

**THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF  
TEACHER IDENTITY:  
AN INTERGENERATIONAL  
COMPARISON OF TURKISH  
CYPRIOT AND GREEK CYPRIOT  
TEACHER NARRATIVES**

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## ABSTRACT

This research focuses on the social construction of teacher identities of state primary school teachers in Cyprus. It is a comparative, bi-communal study based on the life stories of three generations of Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot teachers in relation to historical and cultural contexts of Cyprus. State primary school teachers have been selected as the focus of the study as their education/training has been standardised and led by state-run institutions across the divide in Cyprus. The purpose of the research is to present an analysis which Cypriot teachers across the borders can relate to and learn from.

The main areas of enquiry in this thesis are teachers' perceptions of their professional identities and the influence of individual and collective memory on constructing those professional identities. The study employs Qualitative Research Methods, specifically Narrative Approach and Life History Methodology. Constructionist and Interpretivist epistemological positions have informed the thesis. An analytical framework has been devised using Ivor Goodson's *'Narrative Theory'*, Berger and Luckman's *'Social Construction of Reality'*, Vivien Burr's *Social Constuctionism*, Maurice Halbwachs' *'Collective Memory'* and Keith Turvey's *Narrative Ecologies* works.

The participants of the study have been organised into three generational cohorts, which have been divided with reference to 1974, the division of the island, and with reference to the shifting historical periods during which they were educated. The first generational cohort was educated during the British Colonial/pre-division period while the second generational cohort received their education during the post-colonial/division period in Cyprus. The third generational cohort received their education during the post-colonial/post-division period in Cyprus.

Analysis of the collected data is presented in two chapters. The first analysis chapter presents data that is derived from the fieldnote diaries. That data is reported in the form of twelve stories. Those stories include information concerning the historical, cultural and social contexts of Cyprus. The second analysis chapter portrays the analysis of the collected life histories according to their narrative content and in relation to the wider literature which is formed of historical policy documents of teacher education/training curricula and social, historical and political contexts of Cyprus.

The analysis of the collected data gave way to four overarching themes: "guidelines" "generations", "genealogy" and "gateways" (the "four Gs"). In addition to these overarching themes, notions of "memory", "identity", "nationality", "other(s)", and "borders" have also emerged from the life histories. These notions are structured as sub-themes in relation to the overarching themes in the data analysis chapter.

The originality of the study stems from its bi-communal perspective. It is the first bi-communal study of its kind, focusing on Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot teachers' life histories and exploring their professional identities in relation to their memories and in relation to the memories of their ancestors. The findings of the study reflect both anticipated and unexpected similarities and differences across generations and across the divide in Cyprus.

## **LIST OF FIGURES**

Figure 1: Framework of Reviewed Concepts.....	p.32
Figure 2: Memory and sub-categories.....	p.38
Figure 3: Identity and sub-categories.....	p.65
Figure 4: Ecology of themes.....	p.168
Figure 5: First theme and sub-themes.....	p.175
Figure 6: Second theme and sub-themes.....	p.191
Figure 7: Third theme and sub-themes.....	p.199
Figure 8: Fourth theme and sub-themes.....	p. 205

## **LIST OF TABLES**

Table 1: Historical period and generational cohort of participants.....	p.98
Table 2: Generations, nationalities and pseudonyms of participants.....	p.100
Table 3: Chronological order of interviews.....	p.117
Table 4: Emerged themes and sub-themes.....	p.167

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## DECLARATION

I declare that the research contained in this thesis, unless otherwise formally indicated within the text, is the original work of the author. The thesis has not been previously submitted to this or any other university for a degree and does not incorporate any material already submitted for a degree.

Signed

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'D. D. D.', written on a light-colored background.

Dated

25<sup>th</sup> September 2018



## CONTENTS

<b>ABSTRACT.....</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>LIST OF FIGURES.....</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>LIST OF TABLES.....</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>DECLARATION.....</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>CONTENTS.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>1.1 Research Questions and the Structure of the Study.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>1.2 Setting the Scene Personally and Professionally.....</b>	<b>6</b>
1.2.1 My Personal position in the Research: My-story of Cyprus.....	6
1.2.3 My Professional Position in the Research.....	14
1.2.4 I, a Border-Crossing Researcher: Insider/Outsider.....	14
<b>1.3 Historical Contexts of Cyprus: Colonialism and Post-colonialism Eras</b>	<b>15</b>
1.3.1 Information on Cyprus and its Distant Past.....	16
1.3.2 Ottoman Rule and the Cypriot Nation.....	17
1.3.3 Ottoman/British Rule in Cyprus: Simultaneous Masters.....	20
1.3.4 British Colonial Rule in Cyprus.....	21
1.3.6 The Republic of Cyprus: End of Colonialism.....	27
1.3.7 The Problem.....	28
<b>CHAPTER 2 - LITERATURE REVIEW / CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK.....</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>2.1 Introduction.....</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>2.2 Social Constructionism.....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>2.3 Memory.....</b>	<b>37</b>
2.3.1. Individual/Autobiographical Memory.....	45
2.3.2 Collective Memory.....	46
2.3.3 Memory, Conflict and Nostalgia.....	49
2.3.4 Trauma and Memory.....	51
2.3.5 Nationalism and Memory.....	53
2.3.6 Memory and Narrative.....	53
2.3.7 Memory and Forgetting.....	55
2.3.8 Postmemory.....	56
2.3.9 Generational Memory.....	58
2.3.10 Memory and History.....	59
2.3.11 Memory and Identity.....	60
<b>2.4 Identity.....</b>	<b>61</b>
2.4.1 Individual/Self Identity.....	66
2.4.2 Collective Identity.....	67
2.4.3 National Identity.....	69
2.4.4 Social Identity and Conflict: “Us” versus “Them”.....	70
2.4.5 Teacher Identity and Cyprus Contexts.....	73
<b>2.5 Primary School Teacher Education/Training Systems in Cyprus.....</b>	<b>76</b>
<b>CHAPTER 3 - METHODOLOGY AND METHODS.....</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>3.1 Introduction.....</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>3.2 Philosophical Stance of the Study.....</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>3.3 Narrative Inquiry.....</b>	<b>82</b>
<b>3.4 A Blurred Boundary between (Narrative) Story and History.....</b>	<b>88</b>
<b>3.5 Life Story, Life History and Cyprus Contexts.....</b>	<b>91</b>

3.5.1	Life Histories and Collective Memory in Cyprus .....	93
3.5.2	Life Stories -v- Life Histories .....	94
3.5.3	Validity and Reliability Issues of Narrative Inquiry and Life History Methodology.....	95
<b>3.6</b>	<b>Research Design and Methods.....</b>	<b>96</b>
3.6.1	Generations of Teachers and Ancestral Voices .....	98
3.6.2	Participant Sampling .....	100
3.6.3	Data Collection/Interviews .....	101
3.6.4	Unforeseen Challenges of Data Collection.....	103
3.6.5	Ethical position of the study .....	104
<b>CHAPTER 4 - DATA ANALYSIS: PART 1 .....</b>		<b>114</b>
<b>INTERVIEW SETTINGS AND PARTICIPANT PORTRAYALS.....</b>		<b>114</b>
<b>4.1</b>	<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>114</b>
4.2.1	My story of the interview with Mr S .....	118
4.2.2	Mr S (Turkish Cypriot, 2 <sup>nd</sup> generational cohort) .....	121
<b>4.3</b>	<b>Second interview.....</b>	<b>123</b>
4.3.1	My story of the interview with Mr H .....	123
4.3.2	Mr H (Turkish Cypriot, 1 <sup>st</sup> generational cohort) .....	126
<b>4.4</b>	<b>Third interview.....</b>	<b>128</b>
4.4.1	My story of the interview with Ms U .....	128
4.4.2	Ms U (Turkish Cypriot, 1 <sup>st</sup> generational cohort) .....	131
<b>4.5</b>	<b>Fourth interview .....</b>	<b>133</b>
4.5.1	My story of the interview with Ms M.....	133
4.5.2	Ms M (Greek Cypriot, 1 <sup>st</sup> generational cohort).....	136
<b>4.6</b>	<b>Fifth interview .....</b>	<b>138</b>
4.6.1	My story of the interview with Ms A.....	138
4.6.2	Ms A (Turkish Cypriot, 2 <sup>nd</sup> generational cohort) .....	140
<b>4.7</b>	<b>Sixth interview.....</b>	<b>142</b>
4.7.1	My story of the interview with Ms G.....	142
4.7.2	Ms G (Greek Cypriot, 3 <sup>rd</sup> generational cohort).....	143
<b>4.8</b>	<b>Seventh interview .....</b>	<b>146</b>
4.8.1	My story of the interview with Mr L.....	146
4.8.2	Mr L (Greek Cypriot, 3 <sup>rd</sup> generational cohort).....	147
<b>4.9</b>	<b>Eighth interview .....</b>	<b>148</b>
4.9.1	My story of the interview with Ms D.....	148
4.9.2	Ms D (Turkish Cypriot, 3 <sup>rd</sup> generational cohort).....	151
<b>4.10</b>	<b>Ninth interview .....</b>	<b>152</b>
4.10.1	My story of the interview with Mr R .....	152
4.10.2	Mr R (Turkish Cypriot, 3 <sup>rd</sup> generational cohort).....	154
<b>4.11</b>	<b>Tenth interview .....</b>	<b>155</b>
4.11.1	My story of the interview with Ms C.....	155
4.11.2	Ms C (Greek Cypriot, 2 <sup>nd</sup> generational cohort).....	156
<b>4.12</b>	<b>Eleventh interview.....</b>	<b>157</b>
4.12.1	My story of the interview with Mr P.....	157
4.12.2	Mr P (Greek Cypriot, 1 <sup>st</sup> generational cohort) .....	160
<b>4.13</b>	<b>Twelfth interview.....</b>	<b>162</b>
4.13.1	My story of the interview with Mr K.....	162
4.13.2	Mr K: (Greek Cypriot, 2 <sup>nd</sup> generational cohort).....	163
<b>CHAPTER 5 - DATA ANALYSIS: PART 2 .....</b>		<b>165</b>
<b>5.1</b>	<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>165</b>
<b>5.2</b>	<b>The First G: Guidelines .....</b>	<b>170</b>
5.2.1	Sub-theme1: The Reluctance to Become Teachers.....	176

5.2.2 Sub-theme2: Inspection and Evaluation Systems .....	181
5.2.3 Sub-theme 3: Personal Passion in Aid of Profession .....	186
<b>5.3 The second G: Generations.....</b>	<b>189</b>
5.3.1 Sub-theme1: Narrative style and need for validation.....	191
5.3.2 Sub-theme2: Displacements.....	193
5.3.3 Sub-theme3: Perceptions of professional identity .....	195
<b>5.4 The third G: Genealogy .....</b>	<b>197</b>
5.4.1 Sub-theme 1: Influences of families on choice of career path .....	199
5.4.2 Sub theme2: Ancestral voices and post memory.....	200
5.4.3 Sub-theme 3: Influences of parents on schooling .....	202
<b>5.5 The fourth G: Gateways .....</b>	<b>204</b>
5.5.1 Sub theme1: Views on other(s) .....	205
5.5.2 Sub theme2: Physical and professional borders.....	207
5.5.3 Sub-theme3: Outlook on the future; Reconciliation .....	208
<b>CHAPTER 6 CONCLUSIONS AND COMPLEXITIES .....</b>	<b>211</b>
6.1 Revisiting Research Questions.....	211
6.2 Research Project Findings.....	213
6.3 Originality and Contribution to Knowledge .....	215
6.4 Limitations of the Method and Suggestions for Further Study.....	215
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY.....</b>	<b>217</b>
<b>APPENDICES.....</b>	<b>238</b>
Appendix 1 - Map of Cyprus .....	238
Appendix 2 - Participant Consent Form .....	239
Appendix 3 - Participant Information Sheet .....	240
Appendix 4 - Invitation.....	241
Appendix 5 - Translator Consent Form .....	242
Appendix 6 - Ethics Checklist .....	243

## CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

Studies of teachers' lives might allow us to see the individual in relation to the history of her or his time, allowing us to view the intersection of the life history with the history of the society, thus illuminating the choices, contingencies and options open to the individual. (Goodson, 2003: 62)

This thesis presents the life histories of twelve primary school teachers from three different generational cohorts in relation to the complicated history of a divided island. The intersection of their life histories and the history of Cyprus illuminates how their choices shaped not only their professional identities but also the lives of other(s)<sup>1</sup>.

The research explores the life histories of twelve Cypriot teachers from three different generational cohorts in the light of teacher education and training systems, and the social construction of professional identity and collective memory. This qualitative study has been informed by the life histories of the participants, my self-narrative as researcher, historical policy documents on teacher education/training, and the wider literature on teacher education, memory and identity studies, and studies on Cyprus.

### 1.1 Research Questions and the Structure of the Study

Two research questions and four sub-questions were employed for the study. The first research question and its sub-questions are:

- 1) How are teachers' perceptions of teaching and teachers formed or re-formed during the pre-service and in-service periods?
  - How does the wider community contribute to teachers' perceptions of their professional identity constructions in state primary schools in Cyprus?

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<sup>1</sup> Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots are usually classified as other(s) in their collective narratives.

- In what way does memory inform teacher identity construction in Cyprus contexts<sup>2</sup>?
- 2) In what ways are the teachers' perceptions similar or different across the divide in Cyprus?
- What are the factors that shape teachers' perceptions and practices?
  - Are there any shared practices that can unify teachers on a viewpoint in Cyprus?

These questions were refined as I gained deeper insight into how to conduct research. In exploring the research questions, the study is organised into six chapters. The chapters are reported using the following structure:

Chapter 1 is The Introduction, which sets the scene personally, professionally and historically. It describes how and why I decided to conduct the study through a self-narrative. It also provides information on the historical and political background of Cyprus in relation to the study.

Chapter 2 is the Literature Review, which draws on the literature that was reviewed in relation to the study. In this chapter, information on social constructionism, and the concepts of memory and identity in relation to both individuals and communities is outlined. A brief overview of the education systems of Cyprus is also presented in this chapter.

Chapter 3 is the Methodology Chapter and is designed to provide information on the theoretical framework and the methodology. Narrative Inquiry, Life History Methodology and the Research Design and Methods are explored in this section in order to provide the framework for how the thesis was theoretically structured.

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<sup>2</sup> Cyprus contexts is used in plural form to represent the context of each community across the divide in Cyprus.

Chapter 4 presents the Interview Settings and Participant Portrayals. Information regarding the interview settings and participants is presented through self-narratives of the interviews. The aim of this chapter is to take the readers on a journey of where and how I met the participants. This chapter consists of twelve stories and each story draws upon some of the contested social and political issues in Cyprus contexts.

Chapter 5 is the Data Analysis chapter. In this chapter the emergent overarching themes and sub-themes are explored in relation to the collected life histories, and to historical policy documents on teaching and teacher education/training. This chapter presents the analysed life history narratives in connection to the shifting historical and social contexts of Cyprus.

Chapter 6 is the Complexities and Conclusion chapter. In this chapter, the conclusions of the conducted research hence the complexities of the findings are presented. In addition to the concluding remarks about the study, the link between teacher professional identities and educational and social change is also highlighted.

## **1.2 Setting the Scene Personally and Professionally**

This part of the thesis is composed of my personal and professional positions in this study. It also provides details about the rationale for the research.

### **1.2.1 My Personal position in the Research: My-story of Cyprus**

If you want to know me, then you must know my story, for my story defines who I am. And if I want to know *myself*, to gain insight into the meaning of my own life, then I, too, must come to know my own story. (McAdams, 1997: 11)

The following is my own story. In sharing this story, I aim to follow McAdams' guidance and reflect on my self-narrative in an attempt to explore the Cypriot

identity in connection to the notions of other(s), borders, contested land and property, and collective and post memory.

The title of this section is called my-story of Cyprus as it explores my personal perspective on the complicated history of a small island. Despite the usage of a possessive adjective in the title, the aim is not to possess but to belong to Cyprus and to its stories. The Cyprus and its stories that I desire to belong to are yet to be created and that is the main motivating force behind this study.

I grew up in a village among orange groves. The streets were always full of children and laughter as we all played happily until the early hours of the evening. Most of us were born after 1974 so we were the generation of post-war babies. The parents, who were born around similar times during the British Colonial period, formed a generation of colonial subjects. These two generational groups were the inhabitants of our street. However, there was a distinct difference between the happy environment of the children and the environment of the adults. Rather than laughter and happiness, adult conversations were full of tears and silence. Sometimes they would sit together and just share the silence. As a child, it was difficult to understand why the adults lived in sadness and pain. Fivush (2010) explains that the shared silence “provides the space for the creation of a new narrative, a narrative of resistance” (p.92). Perhaps in their silence our parents were not only protecting us from the traumas of the past but also resisting the relocations. Perhaps the shared silence was an act of remembering the past. To this day I am not sure of the main reason for the upsetting silence. All I know is that my friends and I used to feel uncomfortable when we were exposed to it.

As children, that was the one and only problem we encountered. Apart from the pain demonstrated in silence by the adults, everything else about our village was perfect. The view from our balcony was spectacular. Orange groves surrounded the houses and a small vineyard, planted by one of our neighbours, was growing, putting vacant smiles on the sad faces of the

adults, as it reminded them of their “true” villages. Beyond the orange orchards, the Troodos Mountains, the Mediterranean Sea and the Five Finger Mountains surrounded our beautiful village and made it look like a scene from a postcard.

There were 32 houses on our street: some were bungalows, and some were two-storey buildings, but ours was the only one on columns. These columns were not like the ones on Roman buildings. They were not there for decorative purposes; instead, they marked the un-finished ground floor. According to the original architectural plan, two flats, one on each floor, were to be built. However, the construction was interrupted by the war in 1974.

Our house was the only unfinished building on the street. “Don’t bother to complete the construction. We will soon leave to go back to our true villages,” was the common advice given to my parents by the neighbours. For the whole of our neighbourhood, our unfinished house stood as reassurance – a reminder that we were all there on a temporary basis.

All the adults were refugees and had their “true” villages somewhere else. A cloud of nostalgia and melancholy would surround them whenever they talked about their “true” villages, which were no longer accessible. As far as the children were concerned, there was no other village for us. We were in our village and this was our reality. The community we were in was our community.

The grandparents from my mother’s side lived in the next street with my great grandmother, yet my sister and I were not allowed to go there on our own as it was classified, by my mother, as beyond the approved boundaries. We were only allowed to go up to the pine tree if we were heading right and up to the olive tree if we were heading left. Those were the borders for my sister and I when we were children. Most of our friends had the same borders. Only two of them were allowed beyond the pine and the olive trees, but they never wandered beyond those points as it would mean that they would be alone, with only each other for company.

My mother, always cautious of a “possible emergency” wanted us to be close to home. We never fully understood what “a possible emergency” meant but never crossed the boundaries set by my mother. We also had a packed suitcase in case of emergencies.

I shared my wardrobe with a beautiful wedding dress, which was not my mother’s, but belonged to an “other”. My mother, who never had a chance to wear a wedding dress because of the “war”, was very sensitive about this dress, which had been left in my grandparents’ house. When my grandmother wanted to get rid of it, she decided to keep it for the owner who, in my mother’s view, would soon come back for it.

Our house was an unfinished building. The doors and windows were donated to my parents, so that they could move in after I was born in 1976. The balcony rails, the result of a terrible do-it-yourself job, posed a death trap and made the balcony look more like a prison. My sister and I were not allowed onto the balcony without adult supervision, but when we were on it with our mother, she would always look at the Troodos Mountains and talk about her childhood village on the outskirts of the mountains. Her stories about her “true” village were always full of detail. They were the stories of an ideal past. In winter, she would point at the snow on the peaks of the Troodos Mountains and tell us what snow was like and how enjoyable it was to throw snowballs. “This side does not even get snow” would be one of her usual remarks. The disappointment and longing in that remark were almost palpable. My sister and I would repeat our wish to go to the snowy mountain to visit my mother’s beautiful village, but my mother would utter the same sentence: “They live there now, and there is a border beyond the orange groves, but maybe one day.” “Who are ‘they’ and why are they living ‘there’? Can we see the border if we go up the roof? When will that ‘one-day’ be?” were the questions that my sister and I constantly asked. Those unanswered questions always marked the end of my mother’s stories.

My father on the other hand, would talk about how he visited all parts of Cyprus freely when he was a bus driver before 1974. He would talk about

the sheep and the goats that his father, my grandfather, had to leave behind. Occasionally, he would talk about the unfinished building they had to leave behind. My parents were to have the wedding ceremony once they'd finished building their house in the backyard of my uncle's house. He would talk about the stream that flowed by the house and, in disappointment and disbelief, would say "they have all of it now." His stories would stir a lot of questions. "What were the sheep and goats eating if nobody was there to look after them? Who are they? When would be a good time to go and see the house?" were the repeated questions that my sister and I asked. The unanswered questions would always wake him up from his monologue. The unfinished building of my parents' past and the unfinished building we lived in, the unfinished stories, the idea of being prepared for a possible emergency, borders and others, were the themes of the daily narrative I grew up with.

I found answers to the questions regarding "them" towards the end of primary school. They were the Greek Cypriots. And they were the cause of "our" pain, isolation and suffering. In December each year, we would commemorate the martyrs and the missing and hang posters on the walls of our classrooms. The most traumatising one was the poster of the children who were killed in a bathtub with their mother in 1963. Every time I took a shower around December I would see that picture in my head. The question "who are they?" was replaced by "how could they?" This was a question that I desperately wanted an answer for, especially when I felt the unfairness of isolation. I wanted to travel and discover the world, but I was only allowed to travel to Turkey and to the UK if I was lucky enough to get a visa and the right to enter through the British border. Even with a visa, you could travel to the UK and be refused the right to enter. On a number of occasions, I had witnessed the frustration of friends and family members who invested a lot of time and money for a visa and an airline ticket to go to the UK but were refused the right to enter. This was a disappointing experience, not only for the travellers, but also for the people around them, who were constantly reminded of borders.

During my university years, which were before the era of digital globalisation, the isolation took the form of limited educational resources and very few international books. It was unfair, and, to me, the unfairness was all because of “the other(s)”. The feeling of entrapment meant that as soon as I was able to, I would leave Cyprus and start a new life in a free country. That is the main reason I moved to the UK for the first time in 2000. I ended up in North London, which has a large Cypriot community, and through a family friend I volunteered to help at the Cypriot Centre. To my surprise, it was a bi-communal centre that provided a social building, meals for the elderly, and after school and summer activities for Cypriot children and youth in London. That brief period was my first close encounter with “the other” community. It was an emotionally challenging experience, as it forced me to evaluate my views on “the other(s)”. I could not tell the difference between the Turkish and Greek Cypriot people until they uttered something. The blur between “us” and “them” was disturbing. The longing and pain created by displacements, the mourning for the missing and lost loved ones, and the blame put on “the other(s)”, which was sometimes vocalised but mostly reflected in long silences, was far too familiar. According to Fivush (2010), “talk does not always imply voice” (p. 90) and that was exactly what I was experiencing. “The other” Cypriots were talking to me through their silence. That experience was the key to my awakening. With the help of strange narrators of a familiar narrative, the twofold nature of the otherness was dawning on me.

My second and more dramatic close up experience of “the other(s)” was on 24<sup>th</sup> April 2003, the second day of the official border opening. I was working as a teacher in the UK but was in Cyprus for the Easter holidays. When I heard the news that the borders had become passable, I went to the famous Ledra Palace Hotel checkpoint with my parents, my sister and my friends. It was a scene that I will cherish throughout my life. Instead of barricades and walls, there was only a rope to separate the people who wished to cross to North or South. The beauty of the rope was that it was not an efficient barrier between hugs and kisses. A lot of Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots

hugged and were united in shock, happiness and tears. That was a true awakening moment; no other story would make sense anymore.

My awakenings and the journey to my-story empowered me to question and challenge my knowledge about who I am and where I come from and my position within the historical conflict in Cyprus. My name is Özlem. It means longing and missing. Even though I knew the meaning of my name, I had never associated it with nostalgia. According to Boym (2001) “nostalgia (from *nostos*—return home, and *algia*—longing) is a longing for home that no longer exists or has never existed” (xiii). I am the representation of a longing for a home that was no longer accessible, a home that had been idealised in my parents’ minds. I had not grasped the significance of my name for my parents until 2003, when I accompanied them on a visit to their “true” villages and the unfinished house they had left behind twenty-nine years earlier. They named me Özlem because they longed to go back to their “true villages.” I was the depiction and the cue of that wish. This awareness encouraged me to question my closest friends’ names. Arzu: wish, Çilem: my suffering, Emel: goal, Barış: peace, Savaş: war. Through our names, we were all assigned the responsibility of being the representations and constant reminders of a painful past. This realisation assigned to me the obligation to be actively involved in creating a better future instead of being a passive reminder of a painful past.

When I returned to Cyprus permanently in 2005, I started taking part in bi-communal activities and youth camps and became part of the Cyprus Bold Leaders Program. During the bi-communal youth camps, I realised that teachers could play an important role in peaceful co-existence and peaceful integration in Cyprus. The professional journey that led me from being a teacher to be a teacher trainer and a researcher brought me to the destination of a PhD study. This study is the result of a wish to challenge history, and the notions of the other and borders, and to declare how teacher narratives could facilitate a unified future for a divided society. In pursuing that wish, I explore historical and political concepts of Cyprus with regard to

notions of identity and memory. In addition, I examine life histories from different generations of primary school teachers across the borders.

### **1.2.2 Rationale: My Voice**

I was previously a passive participant, a guest in others' stories. I was a "kulak misafiri." The direct translation for "kulak misafiri" is "being an ear guest." Unlike eavesdropping, which suggests an invasion of privacy, being an ear guest suggests an invitation. Being welcomed or invited to listen, instead of intruding, being a guest in the stories of people other than myself in Cyprus, taught me that listening is more valuable than talking. I never had such painful or dramatic stories that were worth voicing. At an early age I learned that my stories would not make a difference to my parents' or to my friends' parents' pain. Being from the isolated part of Cyprus and not having a voice that was heard by outsiders also strengthened my view that silence was better than voicing something inaudible. Fivush (2010) explains that just like voice, silence is also constructed:

both voice and silence are socially constructed in conversational interactions between speakers and listeners, in which voice and silence are negotiated, imposed, contested, and provided (p. 89).

This statement indicates that listeners and speakers mutually construct silence, just like they construct voice. In my childhood village, the shared silence of the adults and the silent endings of nostalgic stories were constructed by the contributions of the listeners and speakers. Those soundless interactions encouraged me to construct a muted position regarding Cyprus and its stories. Today, I know that my voice can make a difference; my voice can be heard and can contribute to a unified literature. Therefore, presenting my-story in the form of a PhD is significant both personally and professionally.

### **1.2.3 My Professional Position in the Research**

As my-story of Cyprus reveals, my personal narrative is composed of complicated concepts that many Cypriots construct, share and experience in their daily lives. That, in itself, is a valid reason to conduct research about Cyprus, its contexts and its people. However, my involvement in this study is not merely because of the complicated concepts regarding my experiences or the experiences of other Cypriots. The professional appeal is also very powerful. Being a Cypriot teacher, teacher trainer and a researcher, I am curious to discover how the perceptions of teachers are constructed. Due to my professional identity roles, I have the privilege of claiming insider and outsider positions simultaneously in relation to both Cyprus contexts and this research. Recognising and claiming those positions naturally highlights the notion of borders and boundaries and border crossings regarding ethnicity and professional identity. Akkerman and Bakker (2011) explain that:

A boundary can be seen as a socio-cultural difference leading to discontinuity in action or interaction. Boundaries simultaneously suggest a sameness and continuity in the sense that within discontinuity two or more sites are relevant to one another in a particular way (Ibid. p.133).

In their statement, Akkerman and Bakker (2011) point out that boundaries can signify continuity and discontinuity or sameness and difference at the same time. The boundary between the “insider” and “outsider” positions in relation to this research acts the same way. Despite their difference, each of those positions implies and is relevant to the other. In other words, as Akkerman and Bakker (2011) explain, the “insider” and “outsider” positions are interlinked and interdependent in this study.

### **1.2.4 I, a Border-Crossing Researcher: Insider/Outsider**

Holding the position of an insider or an outsider in Cyprus contexts is complicated, as one can never fully claim to be on the “outside” of either the Turkish Cypriot or the Greek Cypriot contexts, despite the physical and ethnic borders which divide the two communities. This is primarily because

of the overlapping cultural, historical, and even physical contexts, and also because of the complex and traumatic nature of war experiences in the form of displacements, and loss of lives, properties and life savings. Therefore, despite the physical border on the island, claiming a rigid boundary between “insider” and “outsider” positions in Cyprus is tricky because empathy and emotional involvement provide an opportunity to claim an “insider” position across the divide, despite the ethnic differences. “Insider” and “outsider” positions and their connection to this research will be explored further in the Methodology and Methods Chapter, Chapter 3, of this thesis.

### **1.3 Historical Contexts of Cyprus: Colonialism and Post-colonialism Eras**

Conducting research on Cypriot teachers and not providing any information on Cypriot contexts would be incomplete and partial. The challenge, however, is to provide both the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot perspectives on Cyprus contexts without emphasising one or the other. For that reason, the following section provides information on Cyprus and its distant historical past. It focuses on Ottoman and British Colonial periods in Cyprus and omits the much contested 1963 and 1974 events. As a Cypriot researcher, I have learnt a lot about the past of Cyprus during the research I conducted for this study. The following parts not only reflect the reviewed literature on Cyprus but also introduce the reader to its complex past. That past is carried to the present in the form of the current Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot conflict hence the Cyprus Problem. I intentionally chose to include this detailed information as part of the introduction, rather than within the literature review chapter, to help the reader understand the complexities of the Cyprus contexts.

The information on the two colonial periods in Cyprus sets the scene for the shifting historical contexts and suggests a perspective of how the ethnic and religious differences came to life in Cypriot contexts. The historical information provided in this section highlights some of the complicated issues of identity classifications in relation to the Ottoman and British

colonial periods. In other words, the presented information on the distant history of Cyprus reveals how the on-going Cyprus Problem came into being, and how it was fuelled during different colonial periods. It also offers information on how post colonialism was attained in the form of a Republic in Cyprus. Information on how the republic collapsed and the contested past of Cyprus have been deliberately omitted from this section, and from the study, in order not to contribute to the disputed historical narratives of Cypriots.

It is important to point out that inevitably information regarding the contested historical past of Cyprus has emerged from the interview data and from the interview place narratives. However, they have not been highlighted in the usual contested style in an attempt to divert the study from contributing to the disputed accounts of Cypriots. As an alternative, the emergent place-narratives have been designed as stories of interview places. In Chapter 4, information about those specific places and locations have been storied without emphasising a Greek Cypriot or a Turkish Cypriot perspective.

### **1.3.1 Information on Cyprus and its Distant Past**

Cyprus is the third biggest island in the Mediterranean after Sicily and Sardinia. Its land area is 9251 square kilometres and it lies at the crossroads between Europe, Africa and Asia. Due to its strategic position between the East and the West, many civilisations occupied Cyprus throughout its history. As Ozmatyatli (2012) states, “the history of Cyprus is one of foreign rule and occupation” (p.9). Some of the civilisations who conquered Cyprus are: the Greeks (thirteenth and eleventh century BC), Phoenicians (mid-ninth century BC), the Assyrians (eighth to sixth century BC), the Egyptians (560-525 BC), the Persians (525-333BC), the Ptolemies (310-30BC), the Romans (30BC-330AD), the Byzantines (330-1191), Richard I and Knights Templars (1191-1192), the Franks (also known as the Lusignans) (1192-1489), the Venetians (1489- 1571), the Ottoman Turks (1571-1878) and the British (1878-1960) (Newman, 1940; Weir,1952; Eurybase, 2008; Ozmatyatli 2012). Pointing out these civilisations and acknowledging their existence in different

time periods in Cyprus is important for the identity discussion that forms an important element of this thesis. Drawing attention to the existence of all those different civilisations in Cyprus should be an indication of how complex the Cypriot identity is. Due to the limitations of this study, detailed information regarding those civilisations cannot be provided.

The historical, social and cultural contexts of Cyprus will be explored only in relation to the Ottoman and the British periods. The choice of starting with the Ottoman period is neither to undermine the contributions of the other civilisations in Cyprus, nor to contribute to the debates about roots of ethnicity of the Cypriots, nor to provide information about the Ottoman Empire itself, but rather to focus on a period when Muslim and Christian communities first began to share the island.

### **1.3.2 Ottoman Rule and the Cypriot Nation**

The Ottoman army conquered Cyprus in 1571. Their aim was to increase their revenues but more importantly to gain safety on the route to pilgrimage in Mecca (Newman, 1940). Once they occupied Cyprus, thirty thousand Ottoman soldiers were given land on the island and encouraged to stay in Cyprus (Newman, 1940; Ozmatyatli, 2012). In addition to soldiers, the Ottomans also deported peasants to the island from Asia Minor, in order to have a reliable Muslim community on the island and to have a community who would engage in farming (Kızılyürek and Gautier Kızılyürek, 2004). This is how the Turkish presence was added to the Greek, Armenian, Maronite and Latin communities<sup>3</sup> on the island. Together they formed the Cypriot nation in Cyprus. Personally, this is significant to me, as it means that my great-great-great grandparents came to the island during the Ottoman Rule. Professionally, it means that the two ethnicities under investigation as part of the study came to life with the Ottoman Rule.

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<sup>3</sup> The Annan Plan, which was the only UN drawn plan that came close enough to reunifying the island in 2004, recognises those five ethnic groups as the official ethnic groups in Cyprus (Ker-Lindsay 2011).

Initially, the Ottomans gave two “privileges” to the Cypriots, which directly affected and changed the ethnic identities of the natives. According to Dietzel and Markides (2009), the Ottomans recognised the Orthodox Church as the representative of Christianity on the island. As religion has played an important role in the contest of “us” and the “other”, this “privilege” essentially contributed to the ethnic separation and indeed discrimination. It not only discriminated among the Christian faith but also created an eternal divide between the Christians and Muslims in Cyprus. All the other Christian or Latin churches, including Armenian and Maronite churches, were either converted to mosques or demolished (Newman 1940). Would Cypriot ethnic communities be more tolerant and accommodating towards each other had the Ottomans not done this is a question that emerges but is doomed not to have an answer.

The second “privilege” that was given to the Cypriots by the Ottoman rulers was the abolition of the feudal system. According to Newman (1940), Bryant (2004) and Ozmatyatli (2012), this decision transformed many Cypriots from serfs into landowners. However, the abolishment of the feudal system did not provide the implied freedom. The status of the serfs was transformed as they became owners of land, yet they had to obey the Ottoman rule of taxes. In other words, people were restricted not by the landowners, but by the heavy taxing system which was called the “millet system” (Bryant, 2004; Ozmatyatli, 2012). Navaro-Yashin (2012) points out that the “millet system” of taxing “classified communities on the basis of their religious affiliation” (p.11). By transforming their status from serfs to landowners Ottomans changed the status of Cypriots, but they established different divisions in the form of religious differences. Kızılyürek and Gautier Kızılyürek (2004) explain that the taxation implemented by the Ottomans was heavy on the Cypriots and meant they all shared the same poverty and exploitation regardless of their ethnic backgrounds and whether they were Latins, Venetians, Greeks, Turks or from any other background. They all had to obey the “millet” system of taxes. In return they were free to practice their religion (Kliot and Mansfield, 1997). This is a problematic statement; as it is stated above, Ottomans only recognised the Greek Orthodox Church as the

representative of the Christian faith. It is widely believed that during Ottoman Rule, Muslims and Christians “peacefully co-existed” and “were mutually involved in numerous commercial and everyday activities” (Dietzel and Markides, 2009; Zembylas, 2011). In spite of this, co-existence did not actually bring integration. According to Kızılyürek and Gautier Kızılyürek (2004), neither ethnic conflict, nor ethnic integration took place during Ottoman Rule.

The peaceful co-existence on the island was interrupted in 1821 when the Greek revolt against the Ottoman rule in Morea (Greece) took place. The Greeks rebelled for independence from the Ottoman Empire and many Muslims were killed (Newman 1940). The Greek Cypriots supported the revolt in Greece with money and volunteers (Hitchens 1997). Even though that event took place many miles away from Cyprus, it marked the first active Greek Cypriot identification with Greece and the first ethnic killings among Christian and Muslim groups in Cyprus. When the Christian community of Cyprus was suspected of helping with the riot in Greece, Kutchuk Mehmet, the musellim (governor) of the island had the Greek Orthodox archbishop and many priests murdered on the island (Newman, 1940), (Hitchens, 1997). The killings and the terror went on for six months (Newman 1940) and marked the first violent division of “us” and “them” between the Christian and Muslim communities on the island. It also indicates that co-existence was not peaceful and that “conflict and dislocations were also shared during the Ottoman rule in Cyprus” (Theodossopoulos, 2006).

The reflections of the blurred boundaries between “us” and “them” can be exemplified with a family memory. Whenever my great grandfather annoyed her, my great grandmother, who was born in 1881 according to the British Colonial records, used to utter a saying in Greek which translates into English as: “Where has Kutchuk Mehmet passed from and why did he spare you?” Apart from highlighting the problematic relationship of my great grandparents, the saying reflects generationally inherited fear and also the blurred boundaries of Cypriot identities and the blurred boundaries of “us”

and “them.” My great grandparents were both Turkish Cypriots and were therefore the descendants of Ottomans. In addition to that, they were both born almost six decades later than the events of 1821 so had no reason to be afraid of Kutchuk Mehmet and his practices, and yet they shared the fear of the Greek Cypriot community. It is also important to draw attention to the Greek language that my Turkish Cypriot great grandparents were using. This example is a representation of the blurred social and national boundaries between Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot communities. The blurred boundaries between the collective identities of the two communities and concepts of family memory and national identity will be explored in detail in the further chapters of this thesis in relation to the shifting historical contexts of Cyprus. After three hundred and seven years, the Ottomans let the administration of the island to the British, and the British administration in Cyprus began in 1878.

### **1.3.3 Ottoman/British Rule in Cyprus: Simultaneous Masters**

In 1877 war broke out between the Ottomans and Russians. This was one of many conflicts between the Russians and the Ottomans; however, as it was during the declining period of the Ottoman Empire, it resulted in Ottoman defeat. As a result, they sought help from the British Empire and on 4<sup>th</sup> June 1878, the Cyprus Convention was signed between British and Ottoman administrations (Orr, 1918; Newman 1940; Persianis, 1996; Bryant 2004; Markides, 2006; Varnava, 2009). The aim of this agreement was to prevent the Russians from advancing into territories of Asia Minor and to provide support and protection for the Ottomans against Russians (Persianis, 1996). The agreement stated that the British would run Cyprus on behalf of the Ottomans. According to Hitchens (1997), the Cyprus Convention was also an attempt by the British Empire to prevent the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire. According to their agreement, The British would rule Cyprus on behalf of the Ottomans and they would annually pay a sum of about ninety thousand pounds to the Ottomans, the legal “owners” of the island (Orr 1918; Newman 1940; Bryant 2004). Bryant (2004) argues that the money

never reached Istanbul as the Ottoman Sultan owed a lot of money to the bondholders in London. She explains that the British period in Cyprus “was one of the greatest periods of poverty and misery” (p.26) due to heavy taxes. Ozmatyatli (2012) points out that the British did not dissolve the Ottoman taxation system which was organised in relation to religious divisions “but gradually regenerated them as ethnic divisions essentially imposing colonial Britain’s policy of divide and rule” (p.39). These statements indicate that Cypriots suffered because of the heavy tax system during the joint Ottoman/British period in Cyprus.

The Cyprus Convention created a divided ownership between the Ottoman and British Empires and meant that Cyprus was simultaneously part of both until 1914 (Vanezis, 1977; Markides, 2006). Markides (2006) argues that this situation has created confusion for the Cypriots and that they flew Greek, Ottoman and British flags in Cyprus. This unique situation not only confused the local people, but it also created a reluctant and confused ownership status for the island. The confusion over whose colony it really was might be the real reason why Cyprus was never given enough attention by its rulers and never completely belonged to any of them. This confusion and lack of ownership/belonging is represented in the “us” and “them” conflict in Cyprus.

#### **1.3.4 British Colonial Rule in Cyprus**

The British did not seem to be interested in Cyprus for the sake of Cyprus. Rather, they were interested in “taking over” Cyprus, as it was close to the Suez Canal and on the route to India (Reddaway, 1986; Persianis, 1996), and they were hoping to use it as a military base (Hitchens 1997; Varnava 2009). When the Suez Canal was opened in 1869, the Mediterranean gained importance for Britain, as it provided faster access to the Indian Ocean (Varnava, 2009). Bryant (2004) explains that in 1875, England and France obtained a share in the financial control of the Suez Canal, so when the British came ashore in 1878 their attention was not on Cyprus (p.24).

She suggests that their main mission was to safeguard the route to Suez in the Mediterranean and to use Cyprus as a military base (Bryant, 2004: 24). Varnava (2009) gives details that the weather conditions in Cyprus discouraged the British administration from keeping the ten thousand soldiers who were originally sent to Cyprus. All of the aforementioned statements indicate that Cyprus was evaluated for the suitability of British needs. The needs of Cypriots were never focused on by the colonial powers. This lack of interest in Cyprus for the sake of Cyprus is reflected during both British colonial periods in Cyprus.

The first British rule in Cyprus began when Richard I (Richard Coeur de Lion) conquered the island in 1191. According to Ker-Lindsay (2011), Richard I was so disappointed in the attitude of the locals, the landscape and resources that he sold it to the Knights Templars, who only ruled the island for a year before demanding a refund for it. Like Richard I, they were not impressed by Cyprus either. A new buyer called Guy de Lusignan, the former king of Jerusalem, solved the problem between Richard I and The Knights Templars and marked the beginning of the Lusignan period in Cyprus. This information is important, as it shows how the island of Cyprus was perceived as a commodity to be owned and traded. The inhabitants and the ways they suffered under different civilisations, and the ways in which identity concepts changed through foreign effect are the missing elements of that narrative. As silent elements of painful narratives and debated identities form an important aspect of this study, pointing out the obvious is crucial in this context. Just like the first British rule, the second British rule was also criticised for its uncaring ethos. As the real intentions of why the British were interested in Cyprus are highly debated (Markides, 2006), a structured policy on governing Cyprus is difficult to pin down. The common Cypriot narrative regarding British policy in Cyprus suggests that the British adopted an uncaring attitude and followed the Ottoman model in ruling Cyprus.

Bryant (2004) explains that in 1882, four years after Britain took control of Cyprus, the nationalist revolt in Egypt was suppressed by the British, which led to its military control. Persianis (1996), Hitchens (1997), Borowiec

(2000), Bryant (2004), Varnava (2009), Kadioglu (2010) and Ker-Lindsay (2011) elaborate on how Cyprus lost its strategic importance to the British in regard to the Suez Canal after they took control of Egypt and how a lot less attention was paid to Cyprus until the First World War. They explain that in 1914, when the British and Ottoman Empires took opposite sides during the Great War, Britain annexed Cyprus. Nevertheless, full possession in the form of annexation did not make Cyprus more important to the British Empire. Hitchens (1997) and Kadioglu (2010) point out that Britain offered the island to Greece the following year in exchange for Greek involvement in the war alongside Britain. According to Hitchens (1997), the offer of annexing Cyprus to Greece was declined by the Greek government in 1915, mainly because they were pro-German and did not want to upset them. Hitchens' statement is debatable, as Greece and Germany entered the First World War as enemies, but its relevance is that it creates curiosity regarding the history of Cyprus. What would have happened to Cyprus and Cypriots had Greece accepted the offer of annexing Cyprus? This is another complex question that cannot be answered.

After the First World War, the rulers of Cyprus changed. In 1923, with the Treaty of Lausanne, the Ottoman Empire "officially" gave up their rights in Cyprus. This treaty led not only to a power shift, but also to a change in the demographic map of the two communities, as many Turkish Cypriots "chose to immigrate to Turkey with the establishment of Republic of Turkey" (Ker-Lindsay, 2011: 16). This immigration has contributed to a Turkish Cypriot population decrease on the island, which formed the minority/majority debate, one of the key themes of the on-going Cyprus Problem, among Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots. In 1925, two years after the Treaty of Lausanne was signed, Cyprus became a British Crown Colony. However, this declaration did not bring integration. The British policy of ruling Cyprus was founded on a "divide and rule policy," with Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots being kept separate on education and administration levels (Loizides 2007, Kaufmann 2007, Dietzel and Markides 2009, Bibo 2013). During the Ottoman rule in Cyprus, ethnicity was determined and emphasised through religious identities, but during British rule, ethnicity was

emphasised through Turkish and Greek nationalisms. Whether it was based on religion or nationalism, ethnic divisions were used to create an “us” and “them” divide between Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots.

### **1.3.5 Divide and Rule or Divide and Resign?**

According to Loizides (2007), the colonial powers exploited and fuelled the “ethnic divisions” in Cyprus, as it “enabled them to prolong their reign” (p. 176). The strong “ethnic divisions” that were encouraged and highlighted by the colonial powers continued during the postcolonial era and prevented the possibility of a shared nation building which could have overpowered the problems of colonialism and created a medium for a common nation building. Saybaşlı (2008) elaborates on this view:

Unlike the decolonisation movements which arose after the Second World War in other colonial societies, where the idea of ‘nation’ was the main driving force for the resistance against imperial power and oppression, Cypriot society has never been able to go through the process of nation building (p.94).

This statement suggests that nation building in Cypriot society was never successfully realised, hence there was no resistance to colonialism. The nation building process of Cypriots was not realised and yet the struggle against the colonial power was in place. Drousiotis (2008), Fouskas and Tackie (2009) and Atakol (2012) give details of the Cypriot resistance against the British colonial administration. They explain that it was mostly the Greek Cypriots carrying out resistance. This stereotypical classification is misleading, as it undermines and dismisses the common, bi-communal events, which unified Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots in resisting the colonial power. An (2005) explains that, in 1948 Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots organised a bi-communal miners’ strike against the colonial administration. According to An, this was neither desired nor approved by the community leaderships or by the colonial administration, as it posed a possible power loss. As the colonial period created a contested national identity, a struggle to build a unified nation was never realised in Cyprus. The lack of a unified national identity in Cyprus and the fact that it was a

colony for most of its history, created confusion around independence, and power struggles among Greek and Turkish Cypriots during the post-colonial period.

The division and “othering” of the two communities facilitated by the British administration reached its peak in 1931 with the second enosis (unification with Greece) riots (Kaufmann 2007). During these riots, the Greek Cypriots burnt the Government House of the Colonial Administration and demanded unification with Greece. In response, the British set up a special police force to deal with the Greek Cypriot rioters. These “auxiliary policemen” (Kaufmann 2007) were exclusively Turkish Cypriots. The 1931 riot encouraged Turkish Cypriots to turn to modern Turkey for protection (Kizilyurek and Gautier-Kizilyurek 2004). It is ironic that the “othering,” which led to the riot, was implemented to try to suppress it and prevent future riots. By employing Turkish Cypriots against Greek Cypriots, the British administration only deepened the divide between the two communities. The 1931 riot, which led to further fractures and divisions among Cypriots, led to paradoxical unified education policies, a plan for setting up an English University in the island and the establishment of a Teacher Training College to train primary school teachers (Colonial Report, 1934). Even though the English University was never set up, the Teacher Training College was established in 1937. Some of the graduates of that particular institution form the first generational cohort of participants of this study. Focusing on education especially teacher education was part of a strict colonial administration policy was followed between 1931 and 1943 (Ozmatyatli, 2012). The policy attempted to bring Cypriots together under a Cypriot nationalism yet was doomed to fail when Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot ethnicities were highlighted. The strict measures were only relaxed due to the Second World War and alliance with Greece. As a result, Greek Cypriots continued with their ideals of unification with Greece and Turkish Cypriots continued to seek for the support and protection of Turkey. In 1955 Greek Cypriots set up EOKA (National Organisation of Cypriot Fighters) to free Cyprus from the British rule and to unify it with Greece (Bryant, 2012; Loizides, 2007; Kaufmann, 2007; Drousiotis, 2008 and Chatzipanagiotidou,

2012). Within two years, Volkan (Volcano) was set up by Turkish Cypriots to fight against enosis and in 1958 TMT (Turkish Resistance Movement) succeeded it (Bryant, 2004; Ker-Lindsay, 2011). While the Greek Cypriots were working towards enosis (unification with Greece) Turkish Cypriots were working towards taksim (separation) of the island. Eventually, the divisive policies took shape in the form of inter-communal killings. The armed conflict and inter-communal killings brought the end of the colonial period. In 1959 London-Zurich agreements were signed between Turkish Cypriots, Greek Cypriots, Turkey, Greece and Britain. The Treaty of Guaranty was signed by Britain, Greece and Turkey and made them the official guarantors of the constitution. During the peace talks of 2016 this was a highly contested topic. Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot leaders had different views on whether this should be included in the new constitution of a re-unified Cyprus. In addition to the Treaty of Guaranty, in 1959 the Treaty of Alliance was signed between Greece and Turkey, which allowed them each to have a certain number of military troops on the island. The Treaty of Establishment was also signed the same year, to allow Britain to have 99 square miles of the island to establish British Sovereign base areas. (Ker-Lindsay 2011) Agrotiri and Dhekelia are still British military base areas today. Those three treaties shaped the history of Cyprus.

The British policy of divide and rule turned out to be a policy to divide and resign. The British claimed that leaving or facilitating a partition would be the last thing they would do, and it really was the last thing they did (Hitchens 1997). It could be argued that the British have never left, as the British military bases are still in place. Therefore, the division is not only reflected in the physical and the ethnic contexts among Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot communities but also between the Cypriots and the British. Borders do not only exist between the north and the south, but also between British and Cypriot controlled land. This adds to the complexity of border crossings. The notion of borders and border crossings will be explored in detail in the following chapters of this study.

### 1.3.6 The Republic of Cyprus: End of Colonialism

With the London and Zurich agreements, Cyprus achieved sovereignty and Cypriots became the rulers of the island for the first time after centuries of colonisation (Ker-Lindsay, 2011). The colonial period came to an end with the establishment of the Cyprus Republic in 1960 (Leonard, 2011; Kaufman, 2007; Reddaway, 1986). Drousiotis (2008) expresses that Cyprus Republic was a “joint Greco-Turkish state” and that the setting up of it was a “compromise.” He says that “the Union of Cyprus with Greece (Enosis)...the national goal, was abandoned for an independent state.” (Drousiotis, 2008: 9). This statement suggests that Greek Cypriots abandoned their goal for the sake of independence. Similarly, Ker-Lindsay (2011) explains that The Republic of Cyprus signified the failed goals of enosis and taksim. In other words, the established republic signified the unmet goal of unification with Greece for the Greek Cypriots, while representing the unmet goal of separation for the Turkish Cypriots. Zembylas (2013) explains that:

Although Cyprus emerged as an independent bi-communal state in 1960, following the Greek Cypriot armed struggle against the British colonial rule (1878-1960), independence was not enthusiastically welcomed by either community (p.443).

As stated by Zembylas (2013), independence was not embraced or celebrated. Chatzipanagiotidou (2012) expresses a similar viewpoint and suggests that the Constitution did not satisfy the wishes of the Greek or Turkish Cypriots and therefore they continued in their separate pursuit by seeking to gain advantages within the same arrangement. The constitution became ineffective as the Turkish and Greek Cypriots could not agree on constitutional matters. The main dispute was seemingly about different municipalities (Ker Lindsay 2011). In addition to the municipality conflicts, Makarios, the president of the Republic, a Greek Cypriot, drew a 13-point change plan and demanded to change some of the stipulation (Kliot and Mansfield, 1997; Ker-Lindsay 2011) and it “was established on the basis of power sharing, but this system eventually collapsed due to the tensions between the two communities” (Zembylas, 2013: 443). All of the

aforementioned elements contributed to the conflict and deepened the ethnic “othering” between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots. The contesting wishes, and expectations prevented Cypriots from embracing the Republic of Cyprus, which led to the collapse of the constitution and gave way to the first civil war among Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots in 1963, only three years after the establishment of the bi-communal Republic.

Another reason why the Cypriots could not welcome the Republic of Cyprus might be because they did not know how to govern themselves after being colonised throughout their history. In 1952, Weir observed that Cypriots had never known freedom because different empires had always governed them. It was almost as if he foresaw what was to come: eight years later, the establishment of the Cyprus Republic and the attendant nationalist differences led to the “othering” and a search for (m)othering among Cypriots. As Zembylas (2011) explains, the post-colonial period brought a wish to be attached to a “motherland”. Both Greek and Turkish Cypriots were united in their wish, yet they disputed “which motherland.” While Turkish Cypriots perceived Turkey as the “motherland”, Greek Cypriots perceived Greece as the “motherland.” This was not a simple dispute as it was reflective of ethnic, religious and cultural differences. Consequently, those differences led to irreparable damage in the form of civil war and the physical division of the island.

### **1.3.7 The Problem**

Cyprus is usually known for its sandy beaches, hot summers, delicious food, hospitable inhabitants and slow pace of life. “A place on earth, touched by heaven” and “The birthplace of Aphrodite, the goddess of love” are popular slogans on tourist information leaflets. These characteristics of Cyprus present an idyllic image of the island. Unfortunately, however, not everything is positive about Cyprus and its history. In addition to its positive characteristics, Cyprus is also known for its on-going Cyprus Problem, a problem that is widely known as the ethnic conflict between Turkish Cypriots

and Greek Cypriots. Bryant and Papadakis (2012) comment on the Cyprus Problem:

What has come to be generically called “the Cyprus Problem” has in fact gone through various phases: anti-colonial struggle, inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic violence, postcolonial instability, war and external interventions (p.4).

As highlighted in this quote, “the Cyprus Problem” is the result of a number of different elements. According to Connery and Seth (2006), the shift from colonial to post-colonial periods usually gives way to various problems, and ethnicity is one of those problems. They explain that Cyprus is an example of the problems that arise as a result of a shift from colonial to post-colonial periods:

Cyprus offers to our thinking a full spectrum of colonial and postcolonial problematics: race, religion, ethnicity, nationhood, sub-nationhood, socialist politics, finance capital, imperialism, militarisation, and regional over determination are formative in every thorough analysis of its past, present, and future trajectory (ibid. p. 227).

As Connery and Seth suggest, the problem areas like race, ethnicity and nationhood, which are usually associated with the colonial and post-colonial periods, continue to occupy the past and the present of Cyprus in the form of an on-going conflict. When those problems are so embedded in the past, present and the future of the island, it is inevitable that they are reflected in the colonial, post-colonial and post-division periods which influenced and played an important part teacher identity formation and teacher education in Cyprus. That is one of the reasons why the participants of this study were selected from different generational cohorts. In selecting participants from those generations, the aim was to explore how the changing historical periods were reflected in teacher narratives of different generations. Cypriots suffered different traumas in the form of inter-communal fighting, displacement, loss of loved ones, division and separation. Even though the main focus of this study is not to present how those events affected the psychologies of many Cypriots, it is helpful to acknowledge these traumas,

as they were also experienced by students and teachers and were referred to during most of the interviews conducted for the purpose of this study.

Cyprus has been a divided island for more than 40 years. The physical borders, known as the “Green Line” in the United Nations contexts, were established as a result of the war in 1974 dividing Cyprus into north and south. The events leading up to the war in 1974 and the division itself are interpreted in disputed ways in the “official” Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot histories. The north, which is mainly populated by Turkish Cypriots is known as the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus and is only recognised by Turkey, while the south, which is mainly populated by the Greek Cypriots, is known as the Republic of Cyprus and is a European Union member state. The physical borders became passable in April 2003. Cypriots<sup>4</sup> and tourists from the European Union, Canada, the USA and Australia can show a valid identity card or a passport and cross the borders to the north or south parts of the island.

More than a decade has passed since the borders, which were set up in 1974, became passable and since then many Cypriots have had the chance to encounter the “other(s)”. However, there are not many bi-communal projects on education itself apart from the school camps for teenagers organised by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) or the incomplete attempts at revising history books. Since I started this study, a bi-communal education committee has been set up with the aim of comparing the education systems, providing guidance on peace education and drawing up a framework for an education system for a reunified Cyprus. Unfortunately, however, due to the current political situation, the committee hasn’t been successful in meeting its targets yet. This study aims to provide a perspective that Cypriot primary school teachers from both sides of the island can relate to and learn from, while developing a deeper understanding of the “other(s).”

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<sup>4</sup> Turkish Cypriot identity card holders who became residents after 1974 cannot cross the borders.

In this chapter, my personal and professional positions as a researcher and the historical and political contexts of Cyprus are portrayed. In doing so, the aim was to set the scene for this research/study. The following chapter presents information from wider literature regarding the key concepts of the study.

## CHAPTER 2 - LITERATURE REVIEW / CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the reviewed literature in connection to the concepts that inform this research. It is one of three chapters that link this study to the wider literature. In Chapter 1, the reviewed literature regarding the history of Cyprus is presented, while in Chapter 5 the emerged themes are explored in connection to the wider literature. This chapter is organised into four sections: Social Constructionism, Memory, Identity, and Primary School Teacher Education in Cyprus. All four sections are interlinked and form the basis for the study.

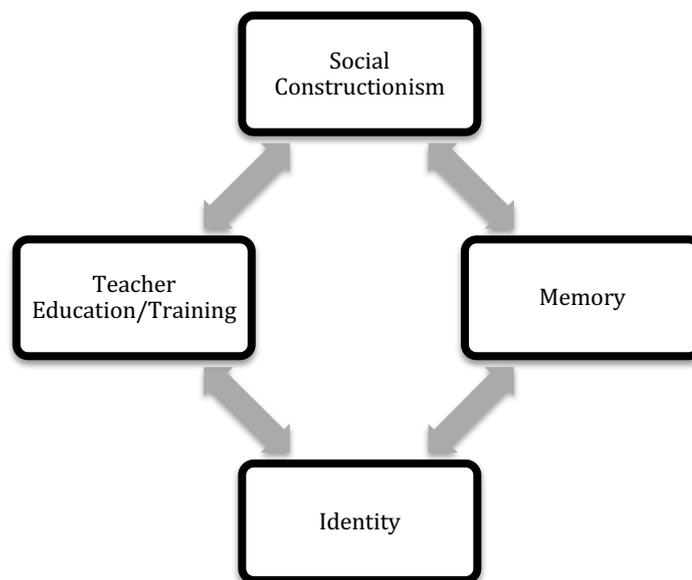


Figure 1: Framework of the reviewed concepts

These areas have been chosen in connection to the research questions and in connection to their significance in the Cyprus contexts. The concept of memory has been reviewed in extensive detail in order to provide a broad perspective and an in-depth insight into how it forms a bridge between past and present for the Cypriot communities.

Reviewing the literature was problematic at times. For instance, in relation to the political situation in Cyprus, the majority of work that claims to portray studies from and about Cyprus reflects either Greek Cypriot or Turkish

Cypriot perspectives separately and therefore lacks a bi-communal element or presents a one-sided perspective while claiming to represent both perspectives. In order to overcome this problem, arguments and viewpoints from both sides were explored and the utmost attention has been paid to present a unified outlook regarding the concepts of memory and identity, which are highly contested and used in reflecting competing arguments about “who suffered more” (Bryant 2012) in Cyprus. The following sections of this chapter explore individual and collective aspects of memory and identity in connection to conflict and nostalgia and in relation to the Cyprus contexts. According to Wangler (2012), “individual identity constructions and identifications are dependent on a person’s life course and biography” (p.16). She explains that those individuals form the “members of a collectivity” who reflect a “collective identity in connection to... culture and ...social change” (p.56). A similar viewpoint is adopted in this study regarding individual and collective identities which are explored in detail in the following sections of this chapter.

## **2.2 Social Constructionism**

Social constructionism is crucial to this study for two reasons. Firstly, it forms the basis of the research, as the intention of this study is to explore social construction of teachers’ professional identities. Secondly and more importantly, it plays an important role in the daily lives of Cypriots who socially construct their oral histories in connection to their memories across the divide. This section aims to provide an insight into social constructionism as a concept. Details about how teacher identities and memories are socially constructed in connection to the Cypriot communities will be explored in the following parts of this chapter and in the Data Analysis Chapters (Chapters 4 5).

In an attempt to settle on a definition, it became apparent that “there is no single description of social constructionism” (Burr, 2015:2). Therefore, I present how social constructionism is used in relation to this study. According to Wang (2016), Kenneth Gergen, who writes extensively on

social constructionism, said: “I generally try to avoid the term social constructionism, as the term seems to treat the ideas as complete and fixed” (Wang, 2016: 566). When Burr and Gengen’s statements are considered, it becomes apparent that the concept of social constructionism should be treated as complex and on-going. Providing a complete definition for an incomplete and open concept is impossible, but this part of the thesis aims to present an insight into social constructionism and examine its possible links to Cyprus contexts. It is this complex and open-ended nature that makes social constructionism a perfect methodological tool for investigating teacher professional identities of Cypriot primary school teachers across three generations. Like the concept of social constructionism itself, identity construction and the Cyprus Problem are also complex and ongoing. The details of the complexities of identity constructions in Cyprus will be explored in the Identity section of this chapter.

In search of an in-depth understanding of social constructionism, I turned to Berger and Luckmann’s *The Social Construction of Reality* (1991). In their work, they differentiate between “primary socialisation” and “secondary socialisation” in connection to social constructionism:

Primary socialisation is the first socialisation an individual undergoes in childhood, through which he becomes a member of society. Secondary socialisation is any subsequent process that inducts an already socialised individual into new sectors of the objective world of his society (Berger and Luckmann, 1991:150).

This statement highlights the influence of family as well as society on an individual’s socialisation hence constructionism. As I pointed out in Chapter 1, in the “my-story of Cyprus” section, my own constructions of events in Cyprus began when I was a child. In this context, it could be argued that my first perspective of what happened in the past was through a “primary socialisation.” My experiences as a Cypriot and as a teacher and teacher trainer have shown that I am not unique. For many other Cypriots across the border, “primary socialisation” regarding the events in Cyprus was followed by “secondary socialisation” and contributed to their construction of events

and constructions of “the other(s).” Berger and Luckmann (1991) elaborate further and explain how the socialised individual constructs subjective and objective realities. When this evidence is used in evaluating the socialisation processes in Cyprus, the divide between subjective and objective realms becomes blurred. This is mainly because many Cypriot children are socialised with contesting perspectives of the same events across the divide. For that reason, exploring how teacher socialisations, and therefore social constructions, are realised in Cyprus in relation to their historical, cultural and professional contexts becomes more interesting. The data analysis chapters (Chapter 4 and Chapter 5) in this study investigate the social constructions of Cypriot primary school teachers in further detail.

In addition to “primary” and “secondary socialisation,” Berger and Luckmann (1966) focus on the importance of communication as a means for socialisation. They explain that, “I cannot exist in everyday life without continually interacting and communicating with others” (p.37). Nightingale and Cromby (1999) express a similar viewpoint, proposing that “social constructionists agree that social processes, particularly language, are central to everyday life and experience” (p.6). In other words, language, which is one of the main methods of communication, goes hand in hand with social constructionism: “we speak in order to create, maintain, reproduce and transform certain modes of social and societal relationships.” (Shotter, 2005:133). According to Gergen (2005), “social constructionist inquiry is principally concerned with explicating the processes by which people come to describe, explain, or otherwise account for the world (including themselves) in which they live” (p.15). All of these statements indicate that constructionism requires language and a group of people to enable the required medium for construction. When language plays such an important part in social constructionism, its role for the oral history-driven communities of Cyprus is inevitable. However, problems arise as many Cypriots construct contesting memories in their daily narratives across the border. Hacking (1998) highlights the importance of culture and history for social constructionism:

By constructionism, we should mean various sociological, historical and philosophical projects that aim at displaying or analysing actual, historically situated, social interactions or casual routes that led to or were involved in the construction of an entity (p.54).

Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot national identities, Cypriot teachers' professional identities, and the collective memories and collective identities of the aforementioned communities can be examples of the entities that Hacking mentions. Young and Collin (2004) point out the historical and cultural characteristics of social constructionism and explain that, "social constructionism does more than say that something is socially constructed: it points to the historical and cultural location of that construction" (p. 377). On a similar note, Burr (2015) explains that "other people both past and present" mould our constructions of social life. This draws attention to the importance of our past and present. Situating social constructionism in historical and cultural realms gives it a deeper perspective and relevance for Cyprus contexts, which are interlinked with historical and cultural complexities and contests. Due to the limitations of this study, however, social constructions of a contested history will not be explored but may form the basis of a possible future study in Cyprus contexts. What this study aims to investigate is the social constructions of Cypriot teachers with reference to their professional identities.

In search of literature to understand the connection between social constructionism and teacher professional identities, I came across *The Socialisation of Teachers* by Colin Lacey (1977). Lacey's definition of socialisation is closely linked to the social constructionism that is employed in this study. He suggests that "shared experiences and common problems give rise to a common set of interests, to certain ways of looking at the world, of interpreting the world and obtaining a world view" (Lacey, 1997: p.14). As this statement indicates, worldviews are constructed through shared involvements. Furthermore, Lacey (1977) points out that an individual develops "sets of behaviours and perspectives... as he (*sic*)

confronts social situations” (p.30). According to Lacey, these social situations form “sub-cultures.” In defining “sub-cultures,” he draws upon the socialisation of teachers and reveals how student teachers become teachers. This is closely connected to the aim of this study as it focuses on how teachers construct their professional identities. It is difficult to explore social constructionism as part of this study without commenting on the distinction between constructivism and constructionism. Young and Collin (2004) explain that “constructivism” “focuses on meaning making and the constructing of the social and psychological worlds through individual, cognitive processes” (p.375), as opposed to “constructionism” which “emphasises that the social and psychological worlds are made real (constructed) through social processes and interaction” (p.375). On a similar note, Burr (2015) says:

Constructivist psychologies... argue that each person perceives the world differently and actively creates their own meanings from events. The “real” world is therefore a different place for each of us (p.21).

It is interesting that both of those concepts are valid in Cypriot contexts. The Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities create “their own meanings” of the past and their “realities” are usually different. At the same time, they construct a shared past “through social processes and interaction”. At this point it is important to highlight that even though this study focuses on social constructionism, constructivism is also relevant in Cyprus contexts.

### **2.3 Memory**

The notion of memory plays an important role in the historical, cultural and professional contexts in Cyprus. An extensive literature review has been carried out regarding the concept of memory and some of its sub-categories that are linked to the Cyprus contexts. The reviewed sub-categories are chosen in connection to the research questions. The following table (Table 2) shows the explored memory categories in the form of a “situational map”

(Clarke et al., 2018). These categories are wide concepts but, due to the limitations of the study, only certain aspects of each are presented in connection to this study and to the Cyprus contexts. For each category, a possible link to constructionism is indicated. As previously stated, social constructionism is used as a tool in exploring the teachers' narratives. Therefore, pointing out the constructed nature of the memory categories fits in with the investigative approach of the research.

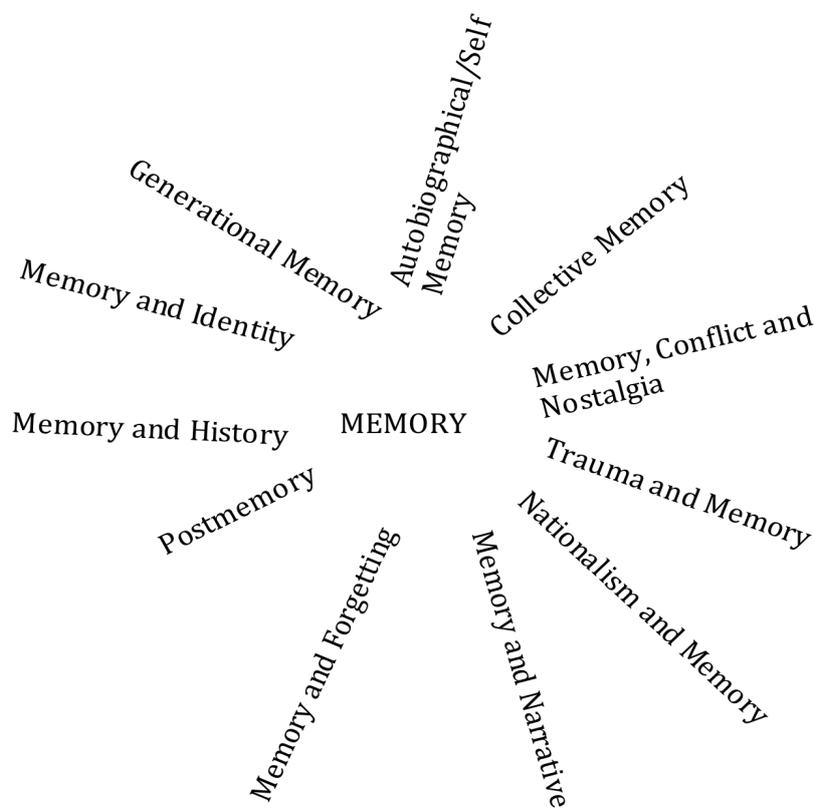


Figure 2: Memory and sub-categories that form different sections of this chapter (Inspired by the maps in Clarke, A.E., Friese, C. and Washburn, S.R. (2018) *Situational Analysis: Grounded Theory After the Interpretive Turn*, 2nd ed. London: Sage).

These categories play an important part in Cypriots' interpretations of a contested past and provide a link to their current perspectives and hence are relevant to the teachers' constructions regarding their professional identities. In the daily narratives of Cypriots, the act of memory is usually associated with remembering the "painful" past. Ross and Buehler (2004) explain that

Words such as remembering, recalling, recollecting, and reminiscing all imply thinking of something again, bringing forth earlier thoughts from memory into current consciousness. From this perspective, remembering is more similar to reproduction than to invention (p.28).

However, when this statement is applied to Cyprus contexts, it has to be said that remembering involves *both* “reproduction” and “invention.” In other words, acts of remembering can be referred to as reproductions but they are also inventions in Cypriot narratives. As stated in “my-story of Cyprus,” some Cypriots, including my parents, remember a unified Cyprus, and they remember their “true” villages, and they remember traumatising events. For all the generations who experienced colonialism and the division, the act of remembering is about recalling and sharing the past with their descendants<sup>5</sup> who only experienced post-division Cyprus. In these contexts, the act of remembering is closely connected to reconstruction. The generations of Cypriots who receive these reconstructed memories can be said to invent memories through the stories they inherit from their ancestors. For that reason, remembering and sharing memories is usually complicated and problematic in Cyprus settings. The different acts of (re)construction and invention of memory across generations of Cypriots will be explored further in the following parts and in the Postmemory section of this chapter.

Neisser and Fivush (1994), highlight an important aspect of remembering by stating that it is a talent that we learn:

Remembering does not just happen. Instead it is a skill that must be learned, a socially motivated activity with a specific developmental history in early childhood (p. vii).

This statement is significant as it can be used to define how some Cypriots, including myself, have been taught to remember a painful past even though that past was not directly experienced by “us.” This feature of memory is closely linked to Berger and Luckmann’s (1991) aforementioned “primary

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<sup>5</sup> The aim is not to stereotype Cypriots who belong to those generations but to highlight their collective narratives, which reflect similar snapshots of the shifting historical periods.

socialisation” notion. Therefore, it can be said that through “primary socialisation,” younger generations of Cypriots learn to remember their parents’ past. Abrams (2010) explores the connection between memory and oral history and explains that remembering is a construction that is linked to social and cultural contexts:

Memory is not just the recall of past events and experiences in an unproblematic or untainted way. It is rather a process of remembering: the calling up of images, stories, experiences and emotions from our past life, ordering them, placing them within a narrative or story and then telling them in a way that is shaped at least in part by our social and cultural context (p. 78-9).

According to Abrams, memory and remembering involves reshaping our past experiences in light of our social and cultural contexts and presenting them in the form of narratives. The reshaped past in Cypriot narratives usually fuels the Cyprus Problem as they reflect strong emotions around displacements and loss of lives and belongings. The aim of this study is not to explore these narratives but rather to examine the narratives of Cypriot teachers. For that reason, Chapter 5 will explore the ways in which personal and professional pasts are remembered and hence shaped in the collected narratives. Goodson (2008), who writes extensively on narratives and stories, draws attention to the connection between stories and memories. He explains that “memories - whether expressed as rhetoric, argument or description - are in essence stories that people tell about themselves and their experience of reality” (p. 70). Goodson’s statement highlights the fact that memories are stories of experiences of realities. In Cyprus, the stories of our ancestors’ experiences are usually accepted as the reality. In the aforementioned statements, both Abrams and Goodson emphasise the constructed nature of memories.

The socially constructed nature of memory and the link between memory and narratives has attracted the attention of many researchers across generations. For instance, Vico (1725 and 1948), quoted in Neimeyer and Metzler (1994) classifies memory into three groups:

Distinguished among three different aspects of memory: memory as memory itself (*memoria*), memory as imagination (*fantasia*), and memory as invention (*ingegno*) (p.106).

Unlike Ross and Beuhler's (2004) conceptualisation, which marginalises the invented aspect of memory, Vico recognises it and places it alongside fantasy. In Cyprus contexts, the "invention" and "fantasy" elements of memory are reflected in narratives about the past. For example, when I had the opportunity to visit my parents' "true" villages<sup>6</sup> for the first time in 2003, I realised that their narratives of their "beautiful" villages included components of fantasy as they exaggerated the size of their villages and the way their neighbourhoods looked. Change was inevitable, given the twenty-nine years that passed before we could visit my parents' villages, yet the constructed elements of their stories and memories – the fantasy elements – were obvious. Neimeyer and Metzler (1994) elaborate further on Vico's stated classification of memory and explain that the past and the present constructions are reflected autobiographical memory:

Each of these features of memory, its capacity to bring to the present that which is past, its translation of events into personal terms, and its contingency upon shifting tides of self-construction are features now receiving attention within constructivist accounts of autobiographical memory' (p. 107).

This statement highlights the link between the act of constructivism and autobiographical memories. As indicated previously, constructionism and constructivism play important roles in this study. Therefore, situating them within the realm of autobiographical/individual memory adds a different side to this study. Neimeyer and Metzler (1994) explore the connection between autobiographical memory and fantasy constructions in detail. They explain that,

Autobiographical recollections do, indeed, enable us to bring to the present that which is past (*memoria*), but never the thing itself, only its reconstructed image in personal terms (*fantasia*), and always in the context of continuously evolving system of self-constructions (*ingegno*) (p.130).

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<sup>6</sup> Detailed information about this is presented in "My story of Cyprus" in Chapter 1.

The concept of autobiographical memory will be explored further in the following section of this chapter. However, it is important to point out this capacity of the past to be fantasised, which explains how the life history narratives of Cypriot teachers also include these elements of fantasy.

Bryant (2012) expounds the Cyprus Problem and how it is linked to suffering that is created by memories: "In Cyprus, as in many ongoing conflicts, memory has been institutionalised as a wound, visible in the rupture of partition as well as in politicised personal suffering" (p. 340). Bryant classifies memory as a "wound" in Cyprus contexts. While conducting this research, I became aware that the "wound" is not yet healed, as memory is still used as a powerful tool in "primary and secondary socialisations" (Berger and Luckmann, 1991) of younger generations of Cypriots. The politicised personal suffering that she describes is generally reflected in the collective memory narratives and hence the collective suffering narratives across the divide in Cyprus. The personal and collective traumas of Cyprus and the memory narratives of those situations formulate a wide spectrum in the contested narratives in Cyprus. Due to the focus of this study, primary school teachers' memories and the politicised personal suffering stories; which they tell about themselves and their experiences, will be reflected upon.

The contested memories and contested acts of remembering are deeply embedded in "us" and "them" narratives. Those narratives fail to acknowledge that suffering narratives are similar on either side of the border. Instead, they focus on the cause of that suffering, something strongly contested in Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot contexts. This is mainly due to the socially constructed nature of memories that are shaped mostly within each community. In order to avoid contributing to "us" and "them" debates, or privileging stories from either side of the border, Chapter 4 presents the emerged data in narrative form and enables the readers to experience the interview settings through descriptive discourse, while Chapter 5 focuses mainly on analysing narratives of the primary school teachers in connection to their professional identity formation.

Brockmeier (2002), who focuses on memory and forgetting, explains that memory forms a bridge between past and present. He defines memory as “a movement within a cultural discourse that continuously combines and fuses the now and then, and the here and there” (Brockmeier, 2002: p.21). When this definition is adapted for Cypriot contexts, the act of bridging the past and the present in the form of memory, remembering and presenting it in a narrative form usually creates contested memories. These memories are sometimes within, but mostly between, the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities. As a Cypriot who was always exposed to the remembering acts and socially constructed narratives of memories of the generations before me, I grew up wondering whether the past was purely formed of painful events for my parents and for our neighbours or whether they – intentionally or unintentionally – forgot their happy memories and only focused on the painful and sad ones.

During the research that I conducted for this study, I came across the idea that memories can be explored using three interrogative words, “how,” “where” and “what.” Even though interrogating or questioning memories might seem unnatural, according to Brockmeier (2002: p.20), “the process of memory” is “the idea of storage of knowledge in and retrieval from, a warehouse.” This idea can be explored using the following two questions, “how does the process of memory work?” and “where is memory stored and retrieved from?”. Answers to these questions elaborate on the progression of memory. In addition to this, Brockmeier also describes “the content of memory” as “what is remembered and what is not” (p.20). This aspect can be explored by focusing on “What does memory entail?”. In Cyprus, many people’s “memory warehouses” are full of painful, traumatic and sad stories and most choose not to remember the stories or memories related to the pain of the “other(s).” This selective act of remembering seems to be a collective action across the borders. During the first set of interviews I heard the term “our pain” indicating the pain of the society that the participants belonged to. The missing narratives of “their pain” may suggest an ignorance and lack of empathy towards the “other(s).” This collective action was investigated during the second set of interviews. When asked, all of the

participants acknowledged the pain of the “other(s)” yet some of them felt the need to explain whose fault the conflict pain was. Not only the lack of empathy and the selective remembering but also the use of fantasy in memory can be problematic in Cyprus contexts.

Brockmeier (2002) argues:

Remembering and forgetting do not depend simply on an official historical act, nor on an individual decision. They are negotiated in the interplay between social and individual organisation of memory (p. 32).

This statement explains that remembering and forgetting are not solely individualistic actions, but are the result of individual and social, hence collective, interactions. Memory and forgetting will be explored further in the following sections of this Chapter. Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots in their respective communities have chosen to forget certain elements of their past. Those events are mostly connected to the contested histories on the island. For example, the events of 1948, 1958, 1963<sup>7</sup> and the events leading up to 1974 are contested in the official histories. Those events will not be explored here. Instead, three generations of Cypriot primary school teachers' life histories, their “memory warehouses” and “contents of their memory” will be investigated to evaluate how their memories helped shape their collective and professional identities, and whether these are reflected homogenously on each side of the border. The following parts of this chapter investigate individual and collective areas of the concept of memory in addition to other elements.

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<sup>7</sup> Due to the limits of this study the events of those years will not be explained explored here. However, the “official” significance of the dates themselves are highlighted in the chronology of events.

### 2.3.1. Individual/Autobiographical Memory

Exploring the concept of individual/autobiographical memory is essential, as it provides insight into how autobiographical memory is linked to constructionism. This is crucial in understanding and representing primary school teachers' constructions of their memory narratives regarding their profession. In Cyprus, the daily narratives of individuals usually reveal traumatic memories of troubled times. Those individual/autobiographical memory reflections generally contribute to the conflicting and contested history narratives of Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots as they contribute to the "primary socialisation" of Cypriot children and get passed from one generation to the next. Abrams (2010) defines autobiographical memory as "the events of one's life as they are personally reconstructed in the mind (rather than faithfully recalled)" (p. 86). This definition highlights the constructed nature of autobiographical memory. Neimeyer and Metzler (1994) point out the constructed nature of the self:

autobiographical memory is better understood as a process of personal reconstruction than one of faithful reconstitution. Because the reconstruction is embedded within the broader developmental context of the evolving self, processes of self-construction are inextricably linked to autobiographical memory recall (p. 105).

As the statement suggests, the construction and the changing of self is fulfilled through autobiographical memory. When Neimeyer and Metzler's work is taken into consideration, it is inevitable that teachers' professional identity constructions are linked to their autobiographical memories.

Neisser (1994) points out the construction that links the self and memories: "*I* is the remembering self, inventor and constructor of the remembered *me*" (p.7). This statement assigns the responsibility of construction to the self, which suggests a conscious act. In other words, Neisser emphasises that we create ourselves in and through our memories. By the same token, Bruner (1994) focuses on the connection of the self and memory:

self is not an entity that one can simply remember, but is, rather, a complex mental edifice that one constructs by the use of a variety of mental processes, one of which must surely be remembering (Bruner, 1994: p.41).

In this statement, Bruner highlights the multifaceted structure of the self and its connection to memory. He then develops this statement and explains that the self is a theoretical construction which classifies memories: “Self is a conceptual structure, a system for categorising selected memories, for engendering expectations, for judging fitness, and so forth” (Bruner, 1994: 43). In his account, Bruner places the responsibility for the construction on the self. In the same way, Gergen (1994) refers to the connection of social construction and self-memory:

To “do” memory is essentially to engage in a cultural practice. Instances of self-memory, then, take place within and are shaped by social processes. It is also by virtue of social processes that the concept of self-remembrance becomes meaningful (Gergen, 1994: 89).

As pointed out in Gergen’s statement, cultural practices and social processes are important for autobiographical memory or “self-remembrance.” This connection calls for an investigation of how the shifting historical periods and shifting cultural practices in Cyprus affect autobiographical memory constructions. Due to the limitations of this study, this connection is mentioned yet an in-depth analysis will be reserved for later study.

### **2.3.2 Collective Memory**

Similar to individual/autobiographical memory, collective memory is also very important in Cyprus contexts as it provides an insight into the “official” historical narratives of the communities on either side of the border. Maurice Halbwachs, who is known for his work on collective memory, focuses on the “socially constructed” nature of collective memory. He describes how individual memories are linked to collective memories: “we can understand

each memory as it occurs in individual thought only if we locate each within the thought of the corresponding group” (Halbwachs, 1992: 53). Similarly, Wertsch and Roediger (2008) explain that “collective memory is a form of memory that transcends individuals and is shared by a group” (p. 318). In the same way, Wertsch (2008) makes it clear that “collective memory is a representation of the past shared by members of a group such as a generation or nation-state” (p. 120). Antikainen et al. (1996) provide a similar definition and state, that “memories are created interactively with other people” (p.23). All of these accounts draw attention to how individuals share and co-construct collective memories. In Cyprus the collective memories of Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots usually contradict and give way to the contesting narratives.

Highlighting the collective memory constructions of Cypriots across the divide in Cyprus emphasises their active responsibilities regarding the Cyprus Problem. Wang (2008) points out the interlinked nature of memory creations and memory transformations: “just as one cannot separate a dance from the dancer... one cannot separate a collective memory from the collective and its individual members who are the creators and carriers of the memory” (p. 305). This statement is useful in defining Cyprus contexts as it highlights the blurred boundaries of individual and collective aspects and creators and carriers of memories. Another important characteristic of collective memory is its link to history. Devine-Wright (2003) connects individual and collective memory constructions to history:

Although remembering is ultimately a process carried out by individuals, it would be a mistake to overlook the shared and collective nature of remembering and forgetting, especially as they concern group members and experiences from the groups’ history (p. 11).

In addition to the past, Devine-Wright observes the connection of collective memory and collective remembering, hence collective forgetting. The act of forgetting in Cyprus involves forgetting the perspective, the trauma or the loss of the “other(s).”

Wertsch and Roediger (2008) investigate the constructed nature of the past in collective remembering:

In collective remembering, the past is tied interpretatively to the present, and if necessary part of an account of the past may be deleted or distorted in the service of present needs (p.320).

This statement explains how the past is reshaped and changed in an interpretive and constructionist manner with regards to the contemporary necessities. Similarly, Eber and Neal (2006) call attention to the link between the past and collective remembering: “how our culture embraces the truth of artistic ‘re-presentation’ is one key to how we collectively remember our past” (p.6). My experience of the Cypriot collective memory as a teacher is that the past is constantly distorted in the act of remembering and forgetting. These changes are facilitated by the oral history.

Through the practice of oral history, we have gained a more precise insight into the peculiar qualities of this everyday form of collective memory (Assmann, 1995: 127).

As noted by Assmann, oral history provides an understanding of the features of collective memory.

Hunt (2010) draws attention to the generational aspect of collective memory and states that the continuity of a community is related to the concept of collective memory:

Collective memory ensures continuity in a community. It is the way in which we preserve our collective knowledge and pass it on from one generation to the next (p.105).

In this statement Hunt highlights the importance of collective memory and collective knowledge for communities and the generational aspect of how this knowledge is transferred. In Cyprus, the collective memories of each community reflect a collective knowledge formed of their perspectives. This

act creates exclusive and divisive memories in Cyprus contexts. Hunt (2010) elaborates further and suggests that: “it is difficult to generate political inclusivity in collective memory after a civil war” (p.110). When this statement is applied to Cypriot communities, it is possible to say that the political inclusivity has been disrupted twice after two civil wars in Cyprus. Therefore, the collective memory narratives on either side of the divide are fragmented and contesting. Abrams (2010)’s definition of collective memory almost offers a solution to the fragmented and divisive nature of the concept:

Collective or popular memory is not static. Dominant interpretations of the past shift and alter as formerly marginalised voices are heard and incorporated (Abrams, 2010:97).

According to Abrams, collective memory is not fixed, hence the shifting nature provides a medium to include “marginalised” voices. Paying attention to marginalised voices in Cyprus may give way to new collective memories. This provides a topic for a further study due the limitations of this one.

### **2.3.3 Memory, Conflict and Nostalgia**

The concept of memory in Cyprus contexts is inevitably linked to notions of conflict and nostalgia. Collective memories on both sides of the border are constructed, deconstructed and reconstructed in connection to the ethnic conflict. This part of the research is included in order to highlight the link between memory, nostalgia and conflict but is intentionally kept short in order not to contribute to the stereotypical Cypriot narratives regarding memories of the conflict. The following statement explains the relationship between collective memory and conflict.

Over the years, groups involved in conflict selectively form collective memories about conflict. On the one hand, they focus mainly on the other side’s responsibility for the outbreak and continuation of the conflict and its misdeeds, violence and atrocities; on the other hand, they concentrate on the self-justification, self-righteousness, glorification and victimisation (Bar-Tal, 2003: 78).

As indicated, collective memories of conflict focus on a contesting narrative where “us” is always portrayed in a positive attitude and “them” in negative. Nets (2013) explores a similar viewpoint:

A typical narrative of conflict is significantly biased and distorted...When such a narrative is adopted in the collective memory it plays a major role in the course of a conflict, insofar as it shapes the psychological and behavioural reactions of each party positively towards itself and negatively towards its rival (p. 211).

Those biased viewpoints form the structure of the “official” histories in Cyprus contexts. The education systems on both sides of the border embody the “official” histories and therefore contribute to the biased perspectives. In my-story of Cyprus, I have presented an example of how the primary school that I attended, offered a biased view to its pupils.

Memory and its connection to nostalgia are also crucial in Cyprus contexts. Boym (2001) writes about nostalgia extensively. She suggests that, “while the longing is universal, nostalgia can be divisive” (Boym, 2001: xiii):

At a first glance, nostalgia is a longing for a place, but actually it is a yearning for a different time – the time of our childhood, the slower rhythms of our dreams (Boym, 2001: xv).

Longing for a place and yearning for a different time forms the core elements of the remembered and contested past hence the conflict and the Cyprus Problem. Nostalgia for a past in Cyprus encourages a collective memory of a contested history between Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots. Boym (2001) deconstructs the term “nostalgia” and provides a definition for it:

Algia – longing – is what we share, yet nostos – the return home – is what divides us. It is the promise to rebuild the ideal home that lies at the core of many powerful ideologies of today, tempting us to relinquish critical thinking for emotional bonding (Boym, 2001: xv-xvi).

In Cyprus, longing for a unified Cyprus and longing for the period before the conflict is often voiced across the divide. However, the wish to return home

is complicated. Ker-Lindsay (2011) and Bryant (2004) explain that, the collective narrative of the Greek Cypriots on returning home is not mirrored in the collective narrative of the Turkish Cypriots<sup>8</sup>. When Boym's definition is applied to the collective narratives of Cypriots, nostalgia and a longing for a return to a contested home/homeland and a contested past is highly common, therefore highly divisive in Cyprus. Perceptions of the conflict and nostalgia will be explored against the collected teachers' narratives in Chapter 5 of this study.

### **2.3.4 Trauma and Memory**

The investigation of the concept of memory and its connection to conflict and nostalgia enabled me to realise the connection between trauma and memory. Like the previous section, this one is also intentionally kept short, as traumas of the past in Cyprus are sensitive issues and usually contribute to a disputed narrative. Hodgkin and Radstone (2007) argue that 'trauma theory, whether in relation to an individual or a larger social phenomenon...has at its heart the problem of witness testimony, and of memory' (p.99). In other words, trauma theory is problematic as it encompasses the notion of memory. On a similar note, Walker (2007) comments on constructed nature of traumatic memories:

Traumatic memories are highly fraught 'imaginary scenes' that are constructed with regard to reality rather than reincarnating it; a traumatic memory both weaves itself around and substitutes for an event too terrible to acknowledge non-traumatically (p.109).

Walker's assertion suggests that people use constructions of traumatic memories as a method of dealing with terrible events. Like Walker, Wang (2008) highlights the way traumas are handled. He suggests that collective memories provide a medium for the trauma management systems to arise:

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<sup>8</sup> The wider perspectives of Cypriots regarding the Cyprus Republic are explored in Chapter 1.

Trauma-coping mechanisms, such as rationalisation, avoidance, positive reappraisal, religion, active behaviour, and social support, may all take effect during the formation of a collective memory. As such, collective memory may become a result of collective coping with shared traumas (p. 309).

The trauma-coping mechanisms of Cypriots that are reflected in their collective memories are problematic in Cyprus contexts. Each collective memory that aims to heal the community it emerges from can offend the “other” community across the divide and hence bring the past to the present. These constructed trauma memories are parts of the collective memory narratives that are passed onto subsequent generations and even though they might be the results of coping with the traumas of the past, they are highly debated.

A different use of traumatic memory is noted in Colvin’s (2007) work. In commenting on how to resolve conflicts, Colvin (2007) suggests that traumatic memory should be transformed into therapeutic history.

If the act of writing history is considered to be therapeutic, then perhaps the history-writing project has a place in reconstructing the social, political and psychological constitution of a nation (Colvin, 2007: 157).

In Cyprus, writing a new history started in the form of writing new history books on both sides of the island in an attempt to include each other’s perspective. However, the project remains incomplete because of the current political situation. In Cyprus, writing new histories as a therapeutic tool has failed in the presence of borders, both physical and non-physical. However, exploring the reasons for this failure is outside the scope of this study and only the traumatic memories of the teachers that emerged during some of the interviews will be explored in Chapter 5 in connection to their professional contexts.

### **2.3.5 Nationalism and Memory**

When memory and history are so interlinked, nationalism receives unavoidable attention in Cyprus settings. Vali (1996), quoted in Hodgkin and Radstone (2007), explains that “no ideology needs history so much as nationalism” (p.169). In Cyprus contexts, histories and nationalisms are intertwined and they exist because of each other. “To construct a narrative of the nation implies a large task of suppression and denial of incongruous or undesirable elements” (Hodgkin and Radstone, 2007:170). The “undesirable elements” are the voices and perspectives of the “other(s)” in Cyprus. Therefore, the narratives of Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots<sup>9</sup> deny the narratives of each other in presenting a nationalist memory. As a Cypriot who conducts extensive research in and about Cyprus, Spyrou (2002) provides a negative perspective of the future in Cyprus:

The power of nationalist imagination: the adversarial relationship between “us” and “them” is not just a “fact” of history; it is also a “fact” of the future (however speculative such a rhetorical statement may be). In short, what happened in the past between the two groups is likely to happen again and again in the future (Spyrou, 2002: 262).

The nationalist memory holds the future captive in Cyprus. This imagination has also been expressed by some of the participants during the interviews. These will be explored in Chapter 5 of this study.

### **2.3.6 Memory and Narrative**

Memory and narrative are two notions that have been explored separately in the previous and following sections of this study. However, it is important to point out the connection between them, as they will be used together in analysing the collected life histories. Cortazzi and Jin (2009) observe the connection between memory and narrative and professional identity:

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<sup>9</sup> Here the homogenous ‘official’ narratives are being referred to. The aim is not to stereotype or ignore diverse views but to explore the ‘officially accepted’ narratives that are also used in educational contexts.

Since narratives are generally memories of one sort or another, narrative research can also explore individual or institutional histories and personal or collective perceptions of the past and hence how professional and institutional identities are constructed (p. 28).

Their statement proposes that “narratives are memories” regardless of whether they are personal or collective perceptions. They also point out that this is how the past and how professional identities are constructed. The notion of professional identity will be explored in the following part of this study.

Green (2001) is another researcher who writes about the connection between memories, stories and history:

Memories are created by repeated re-enactments or re-visitations of events, tales, histories, or occurrences. Repetitive storytelling of the past re-creates, solidifies, and even creates the veracity of events and individuals (p.29).

This statement not only highlights the connection between memories, storytelling and the past, but also draws attention to how the repeated storytelling assigns authenticity to events. On a similar note, Thomson (2015) explores the connection between storytelling and memory:

Storytelling, too, is central to the creation of long-term memories. The creation and repetition of the story about an event converts that event into a meaningful experience and consolidates it in memory (p.26).

When the memory narratives of Cypriots are considered through this lens, it becomes obvious why contesting narratives from each side are accepted as “the truth.” The “truth” that is consolidated in the memories of Cypriot generations forms the basis for the competing debates of “us” and “them.” These debates are highlighted in the Introduction and in the following parts of this chapter.

### 2.3.7 Memory and Forgetting

As previously mentioned in the memory section of this chapter, memory and forgetting are intertwined and complex concepts. Both are closely connected to collective memory and hence are reflected in the collective identity narratives. The following statement highlights the link between collective memory, remembering, forgetting and collective identities:

Defining collective memory in terms of *shared memories* embraces not just what is remembered, but also what is not remembered. If collective memories are to serve as a foundation on which to build a collective identity, then what is *not* remembered is as critical to forming this identity as what is remembered (Stone and Hirst, 2014: 315).

The “shared memories” and the “not remembered” – in other words “forgotten” – memories of Cypriot communities shape the ongoing conflict. It is crucial to elaborate on the responsibility of the individuals who – consciously or subconsciously – take part in the act of remembering and forgetting:

individuals in a conversation may remain silent about a past event by not talking about it at all or by selectively recounting it—saying some things, while not saying others (Stone and Hirst, 2014: 317).

It can be said that the silent narratives of the teachers contribute to the “shared remembering” and “shared forgetting” of traumas in Cyprus and hence contribute to a divisive narrative.

Even though they write extensively on forgetting and memory, Stone and Hirst fail to address different types of remembering. Delich (2004) explores the ways in which people remember and suggests that we rely on other people for the memories that we cannot remember, for example our childhood:

Another person or other people are the basis for our memory, especially for what we cannot remember: the story of our childhood – just as we all also keep in our memory what is not part of us. These

multiple memories coexist, like the memory of events and feelings that we do not experience, that do not belong to our time and nevertheless come to life in some cases or are brought to life by us; we then convert all this into an active memory (Delich, 2004: 67).

In Cyprus, older generations provide memories of a troubled past which younger generations cannot remember. This act brings the past into the present and contributes to the active memory constructions of many Cypriots. These often divisive “memories are constructed in intersubjectivity” (Delich, 2004: 69). The act of co-constructions is reflected on a collective level:

The state takes upon itself the duty of remembering and forgetting: its memory is, like the state itself, rational and selective. On the other hand, society remembers and forgets in accordance with certain values and, above all when those values predominate, in a practical relationship with those values (Delich, 2004: 74).

In Cyprus the societies across the divide reflect “selective remembering and forgetting.” Papadakis (2008) explains that history education in schools across the divide present a narrative in which the “suffering of others is silenced”. This exemplifies the selective remembering of events in Cyprus contexts. As highlighted in Chapter 1, in “My-story of Cyprus”, schools on either side of the border contribute to the state chosen memory values. Participants’ perceptions of these values are explored in Chapter 5, while my own perceptions as a teacher and researcher are presented in Chapter 4 within the stories of the interview places.

### **2.3.8 Postmemory**

In Cyprus contexts, the acts of remembering and forgetting crucial events of the past usually contribute to a contested collective memory, which is divisive. This divisive collective memory is usually passed on from generation to generation on either side of the border. In other words, generations of Cypriots inherit collective memory narratives from their

ancestors. Marianne Hirsch proposes the term “postmemory” to describe these inherited memories:

I propose the term “postmemory” with some hesitation, conscious that the prefix “post” could imply that we are beyond memory and therefore perhaps... purely in history. In my reading, postmemory is distinguished from memory by generational distance and from history by deep personal connection (Hirsch, 1997:22).

In this definition, Hirsch emphasises that “postmemory” differs from memory as it contains a generational aspect. She then points out a different characteristic of “postmemory” and how it is linked to trauma and the memories of survivors, all of which are crucial in Cyprus contexts:

Postmemory is a powerful and very particular form of memory precisely because its connection to its object or source is mediated not through recollection but through an imaginative investment and creation... Postmemory characterises the experience of those who grew up dominated by narratives that preceded their birth, whose own belated stories are evacuated by the stories of the previous generation shaped by traumatic events that can be neither understood nor created... I prefer the term “postmemory” to “absent memory,” or “hole of memory,” also derived in Nadine Fresco’s illuminating work with children of survivors. Postmemory –often obsessive and relentless—need not to be absent or evacuated: it is as full and as empty, certainly as constructed, as memory itself (Hirsch, 1997:22.)

“Postmemory” is highly important in Cypriot contexts as generational creative remembering and survivor narratives are the memories that different generations of Cypriots inherit. Those memories are explored in and through the collected teacher narratives from Cyprus.

For survivors who have been separated and exiled from a ravaged world, memory is necessarily an act not only of recall but also of mourning, mourning often tempered by anger, rage, and despair (Hirsch, 1997:242-3).

The mourning for the loss of lives and belongings, the anger and despair are usually the themes of Cypriot narratives. As Hirsch (1997) indicates, these are all the elements of memory of the survivors. These elements will be investigated in the life history narratives of Cypriot teachers.

### 2.3.9 Generational Memory

Erll (2014) writes about the link between “postmemory” and generations:

The concept of generation may remain largely unnoticed, but it has shaped the past century, both as an academic term and as a popular figure of thinking about time and identity. In this sense, generation is not a given, but a discursive constellation, or an assemblage, in which politics, different forms of knowledge, technologies, and cultural practices interact—all the way from vociferous generation rhetoric to postmemory work and to DNA testing (Erll, 2014: p. 404).

As indicated in the statement, the concept of generation links time and identity. Erll points out the constructed nature of generations regardless of whether they are connected to language or “postmemory” or the ancestors-descendants relations. In other words, “postmemory,” which is a form of generational memory is constructed and not pre-given. Generational memory plays a crucial role in this study as teachers’ memories from different historical periods provide information on the shifting historical, political and professional contexts of Cyprus.

Welzer (2010) explains how meaning changes from generation to generation:

Moving through the generations, stories can become so altered that in the end they have undergone a complete change of meaning. This reconfiguration generally functions to turn grandparents into people who always possessed moral integrity, according to today’s standards and normative appraisal (Welzer, 2010: 7).

The past is perceived differently by different generations, inevitably, memory and identity constructions of Cypriot teachers from different generational cohorts are perceived and reflected in light of my own generational perceptions as the researcher. Being aware of this limitation has empowered me to pay more attention to how we perceive and represent previous generations and their constructions.

### 2.3.10 Memory and History

In Cyprus, history is part of the daily narrative and is not, therefore, in the past. These narratives are shaped by the memories and “postmemories” of different generations. Hunt (2010) points out the connection between history and memory:

History gradually emerged from memory when it became a reevaluation of the past, particularly in written form –narrative and reinterpretable-and later gradually developed into a social science (p. 98).

The official *histories* in Cyprus that emerged from memory and that are in written form are constantly supported by oral history, which is also shaped by the reevaluation of the past in a contested way across the divide. In their reevaluations, Cypriots usually omit the perspectives of the other(s). Eber and Neal (2001) state that:

the past becomes a form of selective memory, since the factual details of what happened in history often are neither known nor knowable (p.9).

The unknown and unknowable past narratives that are selectively constructed encompass elements of blame put on the other(s) yet no elements of guilt in relation to themse/ves in Cyprus. Reasons for the way memories are selected and the way the unknowable past is shaped are beyond the limits of this study. For the purpose of this study, it is more important to focus on how the past is remembered rather than the truth about history in Cyprus:

We reconstruct the past in ways we wish to reconstruct it, with little consideration for any objective truth. Collective memory does not involve testimony about the truth (Hunt, 2010: 110).

Being aware of the constructed nature of histories in Cyprus can be a step towards reconciliation. Even though there are individuals and Non-Governmental Organisations who try to increase this awareness, the official histories are still reflective of the divisive memory constructs in Cyprus. Thomson (2015) says: “the past cannot be altered, but memory and history

change all the time” (p.1). I believe that teachers can play an important role in facilitating different memory constructions and therefore a different history in divided Cyprus.

Tonkin (1992) explains that different generations experience and create history through memory and social interaction:

Memory and cognition are partly constituted by social relations and thus are also constitutive of society. We are all simultaneously bearers and makers of history, with discursive representations of pastness as one element in this generation and reproduction of social life (Tonkin, 1992: 97).

This statement proposes that all generations are responsible for constructing history. Admitting that we all share responsibility for the divide might be the first step towards constructing a different future in Cyprus. Plummer (2001) comments on memory, history and life stories:

Life story work involves recollecting, remembering, re-discovering, along with the active process of memorialising and constructing history (Plummer, 2001: p. 233).

Plummer’s statement reveals how history is constructed through memory and through reminiscing the past. It can be said that, in sharing their life histories with me, the participants were constructing histories, even though they were probably not aware of their own power in constructing the past. However, in conducting life history research and in listening to the memory constructions of the participants, I have become aware of my responsibility and my power of initiating a new history construction for Cyprus. Even though this thesis cannot claim to fulfil that purpose, it is still a reflection of an attempt towards peaceful co-existence of teachers’ narratives.

### **2.3.11 Memory and Identity**

The concept of identity and its sub-categories will be explored in the following section. For that reason, this section is presented as a brief

overview of the connection between the concepts of memory and identity. Abrams (2010) explains the connection between memory and identity as follows:

Memory is the key to our identity; without our memory we have no social existence. We depend on our memory in order to conduct our daily lives (Abrams, 2010: 82).

In this statement Abrams observes a key connection between the notions of memory, identity and social existence. For Abrams, identity is attained through memory. Together, they provide the basis for social existence. Hunt (2010) expresses a similar viewpoint and explains that memory is the key constituent of identity:

Our identities are tied up with memory and history. Without memory we have no identity. In order to create our identities, we draw on cultural memories and historical understanding of our cultures. Remembrance of the past is important in terms of our socialisation into our culture (Hunt, 2010: 106).

When memory and identity and history are so closely connected, it is impossible to explore teachers' life history narratives without focusing on their memories, identities and the wider historical narratives in and about Cyprus.

## **2.4 Identity**

Identity-seekers invariably face the daunting task of "squaring a circle:" the generic phrase, as you know, implies tasks that can never be completed in "real time," but are assumed to be able to reach completion in the fullness of time – in infinity (Bauman, 2004: 10-11).

Exploring and defining the concept of identity and its sub-categories that are relevant for the study were challenging due to the ever-changing nature and interconnectedness of the categories. Bauman (2009) suggests that:

Instead of talking about identities, inherited or acquired, it would be more in keeping with the realities of the globalising world to speak of

*identification*, a never ending, always incomplete, unfinished and open-ended activity in which we all, by necessity or choice, are engaged (p.11).

Bauman's proposal recognises and attempts to overcome the challenges of classifying identity. As a researcher, I welcome his approach to assigning identity a less limiting definition. However, the Cyprus Problem and the issues that many Cypriots face in their daily lives originate from a troubled past which involves borders and therefore classification and exclusion. For that reason, I chose to use the more common term of "identity" in referring to the concept.

Even though defining identity is problematic and debated, the socially constructed nature of it is widely accepted. According to Berger and Luckmann (1991):

Identity is, of course, a key element of subjective reality and, like all subjective reality, stands in a dialectical relationship with society. Identity is formed by social processes (p. 194).

As highlighted in the statement, identity is a result of the social practices between the individual and the society. Stuart Hall (1996) explains that:

Because identities are constructed within, not outside, discourse, we need to understand them as produced in specific historical and institutional sites within specific discursive formations and practices (p.4).

In this statement, Hall points to the vitality of discourse in identity constructions and explains that identities are produced in "historical and institutional sites". This is highly applicable to Cyprus contexts where identities are constructed within oral discourse in connection to the historical realms. On a similar note, Spyrou (2002) situates identity constructions in a comparable framework, "identity construction is a situated process. It takes place in specific social, cultural, and political contexts at a specific point in

history” (p. 257). Hence the Cypriot identities are reflective of contesting political perspectives. Taylor (2010) proposes that:

Identity is about the interface between what might variously be characterised as the macro and the micro, the exterior and interior, the peopled social world and the individual person within it, as well as other people’s views of ‘who I am’ and how I see myself (p. 3).

As the statement suggests, identities are constructed in the act of border crossings between individual and social realms. Lawler (2014) highlights the importance of experiences and the analysis and comprehension of those experiences in identity construction. She explains that:

Identities can be seen as being creatively produced through various raw materials available – notably memories, understandings, experiences and interpretations (Lawler, 2014: p. 24).

She extends this statement further and suggests that interpretations of identities are ongoing: “identity is profoundly social and is continually interpreted and reinterpreted” (Lawler, 2014: 30). In light of all these statements, it is crucial for the purpose of this study to note that Cypriot identities are formed as a result of politically, historically and socially contested environments in a divided island. Loizides (2007) argues that there are “two major poles of identity in the island, ‘motherland nationalism’ and ‘Cypriotism’” (p.172). Constantinou (2007) provides a perspective on the polarised exclusive aspect of Cypriot identities:

The most disturbing thing about being a Cypriot is that one can only be a Greek or a Turkish Cypriot. Postcolonial Cypriot identity is quintessentially and inescapably hyphenated; and hyphenated across a fixed Greek–Turkish axis... Who is Turk or Greek has been decided on the basis of religious beliefs and less, or not at all, on the basis of language or other cultural markers. Maronites, Latins and Armenians had, collectively, to choose at independence to be members of either the Greek-Cypriot or the Turkish- Cypriot community. Gypsies did not bother to choose, so “Muslim” Gypsies were officially branded Turks and “Christian” Gypsies Greek, despite their religious practices often being ambiguous (Constantinou, 2007: 248).

As this statement points out, Cypriot identity is a complex and multi layered concept. Ilter and Alankus (2010) refer to these aspects of the Cypriot identities:

Identities are further multiplied and complicated by the existence of other Cypriots such as Maronites, Latin Catholics, Armenians, Arabs, Britons, as well as more recent “postmodern” migrants with or without, and more or less, proper IDs (p. 267).

Acknowledging the diversity of identities in Cyprus not only raises awareness regarding the possibility of “peaceful coexistence” but also assigns responsibility for the Cyprus Problem to Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots. These are the two ethnic groups that created the ongoing problem, which affects all Cypriot ethnicities in Cyprus. For that reason, and because they are the stakeholders of the governments and therefore education, Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot identities are the two identities that have been focused on within the limitations of this study.

The following figure shows the different sub-categories of identity that are explored in this chapter. Similar to the memory table, this table is also presented in the form of a “situational map” (inspired by Clarke et al., 2018):

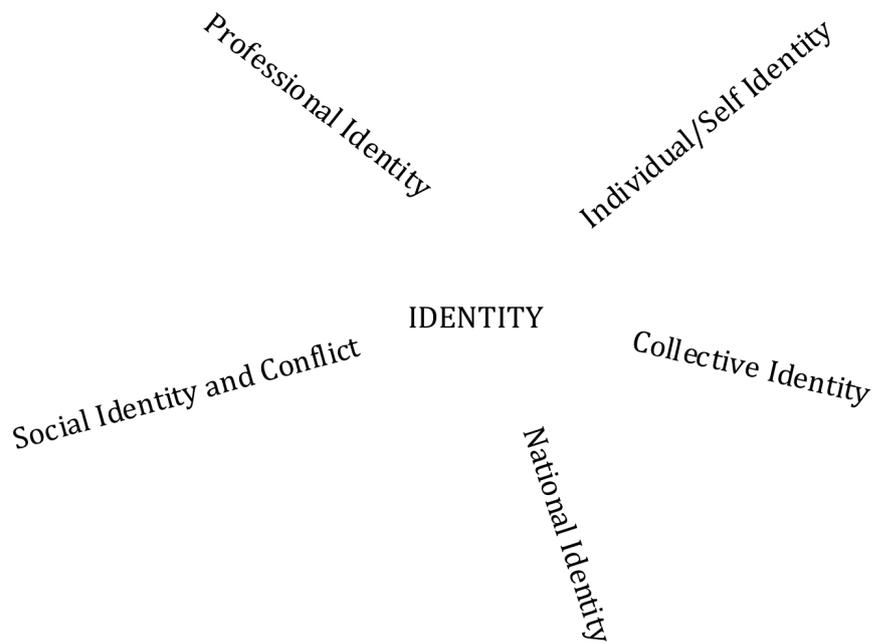


Figure 3: Identity and sub-categories

(Inspired by the maps in Clarke, A.E., Friese, C. and Washburn, S.R. (2018) *Situational Analysis: Grounded Theory After the Interpretive Turn*, 2nd ed. London: Sage).

When the complexity of the concept of identity is considered, it becomes clear that it can be divisive rather than unifying:

Identity can form an etymological view that can be seen as “identical” and “sameness.” But as is well known, in the ongoing debate on identity the term has come to signify the opposite – difference, diversity and otherness (Ljunggren, 1999: 48).

Ljunggren’s argument that identity signifies otherness is reflected in the constructions of Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot identity concepts. One contradicts the other on collective level. Calhoun (1994) highlights the political aspect of identities:

identity politics movements are political because they involve refusing, diminishing or displacing identities others wish to recognize in individuals (Calhoun, 1994:21).

In exploring the teachers' narratives, I aim to explore the possibility of creating more inclusive identity politics in Cyprus.

#### **2.4.1 Individual/Self Identity**

In an attempt to define individual/self-identity for the purposes of this study, I realised that, narrative constructions are prerequisite for the construction and the definition of it. Fivush's (2010) statement highlights the interlinked nature of narrative and self-identity:

Identity is guided by the life narrative and the life narrative is guided by the life script. As each individual constructs a narrative identity that defines an individual life story of the self, they seem to do so in relation to cultural expectations of what a typical life looks like (p.93).

As the statement indicates, narrative identity links the narratives of the self and the individual who experiences and constructs them. For Bruner (1994), self is a narrative that is recreated:

Self is a perpetually rewritten story. What we remember from the past is what is necessary to keep that story satisfactorily well formed. When new circumstances make the maintenance of that well formedness sufficiently difficult, we undergo turning points that clarify or "debug" the narrative in an effort to achieve clearer meaning (Bruner, 1994: 53).

According to Giddens (1991), self-identity "is not something that is just given, as a result of the continuities of the individual's action-system, but something that has to be routinely created and sustained in the reflexive activities of the individual" (p.52). Lawler (2014) adopts a similar viewpoint and explains that she considers "identities as being socially produced:"

Instead of seeing identity as something located within the person – a property of the person, we might say – I consider it as something produced through social relations (ibid. p. 2).

In addition to the socially constructed nature of identities, Parekh (2008) draws attention to the interdependent coexistence and the plural aspect of identities:

Human beings have plural identities, and this is not a contingent but a necessary fact about them. Their identities, further, do not co-exist passively but interact and shape each other (Parekh, 2008: 37).

He develops this point further and explains that identity can be understood in relation to its opposite:

Identity, it is argued, remains indeterminate, blurred, lacking focus, unless it is separated sharply from and contrasted with its opposite (Parekh, 2008: 39).

In light of these statements, the socially constructed identities of Cypriot selves were explored within historical and professional contexts and within different generational cohorts.

#### **2.4.2 Collective Identity**

Collective identities in Cyprus contexts enable the realisation of Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities. This realisation separates each community from the “other” in the act of creating a collective character within each respective community. Bauman (2009) comments on the dividing and uniting aspects of collective identities:

The search for identity divides and separates; yet the precariousness of the solitary identity-building promotes the identity builders to seek pegs on which they can hang together their individually experienced fears and anxieties and perform the exorcism rites in the company of other, similarly afraid and anxious individuals (p.10).

Bauman’s statement mirrors the reasons for the strong wishes for collective identity formations of Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities. Each community displays elements of fear and anxiety towards the respective

other(s) and hence seek to unite within their communities. This stance resonates with, Halbwachs' (1992) classification of collective memory.

In defining collective identity, Eisenstadt and Giesen (1995) explain that boundaries define the positions of "insider" or "outsider", all of which have an impact on collective identity.

Collective identity is produced by the social construction of boundaries. These boundaries divide and separate the real manifold processes of interaction and social relationships; they establish a demarcation between inside and outside, strangers and familiars, kin and akin, friends and foes, culture and nature, enlightenment and superstition, civilisation and barbarism. Constructing boundaries does necessarily entail a process of inclusion and exclusion – and of what in sociological parlance was often designated as "in-groups" and "out-groups." Any such process of inclusion and exclusion entails the designation of the difference between insiders and outsiders, or of strangers, as against the members of the inside community. Such a distinction also poses the problem of crossing boundaries: the stranger can become a member, and a member can become an outsider or a stranger (Eisenstadt and Giesen, 1995: 74).

Their emphasis on borders and the notions of insider and outsider make Eisenstadt and Giesen's collective identity definition applicable to Cyprus contexts.

Parekh (2008) draws attention to the link between shared experiences and collective identity:

Members of an identity group can arrive at a broad consensus as a result of their shared experiences and concerns. If these are absent, the group has nothing in common and lacks a shared collective identity (Parekh, 2008: 38-39).

According to Parekh, agreement and common and shared experiences are crucial in establishing a collective identity. The shared traumatic experiences of the past enable Cypriots to form collective identities within their communities. In Chapter 5, teachers' narratives are analysed in relation to

their shared experiences and hence their collective identities. The notion of belonging is also explored in connection to the collected narratives.

Parekh (2008) explores the link between collective identity and belonging as:

People value their collective identity for several reasons: it is the basis of their sense of self-worth and social standing; it bonds them to those sharing it and generates a sense of common belonging and the collective empowerment that accompanies it; and it gives them a moral anchor, a sense of direction, and a body of ideals and values (p. 50).

The sense of common belonging that Parekh mentions is the key element in Cypriot collective identities across the divide in Cyprus. Even though it cannot be assumed that the collective identities in Northern and Southern Cyprus are homogenous, the accepted collective identities contribute to a contested and divisive practice.

Zembylas and Ferreira (2009) elaborate on collective identity and conflict in societies, explaining that:

Conflicts in societies have a social and political centrality that provides a particular articulation of collective identity and sense of belonging (p. 1).

In Cyprus the sense of belonging to an ethnic group and the collective memories and identities are shaped by the on-going conflict.

### **2.4.3 National Identity**

In addition to collective identity, national identity is also important in Cyprus contexts. National identity as a concept is used to form borders and an exclusive practice instead of a unifying and inclusive one. Highlighting the concept of national identity is important for this study. Parekh (2008) has conducted an extensive research on identity and national identity. He links national identity to individual identity:

National identity or the membership of a political community is an important and often valued part of individual identity (Parekh, 2008: 56).

According to Parekh, national identity is not inherited but co-constructed within generations:

National identity is not primordial, a brute and unalterable fact of life and passively inherited by each generation...National identity is not a substance but rather a cluster of interrelated tendencies that sometimes pull in different directions, and each generation has to identify them and decide which ones to build on (Parekh, 2008: 60).

By the same token, he explains that:

National identity is both given and periodically reconstituted. Citizens inherit it, reflect on it critically, redefine and revise it in the light of their circumstances, self-understanding and future aspirations (Parekh, 2008: 61).

All of the aforementioned statements by Parekh point out that national identity is formed as a result of individual identity within groups. In Chapter 5, the data analysis chapter of this thesis, the connection between national identity and teacher identity is explored.

#### **2.4.4 Social Identity and Conflict: “Us” versus “Them”**

Korostelina (2007) analyses social identity “as a dynamic construct that determines interrelations between individual behaviour and social reality” (p.18). This suggests that social identity is an active creation that establishes the link between the individual and the social and therefore it is possible to suggest that individuals in changing Cyprus realities continuously construct Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot social identities.

Barth (1981) quoted in Korostelina (2007):

Defines social identity as a product of the process of border formation: it is articulated at the boundary and is defined and moderated by the contrast between “them” and “us.” It is only *after* the

establishment of borders that the myths of a historical past and common ancestry appear, with the new social and political roots of identity thoroughly concealed under the cover of invented stories (p.16).

Barth's statement highlights the relationship between borders, stories from the past and social and political identities. As explained in previous sections of this study, all of these notions are key elements in Cyprus contexts and therefore Barth's definition of social and political identities is key to the problem areas of this research.

Exploring social identity and conflict requires exploring the contest between "us" and "them". Safström (1999) explains that the subject is constructed through the comparison to the "other:"

It is in and through the other and the infinite responsibility for the other that the subject is constituted (p.11).

This statement points out the link between the subject and the other.

Ljunggren (1999) also comments on the other and the society and explains that "other" implies an "outsider" position:

To recognise the Other, it is necessary to take, or better to have, a position that is different from what is defined as otherness. And further, to be *recognised* by someone (individual or culture) it is necessary to be outsider, where "out" is defined by the recogniser but also accepted by as a legitimate definition by the recognised (Ljunggren, 1999: 51).

The connection between the subject and the other and the idea that the other holds an "outsider" position gives way to the conflict between "us" and "them." This conflict forms the basis of the Cyprus Problem. Maalouf (2012) comments on those positions and how they give way to a sense belonging within a group:

What determines a person's affiliation to a given group is essentially the influence of others: the influence of those about him – relatives, fellow-countrymen, co-religionists – who try to make him one of them;

together with the influence of those on the other side, who do their best to exclude him (Maalouf, 2012: 25).

Constantinou (2007) writes about the blur between “us” and “them” in Cyprus and focuses on mixed community marriages:

The ethno-religious “converts” — who are almost always the result of mixed marriages — have been a tragic but silent problem, given that these people are often a source of shame for their parental family, and even sometimes for their new family. They generally had to repress their ethno-religious background so as to gain a degree of normality and social acceptance within their adopted communities (Constantinou, 2007: 250).

Another example of the blurred boundaries between “us” and “them” can be seen in the example of Linobambakois (of cotton and linen), a group who converted from Christianity to Islam and from Islam to Christianity.

On the whole, they are presented as either crypto-Christians or crypto-Muslims (mostly the former) who have yielded to the pressures of Ottoman authority, or nominally converted to avoid criminal or political accusations, or paying tax or military conscription. The syncretistic dimension is therefore deliberately set aside. Whereas I do not want to suggest that the Linobambakoi cannot be viewed as “publicly Muslims but really Christians” or “publicly Christians but really Muslims,” I have a problem with the thesis that they were *just that*, or that *all of them* were just that. I think this is an oversimplification of a complex historical phenomenon, which is not, of course, peculiarly Cypriot (note, among other cases, the Donmeh, the Bektashis, the Druze and the Yezidis during and after the Ottoman empire; or across the world, the Iberian Marranos, the Russian Molokans, the Dalit converts in India and the Caribbean followers of Santeria). Such oversimplification is typically the result of historiographies that are written on the basis of ethnic purity and perennial national identity (Constantinou, 2007: 252).

As Constantinou points out, ethnic purity and national identity are problematic concepts in Cyprus contexts. The aforementioned statements provide a similar perspective and highlight the complexities of national identity constructions of Cypriots. These constructions illustrate how the ethnic conflict between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots was formulated. Within the limitations of this study, these perspectives are used in analysing

the collected teacher narratives in connection to teacher professional identity constructions.

#### **2.4.5 Teacher Identity and Cyprus Contexts**

In the previous sections of this chapter the concept of identity and some of its sub-categories including individual and collective identities have been explored. In this section the focus is on teachers' professional identities. As the social construction of teacher identity is the main focus of this study, defining professional teacher identity is crucial. However, providing a straightforward definition is not easy, even though many researchers have conducted extensive research on defining and elaborating on teacher professional identities. Lortie (1975), Lacey (1977), Goodson (1992), Goodson and Hargreaves (1996), Danielewicz (2001), Zembylas (2003), Beijard, Meijer and Verloop (2004), Alsup (2006), Day and Gu (2010), Akkerman and Meijer (2011), Slay and Smith (2011) are some of the researchers who have written extensively on teacher identity. Their work suggest that professional teacher identities are on-going constructs. Danielewicz (2001) points out that:

All identity categories, even those that seem biologically designated like gender or race, are processes under construction. They are not unified or fixed entities that exist permanently inside individuals...As persons in the world, we are continually engaged in becoming something or someone, such as parent, woman, white person, old person, teacher (p.3).

As the statement suggests, identity formations are continuous and constantly changing. Teacher identity formations are no exception. They too are "fluid" and "becoming." Providing a definition of teacher professional identity is a challenge due to its changing nature. For that reason, a brief outline of the concept rather than a concrete definition, is included in this section to set the scene on teacher identities in relation to this study.

Kosnik and Beck (2009) define teacher professional identity as:

How teachers perceive themselves professionally. It includes their sense of their goals, responsibilities, style, effectiveness, level of satisfaction, and career trajectory (p.130).

Kosnik and Beck (2010) explain that professional identity is about how teachers perceive their professional roles. On a similar note, Slay and Smith (2011) define professional identity as “one’s professional self-concept based on attributes, beliefs, values, motives and experiences” (p.86). In this statement they highlight the connection between characteristics, moral values and conduct in professional identity formations. Similarly, Wang (2013) points out the connection between actions and being in defining teacher professional identities:

An identity role in the working environment meaning that a professional identity can be referred to as an identity with which teachers consider who they are and what they are doing in the workplace (p.66).

Wang’s statement confines identity roles to working environments and workplaces. However, Goodson and Ball (1985: 24) point out that teacher identity roles usually extend the workplace and tend to become part of teachers’ lives and social environments, blurring the boundaries between personal and professional realms. Goodson and Ball’s (1985) statement appear to be true in my case as I cannot draw boundaries between my professional identity and my personal identity. Hong, Greene and Lowery (2017) extend professional teacher identity definition to include a timeline of a teacher’s life cycle:

Professional identity is shaped by individual teachers’ past experiences and functions as a motivating agent for their current choice of action and beliefs and provides orientation to their future (p.84).

According to Pollard (2014), teacher identities are shaped by people around them:

Our sense of professional identity forms through life and is particularly influenced by identification with “significant others” such as parents, friends and, in due course, colleagues (Pollard, 2014: 9).

As Pollard suggests, interaction with other people contribute to professional teacher identity constructions. *In Becoming Teachers: Texts and Testimonies 1907-1951*, Cunningham and Gardner (2004) explain that teachers’ professional identities are linked to their local communities: “it was within the context of their immediate local communities that the teachers’ comparative perceptions of their status were most keenly felt” (p.109). The local communities of Cyprus are usually defined by the ethnic conflict and traumas of the past. In exploring professional teacher identity constructions of Cypriot teachers, I aim to explore the influences of the local communities on those constructions as well as the teachers’ professional influences on those communities.

Antikainen et. al. (1996: 59) point out the connection between individual, social and cultural identities and education. They elaborate on how education influences identity formations and how identities in return impact on education. On a similar note, Waller (2010: 58) explains how education, individual identities, and immediate and wider family narratives are interconnected. He suggests that education “impacts on learning, informing, developing and framing a sense of identity” (p.58). In addition to that he also explains that individual and professional identities shape education through narratives. This study is set to explore a similar connection between the social constructions of Cypriot teacher identities through their narratives and in light of the complicated history of Cyprus (See Chapter 1). In investigating that connection with reference to three generations of Cypriot teachers, I aim to search for the possibilities of future practices in regard to teacher influences on the Cypriot societies who could resolve their conflicts.

## 2.5 Primary School Teacher Education/Training Systems in Cyprus

Primary school teacher education was regulated by the British Colonial administration through the 1935 Education Law. The same year, two university graduates, a Turkish Cypriot and a Greek Cypriot were sent to the UK to receive the required education in line of the British values and to become teacher trainers (Behcet, 1968; Feridun, 2011). A multi-national teacher training/education institution, for Turkish Cypriot, Greek Cypriot, Armenian and Maronite communities, under the name of Morphou Teacher's College was established in 1937 (Nesim, 1987; Bryant, 2004; Behcet, 1968; Feridun, 2011). The College was established next to the Agricultural College as agriculture was part of the teacher-training curriculum. Only male participants could get an education there. Two years later female participants were admitted to a different campus of the same institution. (Behcet, 1968; Feridun, 2011) The shared teacher training practices continued until 1958-59 academic year. (Bryant, 2004). When the Republic of Cyprus was established,

two school systems co-existed throughout the Island and their separate existence was enshrined in the Constitution of the new Republic. Education was excluded from the responsibilities of the central government and assigned to Greek and Turkish Communal Chambers respectively. (Wedell, 1971: 5-6)

This arrangement put the responsibility of teacher training/education on the ethnic communities of Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots. The Armenian and Maronite candidates were admitted into these two recognised systems (Feridun, 2011). It can be said that the division of the teacher training institution precedes the division of the island by fourteen years. After 1974, each community continued to train/educate primary school teachers in state run institutions. Today, Cyprus University in the southern part and Atatürk Öğretmen Akademisi in the northern part are "officially" responsible of training primary school teachers.

In this chapter concepts of social constructionism and memory and identity have been explored. Their links to the wider social, historical and cultural

contexts of Cyprus have been highlighted. In addition to those concepts, teacher identity has also been investigated. In presenting teacher professional identities and the overarching concepts of memory and identity and social constructionism, I aimed to point out how teacher professional identities are intertwined with memory and social constructionism. This provided a framework in exploring the collected narratives in Chapters 4 and 5, the Data Analysis Chapters. The following chapter provides an outline of Methods and Methodology, which were employed in conducting the study.

## **CHAPTER 3 - METHODOLOGY AND METHODS**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter focuses on the methods and methodology used to study the life histories of twelve state primary school teachers in Cyprus. It consists of three main sections. The first includes the declaration of the philosophical standpoint of the study and my status as a researcher; the second presents a theoretical framework on narrative and life history methodology in relation to Cyprus contexts; the third provides a detailed description of the research design, the procedures of participant sampling and data collection, and the data analysis methods employed, and also highlights the ethical issues in connection with the framework.

### **3.2 Philosophical Stance of the Study**

Qualitative methods in the form of a Narrative Approach and Life History Methodology were employed in the study. Qualitative research not only provides an alternative to quantitative research (Hammersley, 2013), but, as Goodson and Anstead (2012) point out, “qualitative methods have become progressively influential in social research” (p. 9). Denzin and Lincoln (2008) explain that “qualitative researchers study spoken or written records of human experience” (p.53)<sup>10</sup>. As a researcher, focusing on the spoken or written forms of primary school teachers’ experience has not only given me the tools to explore how in-service teachers construct and are constructed by their professional and personal environments, but has also provided an overview of their perceptions of teacher education/training<sup>11</sup>, as well as Cyprus contexts in general.

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<sup>10</sup> Visual and other forms of human experience can also be explored in qualitative methods. The choice of quotation is due to its link to the study.

<sup>11</sup> The terms “education” and “training” are used together as they are alternatively used in Northern and Southern Cyprus contexts.

Goodson and Choi (2008) emphasise that “qualitative research stresses understanding meaning within contexts” (p.7). This statement can be extended by stating that, as a research method, qualitative research focuses on “verbal rather than statistical analysis” (Hammersley, 2013), and provides different layers of truth that are culturally situated (Crotty, 2003; Cohen et al., 2007 and Punch, 2009). Crotty (2003) and Hammersley (2013) emphasise that the quantitative method was disputed by the emergence of the qualitative method. Hammersley (2013) notes that the “dominance of quantitative method was challenged by the qualitative method for many reasons including ... the concern that the kind of variable analysis employed by quantitative researchers ignores the complex, contingent and context-sensitive character of social life” (p.11). Creswell (2014) outlines the crucial characteristic of truth/reality of qualitative research as such:

When researchers conduct qualitative research, they are embracing the idea of multiple realities... When studying individuals, qualitative researchers conduct a study with the intent of reporting these multiple realities (p. 20).

As Creswell suggests, the qualitative approach provides the opportunity to embrace, explore and analyse multiple realities. The on-going ethnic conflict in Cyprus, the ‘Cyprus Problem’, and the fact that the island is divided into two, makes the idea of multiple truths an unavoidable reality in Cypriot contexts. For this reason, choosing an approach and a methodology that would enable, reflect on and represent the multiple realities of Cypriot primary school teachers was crucial to researching the social construction of teachers’ professional identity and socialisation, teacher education/training and curriculum systems of Cyprus. Goodson and Sikes (2001) observe that:

Traditionally, the goal of research has been to acquire knowledge, which leads to understanding and truth, or, more specifically, to the fixed immutable truth about whatever it is that is being investigated. Such a view of research is problematical for life historians since their primary aim is to explore how individuals or groups of people who share specific characteristics, personally and subjectively experience, make sense of, and account for the things that happen to them (Goodson and Sikes, 2001: 39).

As indicated in Goodson and Sikes' statement, the idea of "immutable truth" is problematic in research and indeed in Cyprus contexts where truth is multi-layered and highly contested. Exploring how teachers' professional identities are constructed, how they construct their individual and collective realities, and how Cypriot state primary school teachers make sense of what has happened in Cyprus, and hence to themselves, was one of my goals as a researcher. Therefore, life history methodology was employed to provide a medium for the multiple truths to emerge. Memory and identity constructions of Cypriot teachers in relation to their profession and in relation to the social and cultural contexts of Cyprus realities have been explored as the core of the study. Despite their on-going constructions, which give way to understanding oneself and the Cyprus contexts and lead to a powerful positioning, teacher voice is usually ineffective in Cyprus, as the Ministries of Education are the decision-making bodies in terms of education policies across the divide. Goodson and Sikes (2001) state that "life history methodology has the potential to enable 'ordinary' individuals to tell their story, to give their version, to 'name their silent lives'" (p.99). This study aims to enable teachers to give their versions of teacher constructions, socialisation, training/education and Cyprus histories. Therefore, qualitative method and life history methodology have been chosen for this investigation.

In addition to life history methodology, this study is informed by the epistemological positions of social constructionism which "argues that our ways of understanding the world do not come from objective reality but from other people, both past and present" (Burr, 2015: 10) and interpretivism, which "attempts to understand and explain human and social reality" (Crotty, 2003). Teacher socialisation is also intertwined in constructionism and interpretivism. Socialisation can be defined as "the development of sets of behaviours and perspectives by an individual as he confronts social situations" (Lacey, 1977: 30). As a researcher, I analysed and interpreted Cypriot primary school teachers' life histories in order to explore how their professional identities are constructed and how their socialisation processes are realised. The collected data is analysed in connection to the shifting historical contexts of Cyprus from colonial to post-colonial status and,

consequently, the division period. An outline of these periods is explored in the Introduction to this study, but political contexts and the reasons behind the shifting periods have not been explored in detail in order not to contribute to the debated perspectives of Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots.

Exploring the social reality of teachers' personal and professional experiences, in addition to their noticeable influences on educational and social change is crucial, as it provides a perspective on Cyprus contexts. Collecting and interpreting life histories is interwoven with the construction of arguments and analysis. Hence “crossing borders” between interpretivism and social constructionism provided the required medium in presenting, de-constructing and re-constructing, and re-presenting of the collected life histories against Cyprus contexts. Creswell (2014) states that constructivist researchers “focus on the specific contexts in which people live and work in order to understand the historical and cultural settings of the participants” (p. 25). In line with this, I focused on specific contexts in Cyprus in order to understand the social realities that participants lived in<sup>12</sup> and the social realities that they continue to live in.

It is important to acknowledge that in presenting their life histories participants interpret their lived experiences and contribute to the interpretivist standpoint with and through their constructions. Goodson (2013) asserts that usually the “life story is quite well rehearsed, for as storytelling animals many human beings already have their life story well worked out before any interviewer appears on the scene!” (p.36). Goodson’s statement notes the constructed nature of narratives and how they are part of human life. The constructed characteristic of narratives and the act of de-constructing and re-constructing them during the data analysis period of the study demands and gives way to interpretivism. Blaikie (2007) points out that interpretivism is the act of understanding the “social world that people have constructed and which they reproduce through their continuing activities”

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<sup>12</sup> Here ‘the social realities that participants lived in’, refers to the period before 1974, in other words, before the division.

(p.124). Understanding and interpreting the Cyprus contexts is crucial, as the Cypriot primary school teachers are educating and are being educated within a system of already-constructed and ongoing constructions of realities regarding Cyprus and its “other(s)”. The methodological standpoint of interpretivism therefore fits well in describing and exploring the social construction of teachers’ perspectives and practices within state primary schools, as well as their personal experiences of social and political change in Cyprus. Life history narratives, supported by the historical documental analysis of teacher training/education systems, will provide the basis for the constructionist and interpretivist approach in this study.

Bryman (2004) and Hammersely (2013) state that in understanding human behaviour we usually need to be able to empathise and have shared experiences regarding the situations that are researched. According to Hammersley (2013) “in studying the social world it is essential to draw upon our human capacity to understand fellow human beings ‘from the inside’ through empathy, shared experience and culture” (p. 26). Goodson and Sikes (2001) point out that the research is usually shaped by the researchers’ own experiences:

Interpretations/explanations/analyses are, inevitably, coloured and shaped by a range of influences, not least of which is the background, interests, in short, the biography, of the researcher (p. 35)

Clearly, my own background and biography has influenced the research, but this unavoidable influence has not been used to present or favour a single perspective from Northern or Southern parts of Cyprus. On the contrary, it was used in understanding Cypriot contexts as a teacher, teacher trainer and as a researcher.

### **3.3 Narrative Inquiry**

The importance of narratives in our daily lives, on both personal and political levels, has been expressed and explored by many researchers (Barthes,

1966; Goodson and Sikes, 2001; Webster and Mertova, 2007; Goodson, 2008; 2013; 2014; Abbot, 2008; Andrews et al., 2013; Trahar, 2009; Goodson et al., 2010; Bathmaker and Harnett, 2010; Moon, 2010; Horsdal, 2012 and Goodson and Gill, 2014). Goodson et al. (2010) point out that “narratives are stories with an organising principle” (p.11). This comparative statement asserts that the essence of narratives and stories are similar, with only structural differences. The structural difference between stories and narratives has been deliberately bridged in this section, and the terms “narrative” and “story” have been used interchangeably.

According to Polkinghorne (1995) “there is an increasing interest in narrative inquiry among qualitative researchers” (p.5). He also notes that the “interest is merited because narrative is the linguistic form uniquely situated for displaying human existence as situated action” (p.5). The connection between human existence and narrative is explored in detail by many researchers. Goodson et al. (2010), assert that our lives and our existence are shaped by stories: “we exist and live our lives ‘in’ and ‘through’ stories” (p.1). Denzin and Lincoln (2008) provide a similar viewpoint and explain that “Narratives are socially constructed forms of action, socially situated performances, ways of acting in and making sense of the world” (p.46). Lawler (2014) adopts a comparable stance, writing that “we endlessly tell stories about our lives, both to ourselves and to others; and it is through such stories that we make sense of the world, of our relationship to that world and of the relationship between ourselves and other selves” (p. 25). According to Moon (2010), “we are story-telling and story-listening beings” (p.vii). All of these statements point out how human life is structured by and embedded in stories. Webster and Mertova (2007) emphasise that stories connect “generations, history and culture” (p.25) and therefore provide a structure for societies. In Cyprus the stories that connect generations, history and culture also divide Greek and Turkish Cypriots. Barthes (1966) points out that stories have always been part of human life. He explains that “narrative is present at all times, in all places, in all societies: the history of the narrative begins with the history of mankind. There does not exist, and never has existed a people without narratives...” (ibid. p.1). When narratives

are so deeply rooted in our lives, it is inevitable that they help shape the perspectives of Cypriots across the divide.

Selbin (2010) carries the role and importance of stories/narratives to a different level and explains that stories help people “to guide, to warn, to inspire, to make real and possible that which may well be unreal and impossible. Stories allow us to imagine the transformation of our lives and our world” (p.3). This statement discloses the multi-layered power of narratives in enabling change. He elaborates further and explains that stories have the capacity to “undergird people’s conscious efforts of resistance, rebellion, and revolution” (p.3). Selbin’s statement not only proposes the possibilities provided by stories but also the power of stories to change the world politically. Goodson (2013) brings in an additional perspective and suggests that politics are changing narratives. He observes that “economic and political control allows narrative levitation and the promotion of stories as ‘a reality’” (ibid. 13). When combined, those statements suggest that narratives and politics have a mutual impact on changing each other and changing societies. That impact is one of the reasons for the ongoing Cyprus problem, where the effects of narratives and politics create contesting stories that are accepted as “reality” across the borders. As Beckerman and Zembylas (2013) propose, “looking at the history of Cyprus, one can easily find competing discourses of representing the other” (p.13). Those discourses usually reflect a political standpoint. Therefore, acknowledging the mutual influence of politics and stories is important in conducting research that situates life stories within historical and cultural Cyprus contexts. In exploring life history narratives of Cypriot teachers, the possibility of educational and social change has also been investigated.

In commenting on the social and political power of narratives, Goodson (2014) differentiates “small-scale narratives” from “grand narratives” and explains that “we should see this as the beginning, not of the ‘age of narratives’, but of the ‘age of small narratives’” (ibid. p.64). Similarly, Stephens (2017) gives details of different levels of narrative:

Narrative also occurs at three different epistemological and theoretical levels: first, at the meta or “grand” level in which fields or traditions of enquiry are defined and legitimated; second, at the meso or intermediate level in which national or regional narratives are espoused and again legitimated; and, finally, at the micro or personal level in which individuals give a narrative account of their lives (p. 49).

In this study, the “micro level narratives” of state primary school teachers have been presented and represented against the “meso level narratives” of Turkish and Greek Cypriot communities in exploring the social constructions of those teachers and in investigating the possibilities of “grand narratives” of educational and social change. The “micro level narratives” of the participants are presented and represented in Chapters 4 and 5, The Data Analysis Chapters of this study.

Denzin and Lincoln (2008) write that any “research involves a complex politics of representation” (p.45) and Trahar (2009) announces that the representations are not only carried out in the research but also in the act of narration:

Narrative research focuses not only on the experiences of research participants but also on the meanings given to the experiences by those participants (Trahar, 2009: p.15).

This statement points out the constructed nature of meaning within narratives and the contribution of participants in formulating the meaning of their experiences. Similarly, Goodson et al. (2010) describe that

Narrative learning is not solely learning from the narrative, it is also learning that goes on in the act of narration and in the on-going construction of the life story (Goodson et al. 2010: p.127).

In addition to the narration, the listener is also important for the narrator. Barthes (1966) notes how the narrator and the listener (or reader) only exist in relation to each other and share responsibility for constructing meaning:

It is a well-known fact that in linguistic communication I and you each presuppose the existence of the other, in the same way it is impossible to have a narrative without a narrator or without a listener (or reader) (Barthes, 1966: p.18).

This shared construction of “I” and “you” that Barthes points out, reflects the interdependent relationship between the narrator, the listener and the narrative. Goodson (2013) highlights a similar relationship between the narrative, the narrator and the receivers of the narrative and the changing nature of narrative constructions by asserting that the “changing canvas for narrative construction... is reflected in our social and political life” (ibid. p.13). With this statement the complex nature of narratives and the link between narratives and the social and political aspects of life are revealed. On a related note, Bruner (1991) points out the interdisciplinary and complex characteristics of narrative research and explains how narrative research links different disciplines. Andrews et al. (2013) express a similar viewpoint:

Narrative research is a multilevel, interdisciplinary field and any attempt to simplify its complexity would not do any justice to the richness of approaches, theoretical understandings and unexpected findings that it has offered (p.13).

As indicated here, the interdisciplinary, complex nature of narratives gives way to rich and unexpected findings. Barthes (1966) also elaborates on the complex nature of narratives and suggests an acknowledgement of different stages of it:

Understanding a narrative is not just following the thread of the story, it is also recognising the “stages,” projecting the horizontal sequences of the narrative thread on its own implied vertical axis (Barthes, 1966: p.4).

Barthes points out that in order to understand narratives not only the linear storyline, but also the stages and deeper implications of those stages, should be considered. In understanding and presenting the narratives provided by the participants, the historical stages and cultural contexts of Cyprus have been reflected on.

Goodson et al. (2010) emphasise that narratives are “rich sources of data,” and Hammersley (2013) and Crotty (2003) emphasise that narratives are popular tools in carrying out research in different areas of social science such as psychology, anthropology and sociology. Goodson and Ball (1985) add a different dimension to narrative research and suggest that education, and especially teacher education, is a crucial area that benefits immensely from narrative research. Goodson has carried out extensive research (1985, 1992, 1996, 2008, 2010, 2013, 2014) on developing and explaining narrative theory in education and especially teacher education. His work on narrative and life history methodology has been the inspiration and basis for the structure of this thesis. Goodson’s (2013) *Developing Narrative Theory - Life Histories and Personal Representation*, Goodson and Hargreaves’ (1996) *Teachers’ Professional Lives*, Goodson’s (1992) *Studying Teachers’ Lives*, Clarke et al.’s (2018) *Situational Analysis* and Turvey’s (2013) *Narrative Ecologies* works have also been used in formulating the theoretical and conceptual background of this study.

In order to situate the study in a wider political, social and historical context in Cyprus, where all the aforementioned notions are problematic and debated by the two stakeholder groups of Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots<sup>13</sup>, life history is interlinked with collective memory methods and Halbwachs’ (1992) *Collective Memory*, Berger and Luckmann’s (1991) *The Social Construction of Reality*, Burr’s (2015) *Social Constructionism* and Lawler’s (2014) *Identity* works have also been used to inform the structure of the thesis. The combination of life history and collective memory methods enable border crossings within the theoretical framework between individual life histories, professional identities, collective identities and collective memory. These concepts are described in detail in the Conceptual Framework (Literature Review) Chapter.

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<sup>13</sup> In Cyprus there are officially five ethnic groups that are recognised by the United Nations. Unfortunately, however, they are not represented in the parliaments on either side of the borders. Due to their political representation (on separate sides) and due to the ethnic conflict between them, Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots have been referred to as the stakeholders.

### 3.4 A Blurred Boundary between (Narrative) Story and History

The recent history of Cyprus is accounted in contesting and contradicting ways by the Turkish Cypriots and the Greek Cypriots who form the two major ethnic groups on the island. The opposing and contradicting information presented in the “official” histories of the island stems from and supports the “us” and “them” contest between these two groups. The following standpoint, which claims that history is a form of story/narrative, is specifically chosen in order to highlight the constructed, hence unreliable, nature of history in general, but particularly in Cyprus contexts.

According to Munslow (2007), “history is a form of narrative written by historians” (p.1). He extends his statement about history and claims “in writing a history for the past we create a semiotic representation that encompasses reference *to* it, an explanation *of* it and a meaning *for* it” (Munslow, 2007: p.9). In light of this statement, Cyprus history has been approached as a his-story to emphasize that it is not only a story, but a story constructed by the male stakeholders across the divide. Ricoeur (1965) takes the constructive nature of narratives to a different level and points out that “history makes the historian as much as the historian makes history” (p.31). Applying these statements to the historical accounts about Cyprus, it becomes clear that Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots, who are made in their own historical constructions, construct narratives of the same events in different ways and provide contradicting explanations and contested meanings for what they claim and accept to be the “true” history of Cyprus. It is important to note that not all narratives are homogenous on either side of the borders. The right-wing/nationalist and left-wing narratives are different and competing on both sides. However, the “official” histories reflect a homogenous perspective, ignoring the contesting views. According to Goodson (1995), historical constructions are due to the power of “storying.” He explains that “storying is a form of social and political prioritising, a particular way of telling stories that in a way privileges some storylines and silences others” (Goodson, 1995: p.94). Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots have been telling their stories to silence the stories of “other(s)” in

constructing their own histories. Those constructed and silenced histories form the historical context of the life history methodology of this study. Therefore, it is crucial to highlight the dual and contesting nature of Cyprus histories.

The interconnected nature of narrative contexts and history contexts have been explored by many researchers, including Bruner (1991), Mali (1994), Andrews et al. (2013), Trahar (2009), Goodson et al. (2010) and Horsdal (2012). Bruner (1991) explains that in creating stories about the past, we create a culture and that:

What creates a culture, surely must be a 'local' capacity for accruing stories of happenings in the past into some sort of diachronic structure that permits continuity into the present – in short, to construct a history, a tradition, a legal system, instruments assuring historical continuity if not legitimacy (p.20).

Bruner's statement points out that history is not only constructed but also legitimised through stories. A comparable standpoint is also taken by Munslow (2007):

History remains a fictively determined attempt at recovering (whether it is reconstructing, constructing or deconstructing) the past in the only way possible – through the creation of a narrative about it (Munslow, 2007: p.29).

As Munslow suggests, the nature of narrative provides the required medium for history to be constructed. Likewise, Mali (1994) argues that, "historical events become meaningful only within narratives" (p.135). The power of narratives in constructing history is elaborated on and expanded by Fox (2009) who defines narrative research as "individual and social histories and identities, through space and time" (p.47). Fox's definition highlights the connection between history, identity and narrative research. O'Sullivan (2005) points out the connection between identity, culture and society: "a person's identity represents the intersection of culture, society and individual psychology" (p.67). Munro (1998) explains that "there is no identity outside

narrative” (p.6). Selbin (2010) points out the power of stories in enabling social change and making history by saying that “people make revolutions: it is the stories that they tell that enable them to do so...it is their history that they seek to make” (Selbin, 2010: p.74). In light of the aforementioned statements it can be concluded that history, the making of history and stories and individual identities are closely connected and very powerful in social contexts. These connections have been explored through teacher narratives in this study.

When Cyprus contexts are considered, oral history has also dominated individual and collective stories and meaning making.

Oral history certainly can be a means for transforming both the content and the purpose of history. It can be used to change the focus of history itself and open up new areas of inquiry (Haley, 2006: p.26).

The representation of history in Cyprus is problematic, as the Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots assign completely different meanings to the same events<sup>14</sup>. This is also reflected in participants’ narratives. However, due to the limitations and the focus of this study, instead of a detailed analysis of the problematic history of Cyprus, only the blur between history and narrative is highlighted in this section to demonstrate that both stories of the history of Cyprus reflected by the Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots are mere constructions. As life history methodology demands situating life stories in historical contexts, both accounts have been presented in this study to support the data analysis, without privileging either perspective. A continuous border crossing between both perspectives has provided the required ground in constructing life histories from the collected life stories. A distant history of Cyprus is provided in the introduction of this thesis. It will not be discussed in any more detail mainly because the focus of this study is to analyse Cypriot primary school teachers’ life histories rather than the story

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<sup>14</sup> As explained earlier, those two groups are not homogenous, yet the “official” histories that are taught in school curricula appear as so. The teachers are generally requested to reflect those “official” stories whether they agree with them or not.

of Cyprus in historical contexts. Expressing the connection between the history of Cyprus and the collected life stories is crucial in situating the study within life history methodology. However, providing further details of the history of Cyprus may lead the study into the contested narratives, which is not the aim of the study.

### **3.5 Life Story, Life History and Cyprus Contexts**

Abrams (2010) explains that life story interviews provide the participants with an opportunity:

To dig deep, to reflect on the inner self, to reconcile any conflicts and then to reconstruct the self as a coherent whole in the form of a single narrative. In an interaction with the interviewer, the interview becomes a process in which the respondent actively fashions an identity (p. 33).

As indicated by the above statement, life story interviews enable participants to create a perfected narrative about themselves with the help of the interviewer. At the initial stages of this study, the aim was to collect life stories from teachers. As the study progressed it became apparent that life histories would suit the needs of the research better than life stories. According to Goodson (1992), “life history is the life story that is located within its historical context” (p.6). In articulating the difference between life stories and life histories, Goodson (2013) points out that “our storylines need to be understood, not just as personal constructions but as expressions of particular historical and cultural opportunities” (p.6). In light of Goodson’s statements, life histories of Cypriot teachers have been collected and placed within the historical and cultural background of Cyprus. Goodson (2014) extends the description of historical and cultural contexts and states that the “historical context of life stories needs to be ... understood in relationship to time and periodisation” (p.72). As time and periodisation are crucial to the design of the three generations of teachers who participated in this study, Goodson’s lead has been followed in structuring the collected data.

All of the above statements enrich and extend the definition of life histories. Within the limitations of the research, Goodson's approach and framework has been followed and, the life stories of Cypriot teachers have been located in the problematic historical and cultural contexts of Cyprus while those historical contexts are reflected in regard to time and periodisation.

Hatch and Wisniewski (1995) explain that "life history and narrative offer exciting alternatives for connecting the lives and stories of individuals to the understanding of larger human and social phenomena" (p.113). Understanding larger human and social phenomena in Cyprus through teacher narratives will provide a better understanding of "other(s)" and ultimately provide an overview of the routes to reconciliation in Cypriot narratives within the limits of the study. In addition, studying the storylines of teachers will provide a valuable insight into how Cypriot primary teachers have responded and still respond to changing historical and cultural situations in the problematic and contested contexts of Cyprus. Munro (1998) argues that life history methodology enables the research to be "situated contextually" and "challenges the norm of objectivity by acknowledging the inter-subjective process of meaning making" (p.9). These characteristics appealed to me as a researcher in choosing the methodology to suit the research. Coming from a problematic and silenced background, I am desperate to belong and to be heard. Life history methodology has provided me with the opportunity to celebrate my subjective position as a researcher in the meaning making process within the research. This empowerment gave way to the research.

Life history methodology not only suits my wishes and needs as a researcher, but also fits in well with teacher education/training research. According to Goodson (1992), "studying teachers' lives will provide a valuable range of insights into the new moves to structure and reform schooling, into new policy concerns and directives" (p.11). In a changing Cyprus, studying teachers' lives will provide the grounds for a new structure in education and educational settings. Goodson and Choi (2008) explain that, "individual life history has been useful in highlighting the uniqueness of

personal trajectories in the institutional contexts” (p. 6). The personal trajectories of the participants in the institutional contexts of state primary school teacher education across the divide in Cyprus has provided the data for analysis in this investigation. Halse (2010) states that the “professional work of teachers cannot be disconnected from teachers’ personal lives or from the cultures and context of schools” (p.37). Without distinguishing between life stories and life histories Fivush (2010) expresses a comparable view:

identity is guided by the life narrative and the life narrative is guided by the life script. As each individual constructs a narrative identity that defines an individual life story of the self, they seem to do so in relation to cultural expectations of what a typical life looks like (p.93).

In adopting this viewpoint, teacher education/training and primary school cultures have been explored in relation to Cypriot teachers’ personal and professional identity narratives provided during the data collection phase of this study.

### **3.5.1 Life Histories and Collective Memory in Cyprus**

Halbwachs (1992) explains that “society, by giving old people the function of preserving the traces of its past, encourages them to devote whatever spiritual energy they may still possess to the act of recollection” (p.48). In Cyprus, the acts of recollection preserve a past filled with “trauma, victimhood, memory and suffering” (Beckerman and Zembylas, 2012: p.13) and those recollections that are transferred from the older generations to the younger ones create a collective memory. Even though there are opposing and contesting views, the recollections of loss and displacement in Cyprus usually reflect a homogenous pain, as the 1974 war changed the lives and perspectives of all Cypriots. Goodson (2013) states that such changes create moral and personal dilemmas:

As people’s life worlds are changed, so their life politics also are transformed... Life politics describes the way we manage our lives

and encompasses the moral and personal dilemmas and decisions we have to confront (p. 23).

Those dilemmas, which stemmed from the inter-ethnic conflict and which are embedded in the daily narratives of Cypriots, have been explored through the relationship of collective memory and life history analysis. By situating the study into the Collective memory framework presented by Halbwachs (1992), I was able to analyse teachers' life histories against their collective narrative experiences.

### **3.5.2 Life Stories -v- Life Histories**

Goodson and Choi (2008) draw attention to the fact that “life studies of individuals” embody a potential problem in that “they can be over-indulgent in looking and at celebrating the idiosyncrasies of individuals” (p.24). Being aware of this empowered me to select the data that I would use for the study. Goodson (2013) offers a more detailed explanation and a solution to the abovementioned concern. He explains that we live in an era where the “small narratives” are more important than the “grand narratives” and goes on to say that “individual life stories could be problematic due to three reasons: their individual focus, their capacity to reiterate social scripts and their relationship to historical time zones and social milieu in which they are embedded” (Goodson, 2013: p.31). For these reasons, he proposes that the focus should move from life stories to life histories where cultural and historical contexts are embedded in the representations.

In conducting the research, life histories of the primary school teachers were used to avoid the problems posed by individual life stories. Goodson and Sikes (2001) describe these possible problems:

Life historians work from what people say, using the language they use to express and describe their lives. Of course, the relationship between what they say and “reality,” “actuality,” “truth” is not straightforward, and it is certainly not our intention to suggest that we believe that life historians have found the methodological equivalent of the Holy Grail, the key to unlock “true” and complete answers about

the human condition. We do believe, however, that it does have a major contribution to make to many investigations of aspects of life in social and educational settings... (Goodson and Sikes, 2001: p.3).

This suggests that the notion of truth in life histories is complicated and that rather than focusing on whether or not the provided data is true, it is more important to focus on the contribution that is being made through those life histories to social and educational settings. A similar standpoint was employed in my own research. Exploring the notion of truth and how it is used in the research contexts raises potential problems of validity and reliability. The following section briefly explores these.

### **3.5.3 Validity and Reliability Issues of Narrative Inquiry and Life History Methodology**

Webster and Mertova (2007) explain that narrative research (hence life history methodology) “should not be judged by the same criteria that are applied to more traditional and broadly accepted qualitative and quantitative research methods” (ibid. p.89). They say that due to the complex nature of narratives, which reflect “individual interpretations and worldviews of complex and human-centred events”, identifying “generalizable and repeatable events” is not as important as “individual truths” (ibid. p.89). In order to explore the “individual truth” they suggest that “traditional meanings need to be redefined in terms of newer ways of viewing, using measures of access, honesty, verisimilitude, authenticity, familiarity, transferability and economy” (Webster and Mertova, 2007: p.102). A similar view is proposed by Miller (2000):

Reality is (at least potentially) chaotic and in constant flux. What constitutes reality will be dependent upon the temporary joint perceptions generated by the interaction of social actors. Hence the idea of a single “meta-reality” which can be apprehended through the use of empirical information is nonsensical to a pure narrativist (p. 17)

Like Webster and Mertova, Miller draws attention to the multiple realities in narratives. The multiple realities of the participants' social contexts will be explored through their life history narratives in Chapter 5.

### **3.6 Research Design and Methods**

Participants who contributed their life histories were organised into three generational sets in relation to the historical contexts of Cyprus. The first generational set was formed of four primary school teachers, two Turkish Cypriots and two Greek Cypriots who trained and became primary school teachers before 1974 and were associated with education during the colonial period. The second generational set was again formed of four primary school teachers, two Turkish Cypriot and two Greek Cypriot teachers who attended secondary or high school before 1974 but received their teacher training after 1974. This set was mainly associated with education during the post-colonial period leading up to the division. The third generational set of teachers was formed of four primary school teachers, two Greek Cypriot and two Turkish Cypriot teachers. Two of them were born after 1974 and the other two were born four and five years before 1974. All of them received their teacher training during the post-division period.

The collected data was analysed for its content following discourse and narrative analysis methods. According to Gee (2014),

Discourse analysis is a reflexive, reciprocal, and cyclical process in which we shuttle back and forth between the structure (form, design) of a piece of language and the situated meanings it is attempting to build about the world, identities, and relationships in a specific context (p.148).

In light of Gee's statement, the discourses of the participants of this study have been analysed for their situated meanings and identity constructions within Cyprus contexts. Gee (2014) provides further details on how identities are constructed during the interview processes:

Socially situated identities are mutually co-constructed in interviews, just as much as they are in everyday conversations (Gee, 2014: 170).

On a similar note, in his work *Analysing Discourse: Textual Analysis for Social Research*, Fairclough (2003) elaborates on discourse analysis and suggests that “meaning-making depends upon not only what is explicit in a text but also what is implicit - what is assumed” (p.11). Both of those statements suggest that the interviews and hence my researcher role contributed to the participants’ constructions of their teacher identities within this study. In embracing this as part of the research I point out that this study reflects the analysis of the collected data through my professional researcher constructions. The extent of my involvement in those constructions can be explained by using Brinkmann and Kvale’s (2015) words:

The interview report is itself a social construction in which the author’s choice of writing style and literary devices provide a specific view on the subjects’ lived world. The writing process is one aspect of the social construction gained from the interviews, and the quality of an interview report attains a key position when validation and generalization of interview findings include communication with readers (p.301).

As Brinkmann and Kvale (2015) point out, this thesis is the social construction of teacher identity constructions of not only what the participants’ narratives, but also the analysis of those narratives through my professional identity perceptions. In order to attain validity, all ethical procedures have been followed.

Turkish Cypriot participants contributed their life histories in Turkish. Those interviews were transcribed in Turkish and the codes and quotations that are used within this thesis were then translated into English. In order to be able to reflect their true words, the translated quotations are also checked by a professional translator. The Greek Cypriot participants’ narratives were already in English as the interviews were conducted in English. The transcribed data were coded and categorized according to the emergent

themes. All the data analysis has been carried out manually in order to understand the data better.

The life histories of these participants were analysed in order to unpack their professional contexts. Teacher professionalisms in the problematic context of Cypriot schools were explored in the light of Goodson and Hargreaves' (1996) work and the notions of "deprofessionalised" and "reprofessionalised" teachers were adapted from Goodson and Hargreaves' (1996) work on reflecting teachers' professionalism and professionalisation. The social construction of teachers' professional identities is explored in light of Burr's (2015), Gergen's (2001) and Lacey's (1977) work. As stated in the Introduction to this study, three main research questions and three sub-questions were employed. To explore these, two ninety-minute-long interviews were conducted with each interviewee. Participants were selected through "intermediary contacts" and "snowball sampling" methods. An initial set of interviews was followed by two sets of semi-structured interviews and the participants' life histories were analysed alongside historical policy documents on teacher education/training and curriculum systems in order to shed light on educational and social change in Cyprus and provide information on how teacher socialisation has taken place. The following sections provide details on how the generational cohorts were organised and how the data was collected.

### **3.6.1 Generations of Teachers and Ancestral Voices**

The interviewees were grouped into three generational cohorts. The first was formed of teachers who were educated during the British colonial period in Cyprus and who taught in segregated schools in unified Cyprus. The second is formed of teachers who experienced the division of the island as students. The third is formed of teachers who were educated and entered the teaching profession after the division of the island. The details of the cohorts are presented in the following table.

<p><b>First generational set: Colonial/post-colonial</b> Who received their teacher training before 1974 and who became teachers before the division. I interviewed teachers who received their training in the colonial period. This set of teachers has been formed from retired teachers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 Turkish Cypriot teachers.</li> <li>• 2 Greek Cypriot Teachers.</li> </ul> <p>A gender balance has been achieved in this cohort.</p>
<p><b>Second generational set: Post-colonial/division</b> Who attended secondary or high schools before 1974 but received their teacher training after 1974. This set of teachers has been formed from both retired and currently working teachers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 Turkish Cypriot Primary School Teachers.</li> <li>• 2 Greek Cypriot Primary School Teachers.</li> </ul> <p>A gender balance has been achieved in this group.</p>
<p><b>Third generational set: Division/Post-division</b> Teachers who were either below the age of five or who were born after 1974 This set of teachers has been formed from currently working teachers. The interviews were conducted either in the afternoons or during the weekends.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 Turkish Cypriot Primary School Teachers.</li> <li>• 2 Greek Cypriot primary School Teachers.</li> </ul> <p>A gender balance has been achieved in this group.</p>

Table 1: Historical period and generational cohorts of participants

Comparisons of the life histories of different generational cohorts provided a medium to explore wider historical contexts in Cyprus and, as part of that analysis, ancestral voices were also examined to find out how they influenced these. Goodson (2014-b) observes that “ancestral voices ...underpin our life histories and autobiographical memories” (p. 106). In Cyprus contexts, autobiographical memory, and hence ancestral voices, play an important role in contributing to the ongoing Cyprus problem. The use of life histories from different generational cohorts allowed me to make an analysis that took account of ancestral voices in my findings about teacher socialisations, education and training curricula and wider historical and social contexts.

### 3.6.2 Participant Sampling

In order to find willing teachers to take part in the research, the Primary School Teachers Union in Northern Cyprus, which has official connections with the Teachers Unions in Southern Cyprus, was contacted. With their help, two official contacts, one Greek Cypriot and one Turkish Cypriot were identified. Those “intermediary contacts” then contacted prospective participants and, with their consent, provided me with e-mail addresses and telephone numbers of volunteers. Some of the Turkish Cypriot participants suggested by my intermediary contact were already known to me through social and professional connections established during my career. Most of the participants were contacted by phone mainly because none of the first generational-set of teachers had e-mail addresses, but also because I believed that having a conversation about my study would be more effective. Clarke et al.’s (2015, 2018) situational analysis strategies were followed in situating the collected life histories into this study. I interviewed more than twelve participants for the first set of interviews for a number of reasons. The main reason was because I was relying on intermediary contacts and felt that I needed to interview everyone they had suggested. Culturally I would have been perceived as “judgemental” and “ungrateful” if I hadn’t. I was also worried about whether I would be able to employ enough Greek Cypriot participants. Time limitations were also a concern as I could only conduct interviews during visits to Cyprus and some participants could not fit in the second interview. Therefore, I interviewed more participants for the first set of interviews. The participants who did not participate in later interviews were informed that their life stories would still shape my understanding of the contexts but would not be included in the Data Analysis Chapters.

The following table gives information about the participants and the generational cohorts and historical periods they belong to. The table shows the ethnic backgrounds as well as the classification of generational cohorts and of the twelve participants who contributed their life histories to this study.

<b><u>First Generational Cohort:</u></b> Colonial/pre-division period	Turkish Cypriot Participants	Mr H Ms U
	Greek Cypriot Participants	Mr P Ms M
<b><u>Second Generational Cohort:</u></b> Post-colonial/division period	Turkish Cypriot Participants	Mr S Ms A
	Greek Cypriot Participants	Mr K Ms C
<b><u>Third Generational Cohort:</u></b> Post-colonial/post-division period	Turkish Cypriot Participants	Mr R Ms D
	Greek Cypriot Participants	Mr L Ms G

Table 2: Generations, Nationalities and Pseudonyms of Participants

### 3.6.3 Data Collection/Interviews

Two interviews were arranged with each participant, with each designed to last for about ninety minutes. However, the interview processes demonstrated that some participants found it distressing to have a time limit. Some were worried that they “would not know how to talk about their job for ninety minutes” (eg. a Turkish Cypriot participant from 3<sup>rd</sup> generational cohort.) and some were worried that “ninety minutes was not enough to talk about a lifetime of events” (eg. a Greek Cypriot participant from 1<sup>st</sup> generational cohort). Therefore, the ninety-minute limit was not strictly followed. During the first set of interviews I adopted the silent researcher position and allowed the free flow of narratives in order to obtain an uninterrupted account.

The more we questioned and structured the interview, the less likely we were to encounter the life story that the person was working with and constructing in an ongoing manner (Goodson, 2013: p.36).

In following Goodson's advice, I "almost took a vow of silence" (p.36) during the first set of interviews and enabled the construction of the life stories. Different generational groups had different responses to the free-flowing interviews. While the first generational group enjoyed the uninterrupted interviews, the second and third generational group teachers continuously asked and demanded reassurance whether their life stories was the ones I was after.

Once the first set of interviews were transcribed and explored, they gave me a clearer idea of how to structure the second set of interviews. During the second set of interviews I probed and asked questions to obtain clarification based on the transcripts from the first set of interviews. The second set of interviews were organised to be shorter and more guided, but I had not taken the social and cultural elements into account. Cypriots are generally friendly, and my participants were no exception. During the second set of interviews they were more talkative as we had established a rapport during the first set of interviews. Therefore, despite all my efforts of keeping them short, the second set of interviews were as long as the first set of interviews. This provided rich data that I could "immerse" myself in during the analysis processes. Ethical guidelines were followed, and participants were given the right to edit and change their transcripts. Some of them exercised that right, but most were happy with what they provided during the interview. The interview data provided the main source of information for the study.

Interviews were arranged according to the teachers' preferred time and place. Some of the first set of interviews were conducted at the Home for Cooperation Centre, a bi-communal centre in the buffer zone, controlled by the United Nations. The centre accommodates a number of non-governmental organisations and provides conference rooms, meeting rooms and a cafe. Only two of the participants stated that they did not want to be interviewed there. The first teacher who did not want to be interviewed at the Home for Cooperation Centre said we could have the interview in a more relaxed environment and the second could not travel to the building due to age-related problems. Most of the Turkish Cypriot participants were

interviewed in their houses, as those were their preferred place of interview. Two were interviewed at the Teachers Union building and one was interviewed in the office of the business he'd set up after retirement. The preferred interview destinations are an indication of my position as an insider/outsider researcher. Information about the interview places and participants is presented in Chapter 4 of this study.

#### **3.6.4 Unforeseen Challenges of Data Collection**

The biggest challenge was being the silent receiver of stories during the first set of interviews. During those interviews I heard interesting stories about teaching during different times and my professional curiosity had to be restrained from interfering with the flow of the interview. As a researcher I was happy to receive the stories yet as a teacher I would have liked to probe and learn more about the teaching environments as the participants were talking about them. When I inquired about those interesting points during the second set of interviews, it was difficult to recapture the original moments.

Another challenge was reassuring some of the participants that their stories were exactly the ones I was after. Convincing them to continue with their narratives was a challenge at times. They wanted guidance in what to provide as a narrative. Some of them continuously asked whether their life stories were appropriate or not. Even though this created an uncomfortable position, which challenged the silent approach that I was trying to adopt as a researcher, it does not mean that those narratives are less valuable for the research. Goodson warns that we should not have the "assumption that we all narrate our lives in any systematic or sustained way" (Goodson, 2013: p.70) he also states that "not all people are practiced narrators, who reflect upon and refine their life narratives" (ibid. p. 70). On a cultural level another problem arose. All of the participants who were interviewed in their houses wanted to offer me cakes and coffee. As it is culturally offensive and rude to decline such an offer during a house visit, I had to encourage them to have the coffee and cake after the interview. Most of them agreed to that

suggestion. However, three of the participants insisted on having a coffee break during the interview. With those participants, the recorder was switched off and a break was taken. The pause created a fragmentation in the flow of the interview. Getting back to the flow of the interview took a long time and therefore, those interviews were substantially extended. Transcribing the interviews took a lot longer than anticipated, but the transcriptions enabled revisiting and understanding of the data.

### **3.6.5 Ethical position of the study**

This research complies with the University of Brighton's Guidance and Good Practice Research Ethics and Governance and with the British Education Research Association (BERA) Ethics Guidelines (2011). Both the interviewees, the translator and the researcher were "treated fairly, sensitively, with dignity and within an ethic of respect and freedom from prejudice regardless of nationality, race, ethnicity, cultural identity, faith, disability, political belief, age, gender, sexuality and any other significant difference" (BERA Ethics Guidelines, 2011). Brooks et al. (2014) draw attention to ethical research and suggest that

Ethical research practice pays attention to the relationships researchers forge with those who participate in their projects but is also concerned with the quality of the research produced- from the initial design, through data collection and analysis, to dissemination (p.5).

As a researcher, I declare that I followed Brooks et al.'s suggestion and implemented appropriate ethical measures not only towards the participants but also towards the project itself (See Appendix 6 for the Ethics Checklist). Suitable ethical procedures in collecting, handling and storing the narratives and in obtaining and analysing the historical documents were followed. Utmost care was shown during those procedures so as not to harm the participants, the researcher or the teacher training institutions in any way. Maintaining the anonymity of the participants has been and will continue to

be a priority. In order to establish anonymity in the study, interviewees were given pseudonyms reflective of their ethnic backgrounds.

Interviewees have been presented with written consent forms in English, Turkish and Greek. They have also been given detailed information regarding the research and the opportunity to look at the research plan if they wished. Interviewees were chosen from bi-lingual teachers and were given access to a translator. Only one teacher (from the first cohort) requested a translator. The translator was given the details of the research and was asked to sign a separate consent form. The interviewees were informed that they had the right to withdraw from the study at any time without facing any consequences. They were also given the right to veto parts of or the complete transcript of their narratives. None of the participants exercised this right. The historical documents that were used in this study were chosen from publicly-accessible documents. As a researcher, I have and will continue to abide by the Intellectual Property rights. The sensitive nature of life history interviewing was taken into consideration.

Life history interviewing is invasive, old hurts or traumas may be reopened or unfavourable comparisons with more successful compatriots or with alternative life paths that may have been more fruitful are a real possibility (Miller, 2000: p, 104).

During the interviews two of participants mentioned that talking about the past makes them upset. However, they chose to continue with the interviews and one of them said that it is “good to talk about the past and get it out of your system, even though it is upsetting” then she moved on to explain that “this is the way forward in life” (a Turkish Cypriot participant from the second generational cohort).

As a researcher, I declare that I have not obtained sensitive information that might offend or harm individuals or institutions. Narratives and historical document analysis were used to contribute to knowledge about teacher perceptions and practices and will not be used to criticise or judge

individuals or institutions. Webb (2009) argues that “ethical management needs to be an ongoing process” (p.223). She also explains that “the very nature of narrative research makes the stories personal and exposing, the participants’ rights complex and therefore the management in the field of ethical matters are more fraught” (p.234). As a researcher I have and will continue to adopt the viewpoint that ethical management is an ongoing process during and after the research because of the exposing nature of the narratives that I have collected.

The most important ethical concern is to do all that we can to ensure that we re-present lives respectfully and that we do not use our narrative privilege, or put another way, our narrative power to demean, belittle or to take revenge (Sikes, 2010: p.16).

As declared previously, I have followed ethical guidelines in conducting the research and to acknowledge and associate different perspectives of ethics in different countries, particularly as I am a UK-based researcher conducting research in and about Cyprus. Brooks et al. (2014) raise questions about the possibility of “establishing a set of universal ethics” and describe that ethical considerations could be “different in Global North than in Global South.” They also emphasise that ethical dilemmas “vary across place and space.” While conducting research in Cyprus, I complied with ethical guidelines yet most of the participants struggled to understand the reasons for such detailed consent forms when they were happy to share their stories. A number of them said “It must be the British way” when I insisted that they should read and confirm consent before the interviews. In complying with the “British” ethical guidelines in Cyprus, I managed to explore and experience the insider/outsider position once more.

### **3.6.6 Border Crossings in Ethics, Ethical Border Crossings**

As explained in the previous section, I followed strict ethical guidelines in conducting the research. Most of the time, the strict ethical procedures were interpreted as strange in Cypriot contexts and gave me an outsider’s position. Even though they did not understand the necessity or value of my

ethical considerations, all participants agreed to comply with the rules thanks to the rapport we managed to establish. The importance of the rapport between the researcher and the participants while conducting research, is explored by Brooks et al. (2014):

In relation to ethical dimensions involved in forms of 'insider research where the researcher –researched do share some biographical identity aspects, it could be argued that the (usually more powerful) researcher is drawing on their position to enhance their access or to produce a form of "rapport" in order to "extract" the data (better and richer and more authentic data) (Brooks et al., 2014: p.109).

This statement not only suggests that insider researchers use their position to form a rapport with the participants, but also notes that they use that rapport to obtain extensive data. The ethical representation of the obtained data and the participants is crucial in research. Webb (2009) explains that there is an "ethical need to pay attention to the accurate representation and naming of different voices in stories" (p. 227). Sikes (2010) explores a similar viewpoint and suggest that:

the most important ethical concern is to do all that we can to ensure that we re-present lives respectfully and that we do not use our narrative privilege, or put another way, our narrative power, to demean, belittle or take revenge (p. 16).

As a researcher, I acknowledge these sensitive ethical issues and declare that I have paid utmost attention to appropriately representing and naming different voices.

### **3.7 Insider-Outsider Researcher**

My personal and professional positions in the research are explored in the Introduction of this study. This chapter explores my position as a researcher in connection to the methods and methodologies employed for the study. I claim an insider – outsider position in collecting the data. In an attempt to define and point out the blur between "insider" and "outsider" positions,

Merton's (1972) work has been explored. He explains and differentiates between outsiders and insiders:

Insiders are the members of specified groups and collectivities or occupants of specified social statuses; Outsiders are the non-members (Merton, 1972: p. 21).

In allocating "insider" and "outsider" positions, Merton's statement assigns a membership hence an inclusive status to the insiders as well as exclusion to the outsiders. Merton elaborates further and suggests that status and belonging can be ways of crossing the border between "insider" and "outsider" realms and claiming both positions simultaneously.

In structural terms, we are all, of course, both Insiders and Outsiders, members of some groups and, sometimes derivatively, not of others; occupants of certain statuses which thereby exclude us from occupying other cognate statuses (Merton, 1972: p.22).

As indicated in the statement, Merton describes that social statuses give way to belonging to different groups and hence occupying the "insider" and "outsider" positions at the same time. As a Turkish Cypriot teacher, teacher trainer/educator and researcher, I simultaneously occupy the positions of "insider" and "outsider" both personally and professionally. My parents are refugees who had to move from Southern to Northern Cyprus in 1974. Through family memory and through the narrative of their experiences, I can empathise with and relate to the pain of the previous generations of Cypriots who were displaced, regardless of their ethnic backgrounds. This act of empathising gives me an "insider" position regarding their traumas and pain. By the same token, my researcher position and hence my professional identity also entitles me to an "insider" position across the divide. Even though I am a teacher and a teacher trainer in the in Northern part of Cyprus, I do have an insight to the teacher training/education and research in the South. During the data collection process, when I shared my narrative of Cyprus and my parents' refugee status, as the nature of the research demanded, I was accepted as one of "them" by most of the participants who

had similar experiences in Northern and Southern Cyprus. In addition, I have felt on many occasions that when the participants were talking about their teaching experiences they expected me to understand the contexts. This assigned me an insider position through my professional identity, in spite of my “ethnic otherness” in southern Cyprus, which was implied during some of the interviews

Many researchers have carried out research on “insider” and “outsider” researcher positions. According to Holloway and Biley (2011), “researchers cannot exclude themselves” from their studies. Similarly, Willis (2007) suggest that, the research is and will continue to be shaped according to the researchers’ “pre-existing theories and worldviews.” At this point, it is important to declare that I conducted an extensive research on Cyprus contexts in order to widen my pre-existing worldviews of them so that the study would not be merely shaped by my Turkish Cypriot views on events. As a result, I have become more critical about the “official” history education that I received as a student. It is also important to emphasise that my pre-existing theories and worldviews about Cyprus, its people and about the teacher training/education systems on both sides of the island have changed and developed during and as a result of the research that I have conducted.

Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1993) focus on the involvement of teachers in research and explain that insider teacher researchers can provide a more detailed account that can inform teaching practices as they have experiences that they can relate to classroom practices as well as to research. According to Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1993), the unique position of the insider teacher-researchers provides a better medium for research. I have taught at the state teacher training institution in Northern Cyprus for eight years, which constituted exactly half of my teaching career before I became a PhD researcher. This teaching experience enabled me to understand the teacher education participants have received, which aided rapport with the participants and helped in collecting the data.

Denzin and Lincoln (2008) point out that the researcher uses his or her social situation in representing the data that they collect:

Research involves complex politics of representation. The socially situated researcher creates, through interaction and material practices, those realities and representations that are the subject matter of inquiry (p.45).

In light of Denzin's statement, I am aware that I am socially situated in Cyprus realities, which are socially, historically and culturally are complex. When this complexity is related to the complexity of representation, I claim both an insider and an outsider position in Cyprus contexts. According to Denzin and Lincoln (2008), the researcher creates the medium of representation. All of the aforementioned statements indicate the "insider" position that researchers possess in relation to the research that they conduct. In the same way, Creswell (2014) differentiates the "insider" position between qualitative and quantitative research:

All researchers bring values to a study, but qualitative researchers make their values known in a study... In a qualitative study, the inquirers admit the value-laden nature of the study and actively report their values and biases as well as the value-laden nature of information gathered from the field (p.20).

This statement explains that a researcher's involvement in his/her research is inevitable. It also reveals that qualitative research gives way to the opportunity for a researcher to acknowledge the position that they have in the research. Thomson (2015) draws attention to a similar viewpoint:

Inevitably the interviewer's questions and character, and how he or she is perceived by the interviewee, affect the stories that are shared (p. 27).

In acknowledging this viewpoint, I am aware that the stories that I collected from participants might be different from those that another researcher would collect because of who I am, how I present myself, and how the participants perceive me. This highlights my unintentional association in the construction

of the specific narratives that I collected as a researcher. Due to the limitations of this study, the contents of the collected narratives are focused on, rather than the reasons why those specific narratives were provided by the participants. Being aware of having an insider position in the research and abiding by ethical procedures empowered me during the initial phase of data collection and during the data analysis process. It helped me to recognise my personal and professional involvement and how participants perceived and responded to me. However, this awareness did not diminish the pressure of organising the collected data. On the contrary, it added extra pressure as it assigned to me the responsibility for handling the stories and the data provided. The lack of similar work in the field intensified the stress that I felt as a researcher. Nevertheless, I embraced the challenge with the view that it would contribute to the originality of my research. In other words, the insider's position helped me in understanding the delicate issues regarding the broader cultural and historical contexts of Cyprus in which the life stories of the teachers are situated and evaluated. (Wegener, 2014) explains how she has embraced her position as an insider and used it in analysing boundary crossings:

Instead of viewing the researcher's insiderness as a potential bias to be minimised, I came to embrace my "own experience" of changing insider and outsider positions as a gateway to analyse boundary-crossing (p.156).

In embracing Wegener's viewpoint, the border between objective and subjective realms became passable within the research without privileging one or the other and without compromising ethical research procedures. My position provided "resources rather than hindrances to research" (Navaro-Yashin, 2012: xi). In other words, my subjective position enriched the research by providing me with the comprehension skills to understand the contexts and content of the Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot perspectives and contexts.

Not only did I, the researcher of the study, cross the boundary of being an "insider" and an "outsider," the participants of the study had similar

experiences in shifting historical and social contexts of Cyprus. Generations of Cypriots who experienced living in a unified Cyprus, pre-1974, had had the privilege of holding “insider” and “outsider” positions simultaneously, because they experienced common socialisation processes, regardless of the ethnic and religious boundaries between the Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot communities. When post-division Cyprus is considered, however, the socialisation processes of Cypriots are realised on a divided geography. Similar family structures, and similar experiences of war and its traumas and the narratives about those experiences, regardless of their contesting content, provide an “insider” position in the segregated communities of Cyprus.

The assumption that all pre-division generations who socialised in a unified Cyprus habitually and collectively welcomed their “insider” and “outsider” positions falls into the category of stereotyping. Similarly, the hypothesis that none of the post-division generations had (or has) the opportunity or the willingness to embrace the “insider” and “outsider” positions is also labelling, as post-division generations usually gain access to those positions through their ancestral voices and family memories. One of the most obvious differences between how those generations claim those positions simultaneously is the collective versus individual approaches. Unlike the collective nature of the pre-division societies in co-constructing “insider” and “outsider” positions, post-division societies reflect individually adopted versions of those positions. The inherited family memories of post-division societies in Cyprus implicate time and space elements of the aforementioned positions.

As a researcher who was born in the post-division era, I adopted the insider/outsider positions in the Cyprus contexts through family memories of unified Cyprus. Wegener (2014) puts emphasis on the fluid nature of the border between the notions of insider and outsider:

Insider and outsider positions are not stable categories in which the researcher and the actors in the field are situated. The multiple sites are not fixed sites in time and space; rather, positions (available to

individuals and occupied by individuals) and sites (constituting the context and also changed by individual activity) are intertwined, mutually susceptible and ever-flowing (p. 165).

Wegener's statement that insider and outsider positions do not necessarily depend on time and space fits well with the contexts that I occupy personally and professionally. It can be concluded that within the limits of this study, personal, professional and psychological borders, the borders between teaching and researching, between teachers and teacher educators/trainers, the self- limitation and the worry of carrying out research in Northern Cyprus and in Southern Cyprus became passable. The border-crossings within the research were continuous and empowering, as they helped in empathising, collecting, understanding and presenting the provided data.

In this chapter the methods and methodology are explained in connection to the conducted research. The philosophical stance of the study, as well as life history methodology and my position as a Cypriot researcher, have been explained in detail. This chapter provides the theoretical framework for the study. The collected data is then situated, analysed and presented in the following two chapters of this thesis. Clarke et al (2018) explain that one of the aims of situational analysis is to provide

means of research design that facilitate doing multisite or multimodal research that includes analysis of discursive textual, visual, and archival historical materials and documents, as well as ethnographic (interview and observational) transcripts and field notes (p.15).

This statement provides a basis for the following chapter as it recognises the importance of "multisite" research and the "validity" of "field notes"/ "field texts," as well as interviews, which are analysed and presented in Chapter 4.

## CHAPTER 4 - DATA ANALYSIS: PART 1

### INTERVIEW SETTINGS AND PARTICIPANT PORTRAYALS

#### 4.1 Introduction

This is the first of two chapters that present and analyse the collected data. The data presented in this chapter emerged from the field notes and interview diaries that were kept during the research. The main aim of the chapter is to introduce the interview settings and the participants themselves. Providing information regarding places in divided Cyprus and providing information on the participants without drawing attention to their ethnic backgrounds and “othering” them was challenging. Therefore, a narrative approach has been chosen in an attempt to overcome the complexities of bias and all of the emerged information is presented in the form of stories.

The chapter is formed of twelve parts and each part consists of two sections. The first section sets the scene by providing information on interview settings and my observations as the researcher regarding places within historical, cultural and social contexts of Cyprus. According to Gubrium and Holstein (2009),

Rather than limiting the empirical horizons of stories to the boundaries of texts or transcripts, the horizons are expanded to include the diverse everyday contexts in which stories are elicited, assembled, and conveyed. The term *narrative reality* is meant to flag the socially situated practice of storytelling, which would include accounts provided both within and outside of formal interviews (p.2).

As the statement suggests, *narrative reality* includes everyday realities and extend beyond the formal interviews. This chapter is designed to embrace and reflect those realities by providing information about the participants and the interview settings.

Marker (2009) explains that in addition to other sources, landscapes generate information for analysis too, “...the ‘truth’ not only needs to be

placed within larger dimensions of history and power, it must be experienced in actual places on the landscape” (Marker: 2009: 37). The “truth” is highly subjective and debated in Cyprus contexts, yet it always involves information regarding landscape whether it is related to ownership of land or displacements or borders. Therefore, writing about my observations and my journeys on the landscape as a reflection of my experiences contributes to a bi-communal perspective in Cyprus. I was familiar with most of the settings before I conducted the research. However, spending time in the UK and conducting research about Cyprus enabled me to develop critical observations and analysis of the everyday settings that I was familiar with and to present those places from a different perspective.

The second section of each part provides details about participants themselves. These sections are titled as Mr... or Ms.... with initials. In order to protect their identities, I haven’t used their actual initials. Giving them pseudonyms would highlight their ethnic backgrounds and would create a divide between the participants. Therefore, using initials enabled me as a researcher to introduce and represent them without differentiating. The following stories reflect the actions of the participants who took part in the study. These narratives provide a description of the actions and my interpretations, hence analysis, of those actions.

These lengthy stories not only enable the reader to join me on the journey to meeting and interviewing the participants, but also gives them an insight into social, cultural, historical and landscape contexts of Cyprus that are usually contested. Once the field notes were thematically analysed, it became apparent that each story reflected different problematic issues in Cyprus contexts. Each of the address at least one problematic issue in Cyprus contexts. For instance, some of the stories describe the border crossing process, which is a sensitive issue for many Cypriots across the divide<sup>15</sup>. For many Turkish Cypriots, the border is what divides them from

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<sup>15</sup> Border crossings are explored from different perspectives in Chapter1, Chapter2 and Chapter5.

“Europe,” as the Republic of Cyprus is officially part of the European Union. For many Greek Cypriots the border is a reminder of the “occupation.” As indicated before, the border assigns “sides” to Cypriots, most of who are unhappy about. Even though crossing the border is a daily act for many Cypriots, talking about border crossings is still a highly delicate matter. Border crossings are only one of the sensitive issues that are disguised in the following stories. Ownership rights on properties, “safe” areas to build new properties, traumas of loss of loved ones, traumas of loss of belongings, refugee neighbourhoods across the divide, and the demands on teachers in times of conflict are some of the themes reflected in the stories. However, highlighting each one of them within and in relation to the stories will contradict the purpose of weaving them into narratives. Therefore, only an overview is provided here, and the rest is left to the constructions of the readers of the stories.

I invite the reader to construct their own understandings of the complex issues of Cyprus through the presented stories. In some cases, more than one interview was conducted in the same place, yet the research diaries reflected different aspects of the same setting. In addition to the aforementioned aims, the stories also reflect the personal and professional awareness that I have developed in conducting this research. In other words, they highlight how the study socially constructed my perspectives as a Cypriot and as a researcher who did not have an in-depth understanding of the complexities of Cyprus settings, despite my nationality as a Cypriot and despite my efforts to take part in bi-communal events.

These stories are crucial in this study as they help transform the life stories in life histories (see Chapter 2 for further information). Ivor Goodson (2013) explains that it is “vital to understand life stories in their historical and cultural settings if we are to investigate and understand individual and personal meaning-making” (p.32). He defines the “background stories” as “genealogies of context” (Goodson, 2013: p.5). The twelve two-part stories in this chapter act as the “genealogies of context” of this study. In addition to that, the stories aim to help the reader to understand Cyprus contexts.

Gubrium and Holstein (2009) explain that the “mundane settings of everyday life” (p.139) reflect a culture. They suggest that those settings “shape the little stories of habitués in relation to bigger stories of shared experience” (p.139). This statement points out interlinked nature of the small stories of individuals and the shared experiences of bigger groups or communities. In light of this statement, it can be said that the small stories of interview settings that are presented in this chapter are designed to reflect the settings of everyday life in Cyprus. They also help the readers to understand the bigger stories of shared experiences of Cypriots across the divide.

The interview stories and the information about participants are sequenced according to the chronological interview dates instead of their generational cohorts. This is mainly because the interview stories are compiled from the research diaries and reflect the development and progress of the research in time. Besides, the chronological interviews indicate that the first three participants were from Turkish Cypriot background, which in itself is a sign of insider – outsider dilemma that I faced at the initial stages of the research. The following table shows how the chapter is organised and provides a chronological order of the conducted interviews.

First Interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My story of the interview with Mr S               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mr S</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Second Interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My story of the interview with Mr H               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mr H</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Third Interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My story of the interview with Ms U               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ms U</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Fourth Interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My story of the interview with Ms M               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ms M</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Fifth Interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My story of the interview with Ms A               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ms A</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Sixth Interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My story of the interview with Ms G               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ms G</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Seventh Interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My story of the interview with Mr L <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mr L</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Eighth Interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My story of the interview with Ms D <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ms D</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Ninth Interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My story of the interview with Mr R <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mr R</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Tenth Interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My story of the interview with Ms C <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ms C</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Eleventh Interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My story of the interview with Mr P <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mr P</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Twelfth Interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My story of the interview with Mr K <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mr K</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Table 3: Order of interviews

## 4.2 First interview:

### 4.2.1 My story of the interview with Mr S

It was a sunny spring morning and I was feeling excited and nervous at the same time, as this was going to be not only my first interview but also my first interview at a participant's house. While I was driving up the road, I tried to keep up with the instructions of how to find the house. In Northern Cyprus, road signs, especially the ones in built up areas, are almost non-existent apart from the street names placed only at the beginning or end of the street. Therefore, the instructions and directions to a place usually revolve around its proximity to noticeable tall buildings or big houses or shops or sometimes even trees. I was on my way to meet one of my Turkish Cypriot participants and I was trying to repeat the instructions to myself. When I contacted him, the participant had sounded interested in contributing his life history to my study and invited me to his house. Here I was, turning left at the lilac coloured house. As the area had recently become popular, many of the

houses were newly built and as the planning permissions committee tended not to interfere with the design of houses,

I drove past some interesting looking mansions amongst some more modest houses. I couldn't help wondering how my participant could afford to live in that area and what sort of house he lived in. Another thought that occupied my mind while driving was the dispute of land and property ownership in Cyprus. This was a newly built area. Before 1974, individuals did not own the land, which the houses were built on. It belonged to the state. How would it be addressed in the current peace talks when so many people had built houses and lives on it? Who were and who are the rightful owners of it? This was a crucial question that we continuously asked regarding different areas on either side of the border in Cyprus. This was only one aspect of the complicated property and ownership issues that occupied the post-division narratives, in addition to being a problematic topic of negotiations. While driving through the streets and trying to find the participant's house, I realised how some people created their dream houses. Were any of these people refugees who had to flee their homes in 1974? Were they trying to create an ultimate house after their loss? Was that the reason why they were building big houses? Unanswered questions were occupying my thoughts.

Being lost in those thoughts, I took a wrong turning. In frustration I went back to where I started and the second time round I managed to focus and follow the instructions; I turned left from the lilac house and then right from the big red mansion and did another turn from the children's play area and followed the road to the end before I turned left again. After being convinced that I was in the right neighbourhood, I parked my car, got out and started fishing for my mobile in my bag. I wanted to ring them to avoid the confusion of knocking on someone else's door, because the houses did not have numbers on them. I assumed it was because the area was new or maybe it was because all the houses were different. As I dialled the number, I recognised a modest house among the rest of them. This was a much smaller building, which could be classified as a more traditional Cypriot house with amazing plants and flowers in its front garden. This was an

achievement in Cyprus weather conditions and lack of water. The fragrance of the flowers was even more attractive than their colours. Their fantastic smell reminded me of something, but I could not figure out what. My thoughts were interrupted when Mr S opened the door before he answered his mobile. He was holding his ringing mobile in one hand while waving at me with the other.

“Welcome, hocahanım” was the first thing he said. He addressed me with my professional identity, “hocahanım” (female teacher). Even though I found the word old-fashioned, I was really happy that he positioned me “inside” the teaching profession rather than in the “outside” researcher position. I walked through the amazing front garden and as I reached the front door, my nervous thoughts vanished. Unlike the other houses in the neighbourhood, this was a white washed house with big windows and as I walked in, I realised that the big windows not only let in lots of natural light but also made the fantastic garden seem like part of the living room. After I sat down, Mr S.’s wife came and said hello to me and offered me a drink. When she brought the drinks, she also brought two types of sweet and two types of savoury offerings. I felt truly welcomed in their house but also felt embarrassed that they had gone to the trouble of preparing food for me. As a Cypriot, I knew that they would offer me cake and coffee, but their generosity was incredible. They were both interested in what I was doing and how I came to hear about Mr S. As the conversation developed, we realised that we had mutual acquaintances and friends and we all appreciated how small Cyprus was and how we were all connected. I truly felt welcomed and when we started the interview I felt at ease.

During the study, I visited Mr S and his wife twice more. Each time they made me feel one of “them” and we got to know each other better. The “insider” position that was generously assigned to me, by Mr S and his wife, was my liberation from the “insider” and “outsider” dilemma that I had worried about. As discussed in the first chapter of this study, the “insider” and “outsider” positions are interlinked. Even though a researcher can never be “outside” the study, the atmosphere of the interview and the information

provided by the participants vary depending on the position they assign to the interviewer. On this occasion, I was the welcomed “insider”.

#### **4.2.2 Mr S (Turkish Cypriot, 2<sup>nd</sup> generational cohort)**

Mr S was a tall man. His fair hair and skin colour did not match the stereotypical Cypriot look. The existence of his moustache however, did. His smile made him look very friendly. When we started the interview, Mr S told me that he was born in 1953 and that he became a primary school teacher out of necessity rather than choice.

I should tell you that I wanted to become a doctor not a teacher but having no parents meant that I was getting help from the extended family and I could not tell them I wanted to become a doctor because they would need to support me for ten years rather than four. It was unfair, and I could not ask for it anyway. I chose teaching because as you started the teacher training/education, you started getting some financial support from the government, which meant that I would be independent and self-sufficient.

I found out during the second interview that Mr S’s parents who ran a coffee shop outside a village were both killed during the first civil war in 1963, leaving five brothers as orphans. A different member of their extended family raised each one of them. I found it interesting that Mr S did not disclose this information during the first interview and that he did not dwell on it during the second one. To him, that was part of his life and he added that he did not wish that on any one from any ethnic background. His open mindedness was one of his characteristics that I wanted to know more about during the second set of interviews.

Mr S presented his perspective of his professional identity in a striking way. He said:

Please note that I loved teaching and I devoted most of my time to becoming a good teacher. With limited resources, I remember how I prepared resources, for each of the 30 something pupils that I had in my group, by hand and most of the time until the early hours of the

morning. I am lucky, because my wife was really understanding and supportive. She knew that it wasn't just a job. I was shaping the lives of pupils through education.

With this statement, Mr S made me realise that teaching was more than a job for him.

Mr S presented a caring teacher image of himself. He explained that in February 1987, when the government introduced a major education change, teachers only had 3 months to prepare the Year 5 students for graduation and for the exams of the selective schools. He described his and his colleagues' reaction to the policy change:

A couple of friends and I believed that it was our duty to prepare Year 5 students to graduate by the end of the year with enough information so that they would not feel a gap in their knowledge for not studying Year 6 and directly going up to secondary school.

When I told Mr S that I was one of first cohort of students who graduated from Year five in 1987 without attending Year 6, he asked me whether I was successful in passing the exam for the English medium college. As I said yes, Mr S smiled and said:

You must have had caring teachers too. It was all down to the teachers you see. We did not have a say in the change but most of us made sure that we equipped the students with as much knowledge as we could within those three months.

I had not thought about the teachers' voluntary input that shaped my life too. I could not help feeling grateful for the teachers who gave up their time to make up for the gaps in the policy.

During the first interview, Mr S explained that 1987 marked the most challenging year of his career. He also explained that he faced challenges in addition to rewards during his career. Mr S's construction of his professional identity was an interesting one. During the second interview, Mr S asked me if I had recognised anything interesting in his front garden. I apologised for

not complimenting him on the beauty of it before and I told him that the smell of the flowers was familiar but that I had lived in flats all my life and did not know much about gardening and flowers. He then looked surprised and said: “Most of the flowers in my garden are the same ones that we planted in primary school gardens every year. You must have recognised the “kadife (velvet)” flowers”. His explanation took me back to my primary school years. Yes, those were the flowers we planted in our school gardens each year with the help of our teachers. It was interesting that their smells were stored in my memory, rather than their appearance, and it was equally interesting that Mr S had chosen to plant the same type of flowers in his front garden. In Mr S’s life history, the boundaries between the personal and the professional realms were blurred.

### **4.3 Second interview**

#### **4.3.1 My story of the interview with Mr H**

Mr H would be the second participant I interviewed. I had hoped and assumed that after the first one it would be easier to conduct the following interviews. I was wrong. Here I was, feeling really nervous. We had agreed to meet up at the primary school teachers’ union building, which was only a ten-minute drive away from where I was. I knew where the building was, so I did not worry about how to get there. The building itself was close to the border in Nicosia and I had to drive past the old Venetian city walls that still stood in all their glory around the divided capital city. The city itself is divided into two with a border running through it. It is usually a topic of conversation that the only unified aspect of the city is its sewage system, which was built centuries ago when the walls were being built. On my way to the union building, I drove past the city walls in northern Nicosia. I thought to myself that those walls must bear a lot of stories within themselves.

The Union building was built by a group of teachers who contributed their salaries as well as their time and physical labour in the late 1960s. They

were also the founding members of the union and the teachers' bank. The building, the bank and the union itself were the symbols of co-operation between those teachers' and their vision of unity. The reception area of the union building had a wall of appreciation, which had close-up shots of the founding members, some of whom looked very young and happy, while others looked older and more serious. Those photographs capture only the faces of the founding members, yet each is a silent narrative of a generation that was united in a caring, sharing ethos. This was a place where teachers felt at home and conducting the second interview there felt significant. A centre that was built by the teachers for the teachers would contribute to my project by providing an office space for the interview.

After I parked my car in front of the building, I started thinking about the participant that I was about to meet. I knew who Mr H was, but we were never formally introduced. I sometimes saw him around the union building and sometimes at the supermarket. Perhaps we lived in the same neighbourhood, but because we did not know each other I had never said hello to him. Every time I saw him, he had a serious or solemn expression on his face and he always wore a suit. His suits varied from navy to dark brown to black and that's all I knew about him. I did sometimes wonder why he still dressed like that as a retired teacher, so when he agreed to take part in my research, I made a mental note to ask him. As I climbed up the stairs of the union building, my excitement about the research that I was conducting, and my nervousness increased. I did not know what to expect from the interview with Mr H. When I reached the third floor, where the offices, the conference rooms and the café of the union were, my heartbeat was the only thing I could hear. I had been to that building many times before, so it was definitely not about the place.

My excitement and anxiety were due to the unknown aspects relating to the participant and the interview itself. When I approached the main entrance, I tried to convince myself that I would sit down at the reception area to calm down. I was there almost forty minutes early to allow myself enough time to settle down. Opening the door, my ears caught the laughter and joy of a

group of people, and to my surprise, my participant was among them. Even though I thought I was there early, I clearly wasn't there early enough. As I walked in, he put his serious face on and said, "Come on in hocahanım (female teacher)." It was surprising that he had guessed who I was and that he invited me in to a place that was open to all teachers and the public. Once again, I was addressed in the old-fashioned way and treated as the "insider" teacher who was invited in. Unlike the first time, I felt that there was a border and that I was given permission to cross it rather than being invited through it. The "insider" and "outsider" positions that I simultaneously occupied while conducting the research were becoming obvious during the interviews. This was the second interview and the second time that the participant was treating me as the insider. Both participants were Turkish Cypriots and that could have been perceived as the reason for the "insider" position. Yet in both cases I was addressed as "hocahanım" (female teacher) so it was clear that my professional identity was acknowledged instead of my ethnic background.

Then he led the way into an office with a grand desk and two guest chairs in front of it. He said: "I am sure we can use this office for the interview." We were both strangers to the room, yet Mr H. sat behind the desk and invited me to sit on one of the guest chairs. The room overlooked some of the rooftops of southern Nicosia and took in a lot of natural light. The closeness of the southern part was shocking. How could we be so close yet so apart? I was busy thinking about the north and the south divide. For a short while, the hissing noise of the air conditioner was the only audible sound in the room. I noticed the deep lines and wrinkles on Mr H.'s face. Each line seemed to be the embodiment of his lived experience. When I caught myself staring at my participant, I realised that I had to improve my interviewing techniques. I smiled in embarrassment and he asked me to explain why I was there. The hierarchy between us was clear. Mr H. was in power. It almost felt like he was the interviewer and I was the participant. With this thought in mind, I made sure that I explained my research in detail. That was the power shift between us.

After I explained the research I was conducting, I thanked Mr H for agreeing to meet up and contribute his life history. He nodded and that was when I saw him smile for the first time. I wondered whether he smiled because he liked my study or because he was happy to contribute his life history. Whatever the reason, the smile changed the atmosphere in the room. We both felt more comfortable about the situation and about the interview.

#### **4.3.2 Mr H (Turkish Cypriot, 1<sup>st</sup> generational cohort)**

Mr H was a man of medium height. His hair was grey, and he was wearing old-fashioned glasses, which looked too big for his face. When we began the interview, Mr H. told me that he was born in mid 1930s to a poor family. His mother worked as a servant in rich people's houses. At school he got picked on by some of his teachers as he did not have the right uniform and had to skip school some days to help out his father in the fields. Physical education was the only subject that he enjoyed in high school, mainly because he felt appreciated by his teacher. He could do somersaults while other pupils could not. Mr H said:

Both my teacher and my classmates looked at me when I did them and they sometimes clapped. I felt happy during the physical education lessons. For that reason, I really wanted to become a sports teacher, but I had to go to Turkey to study and that meant money.

Mr H explained that he was really disappointed when he realised that he could not become a physical education teacher. "Did you know that when we moved to the enclaves in 1963, all the medals that I got from the sports events were destroyed in a house fire set up by the looters?" Even though the question was a rhetorical one, I could not help saying "No, I did not know that." Mr H continued by saying: "That's when I felt that my dreams were shattered twice." As he said this, Mr H opened an album that was sitting in front of him throughout the interview, an album that I had not noticed before. He found a picture of him and his medals and showed it to me. "My passion in sports and my knowledge of farming and agriculture were the two main things that made me a successful primary school teacher," he said.

Mr H. then described how he entered the teacher training institution, which was a multi-national British institution that trained Greek Cypriot, Turkish Cypriot, Maronite and Armenian trainee teachers.

It was difficult to live in the dorms. We all listened to music and the radio in our own language and it sounded like chaos. I suppose it was the tension of living all together. But there were good things about living on campus too. The campus was outside the town near the orange groves and some woodland. Every morning from 5am to 7am we would run five miles. People complained about it, but I did not. I loved it. I loved sports. Then we would come back and get ready and start the lessons. We were all men by the way. Women were educated in Nicosia, not Morphou.

Mr H continued to talk about the teacher education he received and then explained that he was part of the year group which experienced the division of the teacher education institution during their final year in 1958.

As the interview progressed, Mr H. explained how farming and teaching children about growing plants was part of the curriculum in those days.

I made sure that my class always grew edible vegetables. We all ate those vegetables: the children, their families, the teachers and even the head teacher. We grew plenty of vegetables. As I said before, my knowledge of farming and my passion for sports made me a better teacher.

As the interview deepened, I realised that Mr H was an amazing storyteller. Our interviews were longer than I had planned. Some of Mr H's political and professional views were opposed to mine. However, I was not there to judge or to meet someone with similar views. I was there to collect a life history that would reflect some of the cultural and historical contexts of a generation in Cyprus. Being aware of my position, I made a conscious effort to be non-judgemental during data collection and analysis procedures.

During the second interview, Mr H sat opposite me on the other guest chair. The hierarchy and boundary between us became blurred and I got a chance to ask him about his suits. He smiled and said "Once a teacher, always a

teacher. You can retire from the system, but you cannot retire from being a teacher.” It was an answer I did not expect. I had assumed that he wanted to look presentable as a retired teacher, but his answer made me question the generational differences on the perception of the profession. We were both teachers yet my understanding of being a teacher was completely different from his.

#### **4.4 Third interview**

##### **4.4.1 My story of the interview with Ms U**

Ms U was the third participant I interviewed. She was also my first female participant. I knew Ms U's daughter, who was a high school teacher, yet I did not know about Ms U until the intermediary contact, who helped me find participants, mentioned her. Here I was, at the outskirts of northern Nicosia, trying to keep up with the speed of the car in front of me and not to let any other car get between us. It was a hot summer's afternoon and I had assumed the roads would not be too crowded, but I was wrong. There were cars everywhere. My friend, who offered to drive to her parents' place to save me from the stress of finding it, was in a hurry to pick up her son from somewhere. She told me to try to keep up with her driving and it was clear that she really meant it. She was turning left and right and did not bother to signal. I had only been to this part of the town once before and I knew it was a complicated area. The land was Turkish Cypriot property before 1974 and with the complexities of land ownership in Cyprus was perceived as a safe option when buying property, as ownership of the land was uncontested. It rapidly became popular after the checkpoints opened and was still growing more than a decade later.

The streets reflected the wish of people from different economic backgrounds who wanted to be the “true owners” of a place. They were formed of newly built grand mansions, modest houses and old houses (built before 1974), standing side by side. There were also big apartment blocks with lots of small flats, built by “yap satçı” (a person or company who builds

to sell) and sold to people who wanted to live in an area where they would not have to worry whether their land or property was owned by a Greek Cypriot before 1974. Most of the people who lived in those flats probably wanted to avoid any contest regarding land ownership but could not afford the other type of houses in that neighbourhood. The area reflected the diversity of the inhabitants' economic status, with some of the houses looking obviously richer than others.

While I was trying to soak up the atmosphere of the place, I forgot to pay attention to my friend. I had no idea which direction she had taken. I realised that we'd moved away from the central part of the town and were headed towards the hills of Beşparmak Mountains (Five Finger Mountains). The streets were empty. Apart from a couple of stray dogs, there was no one around. I decided to turn left and continue for a while before trying to telephone my friend. I was lucky. I caught a glimpse of her car. She was turning into a different street. I was grateful for her lead because I would not be able to find my way around this area. My curiosity about where her parents lived, and in what kind of house, increased with every turn she took.

The journey from our initial meeting place by the side of the dual carriage way to her parents' house had taken about half an hour. She eventually slowed down and signalled to the left. As we turned, she beeped and put her hand out towards the sky. She then pointed out the house on the left and drove off without a word. I parked my car and took out the sweet and savoury offerings which I had bought as a gesture of my appreciation for Ms U's time. I was hoping that she would like them and not be offended that they were bought rather than home-made. The house I was standing in front of was not an old building, but it did not look new either. It was a very small, detached house with the usual flat roof. The whitewash walls looked tired. The gate was rusty, and the front garden was actually a vegetable plot with rusty wires and tins acting as scarecrows. What an unusual and bold statement it was. The front garden, usually used for flowers and trees, was being used for practical purposes, ignoring the convention in Cyprus contexts of showing off the front garden. I could not open the gate, so I

started calling out for Ms U. I was annoyed with myself for not getting her phone number.

The front door opened with a creak and a tall, slim woman stepped outside. She was dressed up casually but colourfully. This, again, was different from the stereotypical plain colours – especially black – worn by the older generations. She was wearing dark pink t-shirt and dark green casual trousers. She had a dark pink beret, which was decorated with a green fabric flower. Everything about the house and about her seemed out of the ordinary and interesting. She was wearing a beret in the middle of the summer. She waved at me and called for her husband to open the gate, which was locked. While he was doing so, Ms U's husband told me that it was an old habit of wanting to be secure and safe that made them lock the gate every day.

While standing "outside" I was reminded of all the safety issues that have bothered Cypriots over the years. When I was eventually let in, I was invited to the living room, which had a lot of black and white pictures and certificates on the walls. In that room, I felt that I was simultaneously part of the past and part of the present. There were two triple-seater sofas placed in an L-shape with a grand armchair placed on the opposite side. Unlike most living rooms in Cyprus, this one did not accommodate a TV. Instead, there was an accordion on a TV stand. The shutters of the room were half closed, blocking out the direct sunlight as well as the natural light. I felt like I was entering a black and white photograph when I sat down. The only bright colours in the room were the bright pink and green that Ms U was wearing.

I sat at the far end of one of the L shaped sofas. I could see most of the pictures on the walls. Ms U sat in the grand armchair, saying, "Unfortunately, I cannot sit on the sofas anymore." This made me feel relieved, because it meant that the physical distance between us was not intentional. I moved closer to her. I presented the food I brought with me and thanked Ms U for agreeing to talk to me. She made us hot lemonade, which I never had before. Things were different in this house, even the offerings.

#### **4.4.2 Ms U (Turkish Cypriot, 1<sup>st</sup> generational cohort)**

When the interview started, I went on a journey into Ms U's past. She remembered and recounted the events in detail. At the beginning of the interview she said,

I will start with my childhood because you need to know me as a person if you want to understand me as a teacher... I was born in 1941. Children from my age group and from my neighbourhood all attended school. I know that in some places in Cyprus, girls my age were not sent to school, but I was. After primary school, I wanted to go to the English School, but my dad enrolled me in the French school.

Ms U then explained that a group of girls were sent there. She was the youngest, yet she adapted well, and could even communicate in French to buy sweets from the canteen. She explained that she'd considered leaving when her friends left the school, but she persevered and completed the initial three years of secondary school there. According to Ms U, her life had changed within those three years, as she became a Girl Scout at French school. "I was chosen to become a girl scout and my life changed because of it and probably my teaching too."

After providing details about her education, Ms U explained that she was offered a job as a teacher at the Blind School without even putting an application in. She was working at the RAF Cinema Corporation when she was approached by the Turkish Cypriot Education Committee members and asked whether she would be interested in becoming a teacher at the school for the blind.

I have to say that I never had the formal teacher education that most primary school teachers had. I was trained during my time at the school. It was called school-based training back then and it was not a common thing. I suppose they chose me because I was a very successful student. I was a successful teacher too. Come and have a look at the appreciation certificate they sent me after the borders became passable in 2003, forty years later.

At this point in the interview, I followed Ms U to the far end of the room and she showed me her certificate.

As the interview progressed, Ms U told me that The Blind School was the only bi-communal school in Cyprus. It was a primary school for children with special needs, not just for blind children.

There was an interesting set up at the Blind School. The Turkish Cypriot Education Committee (Turk Cemaat Maarifi) was in charge of inspecting Turkish Cypriot teachers and The Greek Cypriot Education Committee was in charge of inspecting Greek Cypriot teachers. The head teacher was a very fair man.

Ms U then explained how her mother did not approve of her teaching job initially, as it was a boarding school and she was worried about Ms U staying there. "I remember telling my mother that sleeping in the Greek Cypriot part of Nicosia was as dangerous as cycling to other parts of town. She was worrying over nothing." Throughout the interview, Ms U emphasised how quickly she learnt new things and how inventive she was when preparing materials to aid her teaching. According to Ms U, her Girl Scout knowledge helped her become a very successful teacher. Towards the end of the first interview, Ms U told me how she drove all six of the Turkish Cypriot children from the dorms to the Turkish Cypriot area of Nicosia in 1963 when the first civil war took place.

It was highly unlikely that something would have happened to them, but I just wanted to be on the safe side and you simply did not know how serious the events were. The children, my accordion, another Turkish Cypriot teacher and I left that day and did not have any access to the school until 2003.

During the second interview Ms U provided more details about her teaching experience at the Blind School and in other schools. She also recounted the experiences she had during the revolt against the British colonial government. Ms U explained how curious she was to see the peaceful protest of women against the British colonial government. When she

approached the protesting crowd, she realised that the British soldiers had surrounded them and placed a barbed wire barrier around the crowd.

Instinctively I wanted to do something, so I shouted that I would lift the barbed wire as I was outside it. When they heard me, the women inside the barbed wire helped too and, as they came out, the British soldiers assumed I was involved and shot me. It was difficult times because the doctors refused to treat me as they thought I was a protester. I was a teenager. This must have been in late 1950s. Long time ago.

Ms U's narrative was a rich one. I visited her three times and in time we got to know each other really well. On my third visit she asked me to make the coffee. She said: "You know where everything is. Perhaps you should make the coffee today." I truly was an insider and it was an amazing feeling. After each interview Ms U thanked me for taking her on a journey to her past. Even though I was just the silent receiver of those stories, Ms U acknowledged my participation.

## **4.5 Fourth interview**

### **4.5.1 My story of the interview with Ms M**

This was my fourth interview and by now I realised that anxiety, nervousness and curiosity were the emotions that I would feel with each interview. However, I could not help feeling extra anxious with this interview as I was on my way to meet my first Greek Cypriot participant. This participant needed an interpreter, as she was not confident in her English language skills. A mutual acquaintance who was fluent in Greek, English and Turkish, and who was familiar with education research, agreed to be the interpreter. Therefore, this interview was going to be different from the others. I decided to park my car in northern Nicosia and walk to the border and the checkpoint.

The car park overlooked the green line/no man's land and old, derelict houses with bullet holes stood beside it. I tended to avoid this car park as

much as I could because you could not park your car without acknowledging the border or the bullet holes on the empty buildings, both of which were extremely disturbing. I would normally cross the border by car, but that particular checkpoint was inconveniently far away. It made sense to park the car in the northern part and walk to the southern part. After I paid and displayed the car park ticket, I started walking through the heart of Nicosia. The narrow streets were lively. Shoppers, tourists and local children filled the narrow streets of this old part of northern Nicosia. As I walked past the old Bazaar and the shops near it, I had to resist the inviting smells of freshly ground coffee, spices and roasting nuts. Today was not a leisurely visit to the area. Today I was going to meet up with my first Greek Cypriot participant.

The walk from the car park to the checkpoint seemed longer. I was walking through the narrow street, which was full of shops. Half of the contents of each shop were outside on display. The shop windows were “windowless” here. Therefore, each shop had a shop assistant standing either outside or in the doorway of the shop. This street was always full of people. The shops sold a variety of goods ranging from designer to fake clothes and bags to household necessities. Male shop owners usually played backgammon in groups in wider parts of the street while shop assistants, usually women, ran the shops. Everything I saw as I walked past seemed normal, yet I was feeling different today. I tried to differentiate between the people I saw. Were they Greek Cypriots or were the Turkish Cypriots? I tried to guess by looking at their clothes, their hairstyle and the way they walked. Was it a leisurely shopping walk or were they hurrying up to get somewhere? The only way that I could tell the difference was when the people I walked past said something. Most of my guesses were wrong; I simply could not tell the difference.

It was much easier to guess people’s nationalities at the border, especially in the queue for the checkpoint. The difference was obvious there. I could tell the difference by looking at the identity cards or the passports that people were holding in their hands. Once again, the border was a reminder of our

identities and sides that we “belonged” to. With all these thoughts in my head, I approached the booth and presented my identity card to the officer. I made sure I presented my Turkish Cypriot ID. The whole process took five minutes. Now I had to walk through no man’s land (the green line) that was guarded by the UN soldiers and wait for a check in to the southern part of Cyprus. The green line was a very tidy area with all the buildings painted and with pots of plants in front of them. However, some of the buildings were “fake,” with only an outside wall to give the impression of a complete house, a complete shop or even a complete two storey building. There was nothing beyond these facades and I had often wondered about them. Did the rest of the building fall and, if so, when? Were the rest of the buildings demolished and, if so, why? How did these walls survive if the rest of the buildings collapsed? Were the “fake walls” of “fake buildings” built to deceive the border crossers? With these questions in mind, I reached the Greek Cypriot checkpoint. Here, only Turkish Cypriots and people from other countries who are allowed to cross the border had to wait in the queue to be checked in. Greek Cypriots could enter without showing a passport. When I was checked in with my Cyprus Republic ID this time, I entered the continuation of the shopping street, which ran from the old Bazaar to the Turkish Cypriot border. This time however, I was on the other side of the border, walking down the southern version of the same street. Once upon a time these two streets were linked and continuous. Not anymore. Now the green line divided them, with two checkpoints on either side.

The street in the southern part was wider and more populated with cafes, restaurants and the international clothes and shoe shops that can be found in many European cities. This was Europe after all. Had Edward Said had the experience of crossing this very border, I am pretty sure he would use it as an example in his differentiation between the “orient” and the “occident”, but there was no time to dwell on those thoughts. I needed to hurry up to meet the participant and the interpreter. We had agreed to meet in a café to have coffee and talk about my study, before going to the building where we would conduct the interview. They had arranged the interview place, so I did not know what to expect, but I was glad we’d agreed to meet beforehand to

break the ice. I was early, so I sat on a bank waiting for Ms M and the interpreter to arrive.

I had met the interpreter twice before for different reasons related to education research, so I knew what she looked like. This would make it easier to recognise them. I positioned myself to overlook the street where the car park was. Soon I recognised the interpreter. Next to her was a medium height woman with short brown hair. She was stylishly dressed. When the interpreter introduced Ms M, I put my hand forward for a formal handshake, but she stepped forward and we hugged. At that point I realised that we might not be able to communicate in words, but we could form a bond. When Ms M smiled at me, it was a warm, welcoming smile, which did not allow any boundaries to come between us. We decided to go into one of the small, independent coffee shops instead of one of the chains. We all wanted to support the local businesses. Unfortunately, it was really crowded so we eventually decided to try the café on the fifth floor of the big Debenhams store. It was quiet and therefore a perfect place to generate conversation and get to know each other before we moved onto the interview place and the interview itself. The café overlooked the rooftops of whole of Nicosia. You could see the Beşparmak (Five Finger) Mountains, the famous Ledra Palace hotel where most of the peace talks had been carried out since the 1970s, and the old part of the town. It was difficult to determine the exact position of the border when you looked at it from this angle. In other words, Nicosia could be perceived as undivided from this view. As we settled down, I insisted on buying the coffee. This was the least I could do to express my appreciation towards the interpreter and towards Ms M. When we conducted the interview, as we had to rely on the interpreter, it was a fragmented one. Yet the information provided by Ms M was very interesting.

#### **4.5.2 Ms M (Greek Cypriot, 1<sup>st</sup> generational cohort)**

Ms M was born in 1936. She never wanted to become a teacher. In fact, she wanted to become a journalist and she did get an offer from a reputable newspaper to join their staff.

When I told my mum, I wanted to become a journalist, she collapsed onto her knees. Every time I recall that moment, I want to cry. She begged me to become a teacher and I could not go against her wishes. In the end I did attend the teacher training institution and I did become a teacher.

Ms M explained that the teacher training institution was a bi-communal one and she had good friends from each community. As the interview progressed, Ms M said: "...the two years that I spent at the teacher training institution were the happiest years of my life." Ms M stated that she graduated with a distinction from the teacher training institution. According to her, the teachers at the teacher training institution made a difference in Ms M's life as they paid attention to her. She was very successful in arts, painting and writing poems and that made her a better student.

Ms M recalled that in her final year, she was chosen to spend 40 days in the UK together with a Turkish Cypriot trainee teacher.

That was a common practice in British colonies. It was an educational programme, organised by the Education Bureau because we did not have a Ministry of Education back then. We visited schools in different parts of the UK and observed lessons and were accommodated in the houses of teachers and head teachers.

Ms M gave details about how useful the visit to schools in the UK was and how she was appointed upon her return to Cyprus.

I will never forget my first year, because I did not like my job. They gave me a Grade A (Year 1) class with eighty children. Eighty children! There wasn't a big enough classroom for the children, so they placed me under the kiosk where children had physical education. How could I cope with eighty children?

Ms M gave details of the difficulties she faced during the first three months of her teaching career. She said that the inspector who came to inspect her told her to "teach the children a little bit to read, a little bit to write and a little bit of arithmetic." In other words, Ms M was advised to teach the basics and not to worry about the rest, as it was almost impossible to follow the whole

curriculum. Ms M then added that the fact that she did not like the job did not mean that she was mean to the children. “The fact that I did not like my job does not mean that I was a bad teacher. No, I wasn’t a bad teacher.” When the Education Bureau eventually sent another teacher to the school, he was given twenty students while Ms M was left with sixty students in her group. “I was left with sixty children and it was like a paradise for me. They were good children... Gradually I started loving them.” Using her talent in art and poetry, Ms M managed to attract the children’s interest and managed to construct stories with them.

According to Ms M, her passion for stories, poems and art made her a better teacher. In addition, Ms M stated that the realisation that children could be inspirational also helped her become a better teacher. During the interviews Ms M explained how she started writing children’s stories mainly because of the lack of resources in schools. She admitted that she did not remember much about the second year of her career; “I believe it is because it was much easier and more usual than my first year.” Ms M’s life history is a very rich one. It reflected the professional difficulties that most of the teachers of her generation faced. Her solutions to those problems were inspirational.

## **4.6 Fifth interview**

### **4.6.1 My story of the interview with Ms A**

The fifth interview I conducted was with Ms A. I had known her for a long time, as she used to live in the same apartment building as my parents. However, I hadn’t seen her since she had moved to a new neighbourhood. When I contacted her about my studies she invited me to her new house. As tradition dictates, I bought her a house warming present. I knew the area that she had moved to, so was not worried about finding the interview location this time. I followed the instructions and parked my car in front of Ms A’s house. It was much bigger than I had anticipated. After I got out of the car, I realised that neither Ms’s A’s house nor the neighbouring three houses

had any gates or fences around them. This was very unusual. Why didn't they have any set borders or boundaries between each house? If it was because this was a newly built house, why didn't the rest of the houses have any fences, or gates or even hedges between them?

When I reached the door with my house-warming present, I was embarrassed that it was far too small for such a grand house. When I rang the doorbell, I realised that it was the type that included an integrated CCTV camera. Even though there was not a fence or a border around the house, there was surveillance to protect that invisible border. I found the idea of an invisible border very interesting. In a country where borders are heavily guarded, having no borders was a bold statement, but the existence of the CCTV contradicted this. Invisible borders surveillance was a paradox. Was this a reflection of the Cyprus context? Where was the border in relation to this particular house? With this idea in mind, I turned my back to the front door while waiting for it to be answered.

There was a large empty field opposite the house. Behind the field there were some houses in the distance. Were those houses on this side of the border or on the other side of the border? Were they Greek Cypriot houses or were they Turkish Cypriot houses? I could not tell. I made a mental note to ask about them. When the door was opened, Ms A welcomed me in. After the usual coffee and cake ritual and before the interview, I asked Ms A about the lack of fences and about the area and its proximity to the border. She invited me to the back garden and said, "this is our shared back garden." Then she pointed out to each of the other four houses and told me that they belonged to her mother, brother, her sister and her cousin.

We are a family and there is no need for borders between us... The building that my cousin lives in actually consists of four flats and all of her brothers and sisters live there, but they had a good architect, so the building does not look like the usual box type apartment block.

Ms A continued to explain how they felt like part of a community here and how her children loved being around the family and how each of them

cooked something different and shared it. “We live by the old Cypriot traditions here” she said.

You know that we have started the construction of this house ten years ago, and we built it slowly. That is why the architectural design does not reflect the latest trends. We built it slowly and are lucky that the land belonged to my family, so we did not pay for it. In fact, this was the back garden of my mother’s house. My sister, my brother and I have all built our houses here. The land used to belong to my father and his brother. They bought it in the 1950s and divided it into two. My cousins got together and built flats, while we built individual houses.

Ms A’s explanations were a true reflection of Cypriot culture. Many Cypriots lived in close proximity to their parents or their children. Children grew up spending time with their aunts, uncles and cousins. Cyprus is a small island and the distances between places are usually manageable. After saying hello to Ms A’s relatives, who were sitting in the shared garden, we went inside to conduct the interview.

#### **4.6.2 Ms A (Turkish Cypriot, 2<sup>nd</sup> generational cohort)**

Ms A was born in 1962. She wanted to study politics in Turkey. However, her father had been killed in 1963, before she was a year old, and her mother could not afford to pay for her expenses. She sat for the teacher training institution and even though she was successful in the written exam, she was refused a place during the interview because of her left-wing views.

I was much braver back then. I stood in front of the committee and I challenged their decision. It did not make much difference, but I repeated it three years in a row and I told them I was not going to give up. You know, it is interesting because back then there was an agreement that each year certain number of people whose fathers or mothers were killed during the war were given the right to enter the teacher training institution with much lower scores than the others. However, I was classified as a leftist, so they did not offer me that right.

Ms A then explained that she found a teaching assistant job after her first attempt to get into the teacher training institution and worked there for three years before she managed to get in. She added that eventually she scored a very high grade at the exam because of the things she had learnt from her job. "Once they realised that I wasn't going to give up they eventually let me in."

Ms A explained how much she enjoyed the training she received while she was at the teacher training institution.

The theoretical information that we were given in the first year was not that good. All the teachers who taught at the teacher's college were experienced high school teachers. Some of them were good but most of them did not know much about the primary school systems.

Ms A described how chaotic the system was. She added that most the knowledge that she and her peers acquired was due to the extended teaching practice they had every term.

We learnt to become teachers like apprentices. The best way you could learn to become a teacher was in a classroom, under the guidance of an experienced teacher. The reason why that system worked for us is because we were responsible and sensible. That system would not work today for many reasons.

During the interviews, Ms A provided a detailed account of the teacher training/education she received and usually compared it to the current teacher training/education practices. She also explained the difficulties that she had faced as a teacher who openly expressed her political views.

Ms A's life history was unusual and very interesting. During the second interview, she told me that her mother was a Greek Cypriot who had changed her religion and her name in order to be able to marry Ms A's Turkish Cypriot father. When he was killed, she stayed with the Turkish Cypriot community and never spoke about her family until the borders became passable in 2003.

Apparently, most of our neighbours and even some of my friends knew about this, yet nobody told me or my sister or my brother. Sadly, my mother's sister refused to see her, so we do not have much contact with my mother's side of the family even though we tracked them down via adverts we placed in Greek Cypriot newspapers.

Ms A's secret was a real indication of the blurred boundaries between Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalities and identities.

## **4.7 Sixth interview**

### **4.7.1 My story of the interview with Ms G**

This was the sixth interview that I conducted, and Ms G was the second Greek Cypriot participant. We agreed to meet up at the Home for Cooperation building in no man's land. I was really excited to conduct the interview there. I had attended many seminars, talks and conferences there, so I was familiar with the place. I parked my car in the car park in northern Nicosia and walked to the checkpoint. I was careful not to tilt the box of baklava that I'd bought for my participant. Baklava is a popular desert among Cypriots, yet it is rare in southern Cyprus. I was hoping it would symbolise my appreciation for my participant's time. Once I showed my Turkish Cypriot ID and got checked out, I started walking to the Home for Cooperation centre, which is about 250 yards from the checkpoint. This was the first border point that became passable in 2003. This was the spot that I hugged and kissed many Greek Cypriots on the second day of the border crossings. For a very long time, this was the only checkpoint in Cyprus, and Cypriots from all over the island travelled here to cross the border to northern or southern parts, even though some of them lived next to the border on different parts of the island. Only the United Nations and people with special permits, such as the British Council staff, can cross this checkpoint by car. Everybody else walks across. Every time I crossed this checkpoint I wondered about the people I met on the second day of the border crossings. Do they still cross the border to the "other" side or have they given up?

As I approached the Home for Cooperation centre I realised how close it was to the famous Ledra Palace Hotel. The Home for Cooperation Centre is home to many NGOs and has classrooms, seminar rooms and offices, as well as a café. The checkpoint was called the Ledra Palace checkpoint because of the hotel. I was there really early, so I decided to order a soft drink and save my appetite for coffee for later because I wanted to have it with my participant. I ordered a fresh orange juice and was really surprised that I could pay in Turkish Liras or in Euros. I paid in Turkish Liras. It saved me from thinking about the exchange rate and worrying about whether I had exchanged enough money. The Home for Cooperation café had tables and chairs and armchairs and stools. It is an amazing space that welcomes everybody. There are books in Turkish, English and Greek about Cyprus and about the projects. On the notice board they advertise bi-communal events, like the bike ride that would start in one part of Cyprus and finish in the other end. I was half way through my orange juice when Miss G arrived. As I had predicted, she wanted to have coffee, so I ordered two coffees and we decided to sit at the café for a little chat before we moved to the quiet part of the building for the interview.

#### **4.7.2 Ms G (Greek Cypriot, 3<sup>rd</sup> generational cohort)**

Ms G was born in 1969. She started primary school in September 1974 straight after the war and division. She explained how nationalism was at its peak in schools.

The whole curriculum was based on nationalist and religious views. On special days the only things we talked about were the places that we lost and how bad the Turkish people were. They created the vision that Turkish Cypriots were dangerous like wild animals.

Ms G explained that the situation was different for her, as she came from a left-wing family and had many Turkish Cypriot friends before 1974. “I was really young, but I could remember my parents’ Turkish Cypriot friends so could not imagine them being bad.” Ms G described her primary school

years in detail. She also mentioned that secondary school practises were similar.

When I started the Pedagogical Institute in 1987, things started changing. The nationalist head master retired and the newly appointed headmaster was more progressive. In the past, nationalist views, Greece and the Church were the main foci in the Pedagogical Institute. When the new head master took over, he made the changes he could.

Ms G explained that she attended the Pre-School department and graduated as a nursery school teacher. In those years, the government decided how many trainee teachers would be admitted to the Pedagogical Institute.

If they needed fifty teachers in the following three years, they admitted fifty teachers. If they did not need any, then nobody was admitted. But their estimates were not good. On my fifth year as a nursery school teacher, the government announced that they needed more than hundred and fifty primary school teachers.

Ms G stated that she attended lessons after work every day for a year and then spent another year writing her thesis so that she could become a primary school teacher. "I wanted to do that because the nursery school teachers earned less." Ms G then explained that the year she had started her primary school teaching career, the teachers union and the government signed an agreement and decided to change the status of the primary school teachers.

The Pedagogical Institute provided a three-year course. All the Universities provided four-year degree programmes. All the in-service teachers were told that we had to complete an additional year. Different Greek Universities and Cyprus University agreed to provide the training in Cyprus. Each university was assigned responsibility for an area. Teachers from Nicosia would be trained by Cyprus University while teachers from Limassol would be trained by Aristotle University of Thessaloniki.

According to Ms G, the programme that was designed by Cyprus University was much tougher than the programmes designed by Universities based in Greece.

For that reason, many teachers opted to travel to Larnaca and Limassol to complete the training instead of staying in Nicosia. I chose the more difficult option and received my training at Cyprus University. We used to have sessions every week-day from 3pm until 8pm.

Ms G explained how difficult it was to attend all those sessions and prepare for exams. She then mentioned that she got used to studying so she completed her Master's degree straight after that.

During the second interview, Ms G provided information about her teaching experiences and how she tried to teach her pupils the skills to empathise with the Turkish Cypriots.

About six years ago, I was teaching in Limassol. That year was the year that we were asked to promote re-unification. Each year the Ministry of Education chooses a theme, which we promote throughout the year. Sometimes these themes are about the environment, and sometimes they are about global or local issues. That year we were asked to promote re-unification. I invited a Turkish Cypriot refugee and a Greek Cypriot refugee, both of whom lost their places in 1974, and they came and spoke about their feelings during one of my lessons.

Ms G explained that the talk was very effective. It stimulated critical thinking among the students.

Only one of them got upset and did not want to sit in class. The rest of them were very attentive. In fact, some of the teachers were not as open-minded as the students. They asked me why I invited a Turkish Cypriot into my class. They did not comment any more than that, but it was obvious that they did not approve of it. Of course, there were also teachers who congratulated me for doing that.

Ms G explained further and told me that even though the policy that year was to encourage re-unification, not everybody was ready to embrace it. "I believe things are different today," said Ms G towards the end of our second interview. Ms G's life history provided an insight into pre-service and in-service teacher training/education.

## **4.8 Seventh interview**

### **4.8.1 My story of the interview with Mr L**

Just like the sixth one, the seventh interview I conducted took place at the Home for Cooperation Centre. This was a participant from the third generational cohort. I parked my car at the usual car park and walked to the checkpoint. Most of the taxi drivers, who are based by the side of the checkpoint, were sitting together. They were having coffee and watching two of their friends play backgammon. By looking at their numbers, I could tell it was a quiet day for them with no customers or commuters. In the past, when this was the only checkpoint and when there was no possibility of crossing the border with your car, I used to walk across the border and get a taxi from a rank on the other side of the border. I was glad there was a rank, because mobile phones did not work on the other side. Today was different however. I was not going to cross the Greek Cypriot border and would not need a taxi. I did not have to worry about a mobile phone signal either. I would be in no man's land. In fact, I would be so close to the border that my phone would be able to pick up a signal from the northern part.

While I was walking towards the Home for Cooperation centre, I realised that a black and white cat was accompanying me on my journey. I did not know which side it belonged to. Was it a stray cat or did it belong to somebody in the northern part or in the southern part? Did it cross the border freely on a daily basis? Did it receive friendly glances from the checkpoint staff from either side of the no man's land or did they put their straight or judgemental faces on when they saw it cross the border? Did the black and white cat mind if their faces were judgemental? Was I projecting my concerns and curiosity onto the cat or was I simply empathising with it? I did not know. The only obvious thing about the cat was that it was very friendly. This was an indication that unlike most of the cats you see in the streets in Cyprus, this one probably had a home, and it really did not matter which side of the border that home was. By the time I reached the Home for Cooperation Centre, the cat had disappeared. I settled down in the café to wait for my

participant. When he arrived, we drank our coffee and I informed him about my study. We then moved on to a quiet part to conduct the interview.

#### **4.8.2 Mr L (Greek Cypriot, 3<sup>rd</sup> generational cohort)**

Mr L was born in 1983 and he belonged to the third generational cohort of teachers. This was my seventh interview, yet Mr L was the first participant who told me he had really wanted to become a teacher. He said:

I always wanted to become a teacher. When I was young I used to gather my friends and teach them about the capital cities of countries. It was not really teaching; you could call it lecturing or instructing, but I loved it.

Mr L stated that the passion he felt about teaching did not fade. “My wish to teach got stronger as I grew up.” Then he added that he had more logical reasons in choosing to receive teacher training/education. “I realised that education was the most important means for social change and I wanted to contribute to that change through teaching.”

Mr L explained that he’d studied at Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. “I learnt a lot from my professors. They shifted the way I think about history and about education in general.” He provided a detailed account of his university education and how significant it had been in shaping his understanding of Cypriot contexts. He proudly added that most of those professors whom he met during his studies were later invited by the government to shape education reform in Cyprus. At this point, I reminded Mr L that he probably was talking about the education reform of southern Cyprus. We both agreed and moved on with the interview. Mr L explained that he developed critical thinking skills during his studies, which enabled him to seek further professional development.

Mr L was the youngest participant I’d interviewed at this point, but he was different from most of the other participants because of the way he approached teaching and the way he spoke about teachers. “After I

completed my teacher training, I did my MA on Peace Education” he said. He wanted to study something that would enable him to contribute to the Cypriot communities through his teaching.

When I first started teaching, I was teaching in a privileged school. However, I did not have as much patience as I have now. I found myself in situations where I was raising my voice and telling the children off instead of engaging them in dialogical processes.

Mr L then explained that he had a very supportive head teacher and very supportive colleagues who provided guidance for him on how to become a better teacher.

I suppose I was open to their criticism and support because they appreciated my strengths. They would sit me down and tell me what I was good at before they told me what I needed to work on in order to become a better teacher.

According to Mr L, the appreciation he received, and the supportive environment of the school he worked in during his first year of teaching, empowered him to become a better teacher.

I had the theoretical knowledge, but I also needed information and feedback on practical matters. The support that I received during my first teaching year guided me in combining the theoretical with the practical. In addition, I learnt to implement peace education in my teaching. I really enjoy being a teacher.

Mr L’s passion for his job was obvious throughout the interview and his life history had challenged my perception of how different generations of teachers approach the teaching profession.

## **4.9 Eighth interview**

### **4.9.1 My story of the interview with Ms D**

The intermediary contact that put me in touch with this participant, informed me that finding this participant’s house would be difficult, as she lived behind

the refugee neighbourhood in northern Nicosia. I had driven through the refugee neighbourhood a couple of times before, so I knew it could be complicated, but I was confident I would be able to find it. I left home really early to allow myself enough time to be disorientated and lost before I reached her house. I followed the instructions very carefully and when I reached the refugee neighbourhood I asked a couple of people how to reach the other end. Everything went smoothly. I was in front of the participant's house almost an hour early. Being late would be acceptable according to the Cypriot traditions but I was sure that being this early would not. Therefore, I parked my car and went for a walk in the neighbourhood. These houses were really small. They were semi-detached houses, yet they were so close to each other that they gave the impression of terraced houses. They all looked tired and old. If they were about my age, why did they look so old was the first question that came to my mind.

The streets were really narrow. When I drove past the main street, I did check to see whether it was a one-way street, but I could not see any signs suggesting it was, so I continued driving. Now that I was walking down the same street, I could see that it was definitely not a one-way street and that the drivers were really struggling. It was quite clear that the cars parked on either side of the road were contributing to the traffic jam and lack of space. Once the traffic jam cleared, I continued walking. Children were playing by the side of the road and a group of women were sitting in front of a house but some of their chairs were on the street between two parked cars. They were having coffee. I smiled and said hello as I walked past. From their greetings I realised that they were Turkish Cypriots. I continued to the end of the street. Some of the houses had better quality doors and windows but most of them looked like they needed refurbishment. None had front gardens or trees in front of them. Some of them had pots of plants. Some had proper pots, and some had old oil tins turned into pots. It felt like I stepped back in time. When we lived in the village, one of my aunts used to plant flowers, basil and parsley in those oil tins and cans. It felt that time had stopped for these people a while ago. After I was convinced that the parallel street was very similar to this one I decided to go back and wait in my car.

As I was walking past the group of women who were having coffee, they asked if I was lost or whether I needed help. When I told them that I was killing time and wanted to explore their neighbourhood, they offered me coffee. In order to make the offer more attractive, one of them said that she would read my fortune from the coffee cup. It was a tempting offer. I usually worry about cleanliness and hygiene, but it was such a sincere offer that I could not say no. They were curious why I was in their neighbourhood. "People do drive past, but not many people walk past our streets," said one of them. Another one said: "why would they walk here? It does not lead anywhere interesting and our poverty is the only thing on display, so I don't blame them." I did not know how to respond to those statements, so I took a sip from my coffee and commented on the coffee. I told them I was a PhD student and that I was going to meet a teacher who lived nearby. I felt too embarrassed to admit that I had been a teacher for sixteen years before I gave up my teaching job to become a PhD student. Admitting that I used to be a teacher would be admitting my ignorance and lack of knowledge about the place. Therefore, I claimed the PhD researcher position. I was truly grateful for the professional border crossing that the research had provided for me. I made a mental note to do more research about the history of this place.

As promised, one of them offered to read my coffee cup, but I did not want to hear how the coffee grounds in the cup would determine my success in life or my relationship status. I kindly declined the offer and said that I would be happier if they let me help with the shelling of the fresh black-eyed beans that they were doing. They placed a tray in front of me and said I could pick up a handful of beans from the plastic box under the coffee table. I suddenly became an insider to the group. I asked them if they lived there long and they said that three of them had been living there since 1963. It suddenly dawned on me that this neighbourhood was not built after 1974. It was built after 1963, so was almost thirteen years older than I was. It was built after the first "civil war". The conversation was very interesting and the people in the neighbourhood were far friendlier than I anticipated but I had to leave to

meet my participant. I promised to visit the neighbourhood again once I complete my studies and promised that I would have my coffee cup read the next time.

#### **4.9.2 Ms D (Turkish Cypriot, 3<sup>rd</sup> generational cohort)**

Ms D was born in 1970. She wanted to study literature and perhaps become a secondary school teacher, but she did not want to study in Cyprus. She wanted to go to Turkey for her undergraduate studies but was unsuccessful in the university entrance exams.

I did not have much choice and my parents really wanted me to try my luck with the teachers' college. I was successful and that's how I became a teacher. My story is not an interesting one. I simply did not want to become a primary school teacher but scored a really good grade in the entrance exam and ended up becoming one.

Ms D told me that she has tried very hard to become a successful teacher. "I am a perfectionist and it did not matter that I did not want to be a teacher, I made sure that I was the best I could be and in time I learnt to love my job." Ms D explained that she started enjoying her job when she realised that she was making a difference to her pupils' lives.

The catchment area for our school is really poor. Some children do not even have their basic needs met at home. For example, some of them come to school hungry. As you know we do not have a system in place to support those children. Some of them come to school in winter wearing their summer shoes. Some of the other teachers and I try to support those children. We get the parent teacher association to buy them the appropriate clothing and make sure they get a sandwich and a drink from the canteen, again paid by the parent teacher association of our school.

As the interview progressed, it became obvious that Ms D was a caring teacher. She explained how she tried to adapt the curriculum to cater for the needs of children with different academic abilities. She was aware that this put additional pressure on her.

When you agree to become a teacher, you agree to take that responsibility on board. At the moment, the curriculum is designed in such a way that it only aims at the average pupils in class. There isn't a focus on high flyers and there definitely isn't a focus on pupils who need extra guidance and support.

Ms D explained that she felt better about herself for trying to cater for the needs of students from different ability groups. Throughout the interview Ms D explained the demands of the profession and her practices as a teacher.

During the second interview Ms D spoke about the act of "othering" that was taking place within some of the classrooms in some of the schools with a poorer catchment area. She explained that she prioritised teaching her pupils about empathy skills. "The curriculum is not usually flexible but if a teacher decides to teach something extra I am sure time can be created." Ms D stated that she strongly believed that teaching her pupils to become good citizens and to be more empathetic was as important as teaching them reading, writing and maths. Ms D's sense of responsibility towards her pupils was amazing.

#### **4.10 Ninth interview**

##### **4.10.1 My story of the interview with Mr R**

The ninth interview I conducted was with the final Turkish Cypriot participant. He lived in Famagusta but wanted to be interviewed in Nicosia where he spent most afternoons due to family responsibilities. He chose to be interviewed at his grandparents' house in Nicosia. His grandparents lived in a popular neighbourhood. Every time I drove past the area, I had admired the gardens and the architectural design of the houses, which reflected the British Colonial style. In "*Make-Believe Space*," Yael Navaro-Yashin explains that this neighbourhood was built in 1930s and that Greek Cypriots, Turkish Cypriots, Armenian Cypriots and Maronite Cypriots lived here happily as neighbours until 1963. Since reading about this neighbourhood, I had a different perspective on it. I tried to imagine a community of peaceful

coexistence and the stories that each house held within. The houses were positioned on either side of a wide street not far from the most prestigious shopping area in northern Nicosia. Its proximity to primary schools and to cafes and restaurants make the street sought-after.

As I parked my car to get to my participant's grandparents' house, I saw that one of the houses had been turned into a crèche and two were undergoing re-construction. The red tiled roof had disappeared, and two more floors were being built on each of those houses. Luckily, the trees and plants were still in place. Most of these houses had orange trees in front of them. Was it a tradition to plant citrus trees? Or were the neighbours inspired by each other's front gardens? I was hoping to find out more about the neighbourhood from the participant. As I approached the house, I realised that a man and a woman were sitting on the balcony. There were two empty armchairs opposite them. It looked like most of the living room furniture had been moved onto the balcony. The coffee table between them had some empty coffee cups on it. As I approached the gate, they said: "You must be Özlem. Please come in and join us. Our grandson will be a bit late, but we can offer you a drink and a friendly chat". It was a very tempting offer, so I sat with them and had coffee and found myself listening to the story of how the neighbourhood had been changing and how they had enjoyed living there since 1964.

When I asked if 1964 was the year they had built the house, they looked at each other and then they looked at me. Had I asked something wrong? Before I had a chance to say anything they said that 1964 was the year they were given the chance to move in. I still did not get it. Who gave them a chance to move in? Why did they need a chance to move in? Where did they live before? Trying to be cautious, sensitive and selective about my questions, I asked whether it was possible to hear the story of why and how they moved there. They told me they'd lost everything in 1963 when the first civil war broke out. They had to flee their home with their three children to stay alive. Initially they lived in tents near Hamitköy, a small Turkish Cypriot village in the northeast of Nicosia. Afterwards, they and some other people

who also had children were given these houses. They believed that the original owners were Armenian Cypriots. They described in detail how the houses on the street differed from typical Cypriot or Ottoman-style architecture. This was a very interesting conversation. They said that they were grateful for the opportunity to move somewhere safe, but often wondered who lived there before they did. As we were talking about the neighbourhood, Mr R arrived, and we moved into the quiet conservatory to conduct the interview.

#### **4.10.2 Mr R (Turkish Cypriot, 3<sup>rd</sup> generational cohort)**

Mr R was born in 1985. He was successful in the university entrance exam and had the choice to study in Turkey. However, due to family obligations he chose to stay in Cyprus.

The teacher training institution seemed to be a good choice, so I sat for the competitive exam and managed to get in. I was extremely disappointed with the teacher education I received. It felt like I was still in high school. I learnt how to think critically but was not supposed to practice it.

Mr R explained that the content of some of the lessons were not in line with the latest educational developments. After he graduated, Mr R completed his postgraduate degree in the UK. He explained that his postgraduate studies gave him a better vision of his job.

When I started my teaching career, I was sent to a school where pupils were taught in multi grade classrooms. In my group I had Year 1 and Year 2 students all in one room. It was very challenging. Nothing had prepared me for those challenges. According to Mr R, that year and the following year, he learnt to be a teacher.

Mr R stated that teachers and their attitudes make a big difference in education in Northern Cyprus.

In this system, where inspections and assessment do not exist and where teachers are employed to teach until they retire, everything depends on the teacher's conscience. If the teacher chooses to make an effort, they make a difference in the lives of the pupils. Unfortunately, this is not always the case.

Mr R's insight into the way primary schools worked was disturbing and painful to listen to, not because of what he said but because I shared some of his views. As I listened to him, I decided that I would do whatever I could to contribute to change and to the positive environment of schools upon my return to Cyprus. Mr R was younger than Mr L and therefore he was the youngest participant I interviewed.

#### **4.11 Tenth interview**

##### **4.11.1 My story of the interview with Ms C**

Ms C was the tenth participant who contributed her life history to the study. We agreed to meet up at a mutual friend's house in southern Nicosia. I had crossed the border in my car many times before, as I often went shopping in the southern part, looking for clothes, food and drink, and other goods that you could only get in European countries. However, today was not a shopping day. As I approached the Turkish Cypriot border control, I unwound the window and handed out my Turkish Cypriot ID. I was glad that the system had been changed so that you did not have to get out of your car. The process only took five minutes. They typed in my details and I was ready to drive to the "other" side. The traffic jam at the checkpoint is usually annoying but I was lucky, as there were only two cars in front of me. Soon I pulled close to the Greek Cypriot check-in booth, I handed in my Cyprus Republic ID. While the person was checking me in, she asked whether I had the required road tax certificate and insurance that would cover me for driving my Turkish Cypriot car in Southern Cyprus. Both had expired a week earlier, so I was asked to park my car, get those certificates from the offices that were set up in the two adjoining booths, and come back for my ID.

Getting the road tax certificate and paying for the insurance took another twenty minutes, so I was glad I had allowed myself extra time.

As the person was underlining the important phone numbers for me to dial in emergencies, I promised myself once again that I would get a Greek Cypriot mobile phone number, because I knew I would not be able to use my mobile phone should I need to contact anybody. After I completed the check out and before I set off on the journey, I rang my friend and told her that I was at the border and that I would be at her place soon. Her place was on the outskirts of southern Nicosia, not far from the refugee area. Some of the people who had to leave all their belongings and their houses in 1974 were given houses in that neighbourhood. The houses were all identical and looked like small boxes next to each other. Every time I visited my friend, I drove past the refugee houses I wondered what sort of houses they left behind. Most probably they had left much bigger and better houses. Even if the house they'd left behind was not bigger, it was theirs and with all the memories and belongings it was surely better than what they were given after 1974. Whenever I drove past the neighbourhood, I felt a great deal of sadness. When I got to my friend's house, the participant was already there and they were waiting for me to have coffee. Ms C was in her mid-fifties. She was a tall slim woman. She greeted me with a smile and a hug. I was grateful that she agreed to contribute her life history.

#### **4.11.2 Ms C (Greek Cypriot, 2<sup>nd</sup> generational cohort)**

Ms C was born in 1961. She did not want to become a primary school teacher. She wanted to study literature, but due to family obligations, and because the teacher training institution was a prestigious one, she decided instead to study primary school teacher education. Ms C explained that the theoretical courses they followed were very informative. According to Ms C, the practical aspects of teaching practice were equally helpful. She said: "Even the school trips were helpful because we learnt a lot about different places that we were expected to teach about in primary schools." Ms C

stated that the teacher education she received was of a high standard and carefully designed.

When she graduated from the teacher training institution, Ms C was appointed as a teacher in a rural primary school. She moved to that area, as it was too difficult to commute every day. When she spoke about her first teaching year, Ms C explained that she was glad that she had prepared teaching materials while she was receiving her teacher education.

Those materials were very helpful. We did not have enough materials to support the curriculum, so the materials that the teachers prepared were livening up the theoretical curriculum.

Ms C gave details about how primary school teachers taught all subjects and how they contributed to the education of the new generations. She said “Teachers and teaching were prestigious when I became a teacher. Today teaching and teachers do not receive the same kind of respect.” Ms C explained why technological advances had changed the status of teachers: “We are no longer the only source of information.” In addition, she stated that teacher training/education curricula needed to be revised and improved all the time, in order to keep up with the new information that children could access.

## **4.12 Eleventh interview**

### **4.12.1 My story of the interview with Mr P**

I met my intermediary contact in the no man’s land, which is controlled by the UN. She parked her car in front of a derelict house with no doors or windows, a house on columns. Every time I cross this checkpoint, I slow down to look at this house. It reminds me of the house I grew up in. The only difference is that this one stands all by itself in no man’s land between the Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot borders. Every time I saw it, I wondered whether the owners lived in the northern or southern part now. How do they

feel if they use this checkpoint to cross the borders? I was glad that my contact waited for me at this particular spot. I was not sure if it was okay to wait there but like most Cypriots, my contact knew that if it was not for prolonged periods, you could park your car anywhere. As soon as I got in the car, we joined the queue, as I had to check in. As we approached the check-in booth, the clerk had a confused look on her face. The car we were in was a registered in southern Cyprus, so she probably thought nobody in that car would need to be checked in. The confused look on her face was probably an indication that my contact and I were challenging the assumptions that she might have had about who travels in a Greek Cypriot registered or a Turkish Cypriot registered car.

The check in process took less than a minute, unlike the previous border procedure. We then started driving along the streets of Nicosia. I had driven here many times, but being a passenger gave me an opportunity to discover new things. As we drove past one building, my intermediary contact pointed out that she had attended that particular primary school. Even though I had driven past it many times, I had not realised it was a primary school and was surprised I had not spotted it before. As a teacher, I find school buildings fascinating. They usually reflect the architecture of the period in which they were built, with some reflecting the features of the colonial period and others reflecting the traumas of the division with their high walls and boxy shape. I started thinking why I had not spotted this particular school. Was it mainly because I could not read Greek? Or was it because I did not feel like a teacher in the southern part of Cyprus? My thoughts were moving towards the insider and outsider dilemmas that I had noticed since starting my research. Realising that I had been lost in my thoughts and quiet for a while, I asked my contact whether she was happy during her time at that school. Her response was amazing. She said that not only she, but also her mother, had been happy there. Apparently, her mother had taken a position on the parent teacher committee and worked to improve the school for many years. "She continued helping the school even after I finished primary school" said my contact. With this statement I began to think about family involvement in education in the Cypriot contexts. Everything I heard, even statements like

this one resonated with my research. Perhaps this was what my supervisor meant by saying that I would start living and breathing the research. In my thoughts, I was constantly crossing the border between research and life.

The journey from the checkpoint to the participant's house took about twenty minutes. When we parked in front of the building, I noticed a big lemon tree in the front garden. It was laden with fruit and reminded me of a novel, *The Lemon Tree* by Sandy Tolan, which I had bought but never read. . . It was a novel based on conflict. I made a mental note to read it. While I was admiring the tree, my intermediary contact pointed out that we needed to go to the first floor. I was not sure about the participant's English language skills so had asked her if she would be willing to act as a translator during the interview; her incredible academic skills and fluency in English and Greek, coupled with her interest in researching memories of refugees, made her a perfect translator. In addition to her skills, her Greek Cypriot ethnic background would be a key to the insider position that I hoped to attain during my interviews with the Greek Cypriot participants. We rang the doorbell on the ground floor and the translator spoke to the participant through the intercom system in Greek. I did not understand a word of the conversation. The translator said that the participant was sending the lift to the ground floor to pick us up. I was surprised that he wanted us to use the lift for only one flight of stairs but was also happy that he seemed thoughtful and hospitable. Perhaps I did not need to worry about the insider position with this interview.

When he opened the door, Mr P's blue eyes and amazing smile were the first things I noticed. He was a medium height man in his eighties. He opened the door as wide as it could open and invited us in. He said welcome in English and also in Greek. I truly felt welcomed. Once we were inside the house, he showed us into the living room. In one corner of the room he had a small table, a table lamp and some books. The room had a comfortable L shaped sofa. The translator and I sat on the sofa and Mr P sat on his chair that he took from behind his desk. He sat facing us and he called for his helper to ask us what we wanted to drink. In addition to coffee, we were

given three different types of sweet offerings. He pointed out two of them and he told me that they are the sweets that are usually made and eaten around Christmas time. He then pointed out the third offering and told us that they were the traditional pumpkin pies that his daughter had made for our interview. At that moment, I realised that not only Mr P but also his daughter welcomed us through the offerings that she had prepared, even though she was not there physically. All my worries about the interview disappeared. Mr P was an incredibly generous person, not just with the offerings, but also with sharing knowledge.

#### **4.12.2 Mr P (Greek Cypriot, 1<sup>st</sup> generational cohort)**

Mr P was born in 1931. He entered Morphou Teacher's college in 1949. He came from a poor background. He explained that teaching was a very prestigious job during that period.

In those days the best pupils of the secondary schools wanted to become teachers. When I passed the entrance examination they invited me to the interview. Being successful in the entrance exam was not enough; you had to be successful at the interview too.

Mr P stated that the whole village had celebrated his success in being admitted to the Teachers College. He explained that his village was in the east of the island while the teacher's college was in the west.

It was a strict boarding school. I packed a bed and all my clothes and got the bus to Nicosia. Then I waited for the bus to Morphou. It was a difficult journey.

Mr P described the education he received at the Teachers' College and how their days were organised.

The system was based on Anglo Saxon values. We had Physical Education every morning at 6am. Then it was breakfast time. We were introduced to porridge and oats. The cook who worked at the college used to work at the British High Commission, so he knew about British cuisine. It wasn't just about food, we learnt table manners as well. We could dress casually for breakfast and lunch, but

we had to dress up formally for dinner. We were not allowed to speak during dinner.

Mr P pointed out that they had social evenings at least three times a week and they were taught about different types of music and dance. “In those days, a teacher was expected to have academic knowledge as well as cultural and social knowledge and skills.”

Once he graduated, Mr P was appointed to a school near his hometown.

I bought a bicycle because I could not afford a car. I was going to stay in the village, but I wanted to be able to go to other places and that's why I bought the bicycle. I also bought myself a nice watch. These were necessary. I paid the bicycle in instalments, one pound per month.

Mr P explained the difficulties that he faced during his first teaching year. He also explained that the village he was teaching in was a mixed village. He said that the Turkish Cypriot teacher and he usually organised school trips together, even though it was not a common practice on the island. “We used to hire a bus and share the costs and put all the pupils in and go on excursions which were compulsory in those days.” This was the first time I had heard about true co-operation between Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot teachers. When I wanted to know more about this co-operation in the following interview, Mr P told me that their co-operation as teachers helped the whole village. He also told me that some of the students chose to attend schools that were for the “other” community. He showed me a letter that was sent to him that year. I could not believe that he'd kept all his documents from those years and that I was holding a letter from 1951.

The letter was the same age as my mother. In the letter, the Education Committee for the Greek Cypriot community informed Mr P that a Turkish Cypriot boy wanted to attend his classes. This letter and Mr P's narrative made me realise that even though this was not a common practice, segregation was challenged by some teachers and in some settings. I wondered whether Mr P was consciously challenging the segregation that

was implemented during the colonial period. However, he then talked about how the British system was designed to appreciate successful teachers. “I received scholarships and studied in Scotland and in America too.” Mr P used the new knowledge that he gained abroad to enrich his teaching. He also realised the importance of professional development. When he mentioned professional development, Mr P offered to show us his study room. We followed him to the back of the flat. When he opened the door and invited us to his study, I felt I was entering a magical setting. There was a grand table in the middle of the room. All the walls were full of bookshelves and books from the floor to the ceiling. It was an incredible room. Mr P had books on a variety of topics and ranging from very old to contemporary.

#### **4.13 Twelfth interview**

##### **4.13.1. My story of the interview with Mr K**

Mr K was the final participant I interviewed. I interviewed him at the shop he was running in southern Nicosia. I walked across the border and walked through the shopping streets of divided Nicosia. When I reached the neighbourhood where the shop was, I asked a couple of people for directions. Eventually I walked into the shop where Mr K was selling souvenirs. When I opened the shop door, I did not know what to expect and walked in cautiously. Mr K raised his head from the newspaper he was reading, looked at me above his reading glasses, smiled and said: “welcome.” His warmth made me feel that I was given the “insider” position once again.

As he showed me a seat, I heard the call for prayers from the mosque. I must have looked puzzled because Mr K said: “We are so close to the border that we could hear the call for prayers from here. I am sure you can also hear the church bells from where you live.” Thinking that borders are not effective for sound, I smiled. Mr K offered me a Cypriot coffee and asked

me about my studies. When I explained what I was doing he congratulated me and said that he was happy to contribute his life history.

#### **4.13.2 Mr K: (Greek Cypriot, 2<sup>nd</sup> generational cohort)**

Mr K was born in the late 1950s. His family wanted him to become a teacher. “In those days, you did not question your parents’ wishes and guidance.” Mr K explained that he became a teacher because his parents wanted him to, yet he loved his profession. He added that he learnt a lot about teaching during the teaching practice. “I can say that the teaching practice complemented the theoretical education that we received.” Mr K said that the teaching practice that they had taught them how to manage a class, how to prepare and plan the lessons and also how to teach in multi grade classes. “What we learnt during the internship periods helped us throughout our careers.” Mr K believed that the teacher training/education that he received was of a high standard. “Even though the education we received was not accepted as BA level, the knowledge and skills we gained during our studies was equal to it.”

Mr K then told me how he was always given challenging groups in the schools where he taught.

As you know, in the past we could not teach in the same school for more than five years. We were sent to different schools. Each time I was sent to a different school I was given a challenging group. In the end I learnt how to cope with those pupils.

Mr K explained the personal strategies he developed to cope with challenging pupils. He said that the inspectors used to give him good reports and praise him on his classroom management techniques. “Once you manage the class, it is easy to teach them,” said Mr K. According to Mr K, most of the pupils he taught would be classified as special needs by today’s standards.

We did not have such categories back in the day, so we tried our best to teach every child and make sure every one of them learnt and received an education before they moved onto the next school.

During the second interview, I asked Mr K to compare that system to today's.

He said:

I do not know much about the latest developments and practices, but I can say that if the children are labelled as special needs, it could give the teachers an excuse not to try their best in teaching those kids.

This chapter presented information on the interview settings and the participants of this study. It is the first of the two data presentation chapters. In this chapter narrative method has been employed in order to overcome the complicated problems which usually arise in relation to the representation of Cyprus contexts. The information presented in this chapter was compiled using fieldwork diaries. They provide information on my journeys of how I reached the interview places my interpretations and initial impressions as well as biographical information regarding the participants of this study. This chapter sets the scene for the following chapter, which is the second of the data analysis chapters. It focuses on a more traditional approach of interview data analysis.

## CHAPTER 5 - DATA ANALYSIS: PART 2

### 5.1 Introduction

The careful analysis of topics, content, style, context and the telling of narratives will reveal people's understanding of the meanings of key events in their lives or their communities and the cultural contexts in which they live (Gibbs, 2007:56).

This chapter reflects a "careful analysis of content, style and context" of the life history narratives of twelve Cypriot primary school teachers regarding their professional identity constructions and the social, cultural and historical contexts of Cyprus. It is the second of two data reporting chapters. As explained in the Methods and Methodology Chapter, the life history narratives, which are analysed here, were collected over two sets of interviews. Following Cortazzi's (1993), Boyatzis' (1998), Fairclough's (2003), Reissman's (2008), Gee's (2014) and Birkman and Kvale's (2015) work, a thematic analysis was carried out on the collected life history narratives in which the "primary attention is on 'what' is said" (Reissman, 2008: 53). Boyatzis (1998) defines thematic analysis as:

Thematic analysis is a process for encoding qualitative information. The encoding requires an explicit "code." This may be a list of themes; a complex model with themes, indicators, and qualifications that are casually related; or something in between these two forms (p.4).

As the statement suggests, I coded and thematically categorised the transcribed interviews. This meant that I was "immersed" (Goodson, 2013) in the collected data in conducting the analysis. This lengthy and challenging process gave way to four shared overarching themes and twelve sub-themes, which form the following parts of this chapter.

The four overarching themes emerged through my analysis of the data: Guidelines<sup>16</sup>, Generations, Genealogy and Gateways. The first overarching

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<sup>16</sup> Guidelines is used in the plural form to indicate practices across the divide in Cyprus

theme is Guidelines. It represents the official pre-service and in-service teacher education and professional development; in other words, the formal aspects as well as the informal, personal aspects of teacher identity formations. The second overarching theme is Generations. It denotes both the age categories and their responses to historical periods in Cyprus in connection to their professional identity formations as teachers. The third overarching theme is Genealogy. The Oxford English Dictionary explains that the term “genealogy” originates from Greek. In Greek, “genea” means race or generation and “logos” means knowledge. When this definition is considered, Genealogy as an overarching theme stands for the different generations of families and their influences on educational practices and hence the transformation of knowledge in Cyprus contexts. The fourth overarching theme is Gateways. This theme consists of personal and professional border narratives. It is called Gateways instead of borders because borders symbolize partition and segregation while gateways suggest an opening and possibility. Therefore, this final theme is deliberately named gateways to conceptualise the future possibilities in Cyprus. These overarching themes will be referred to as the “Four Gs.” The following table shows the Four Gs and the sub-themes that are connected to them.

OVERARCHING THEMES:	Guidelines	Generations	Genealogy	Gateways
SUB-THEME1:	Reluctance in becoming a teacher	Narrative style and need for validation	Influence of families on choice of careers	Views on the other(s)
SUB-THEME 2:	Inspection and evaluation systems	Displacements	Ancestral voices and post memory in social contexts	Physical and professional borders
SUB-THEME 3:	Personal passion in aid of profession	Perceptions of the profession	Influence of families on schooling	Outlook on the future

Table 4: Emerged themes and sub-themes

The structure of the analysis framework for the emergent themes is inspired and informed by Turvey's (2013) *Narrative Ecologies* work. In his study, Turvey (2013) refers to the parallels of narratives and the ecosystem and draws a framework of the narrative ecologies. He explains the connection between growth rings that are visible through the cross section of a tree and the narratives. Inspired by the abovementioned narrative ecology framework, I have used the image of the cross section of an olive tree trunk in presenting the emerged themes and their sub-themes. I have named the figure the Ecology of Themes. It shows how the emerged themes are situated on the cross section of an olive tree trunk. In situating the themes on the image of a tree trunk I aim to draw attention to its growth and potential for change. Just like the tree trunk, the narratives of the teachers are also ever changing and not fixed.

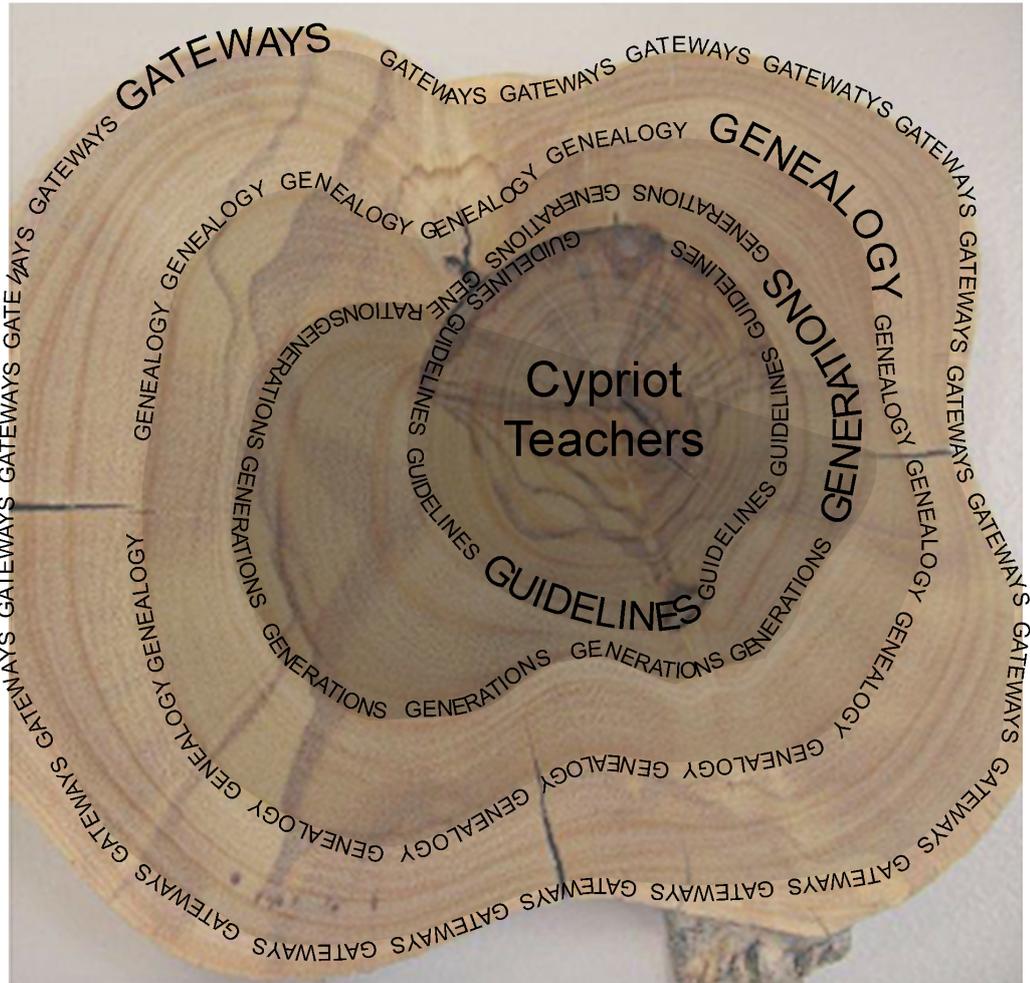


Figure 4: Ecology of themes

Original image of the cross section of the olive tree from Cherubini, Humbel and Beeckman et al.'s 2013 work.

The choice of the olive tree in representing the emerged themes of Cypriot teacher narratives is significant for different reasons. Olive trees are local to the geography of Cyprus. They grow in the south and in the north of the island and also in no man's land<sup>17</sup>, which divides the island into two. Like all vegetation on the island, olive trees do not respond to borders, nationality or belonging. They grow in the north, in the south and in between. Using the cross section of an olive tree trunk, as the symbol of how the emerged data

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<sup>17</sup> No man's land is also known as the border, the green line or the buffer zone. This is an area that is in control of the United Nations and not by either of the Cypriot communities that dominate the northern or the southern parts of Cyprus.

is grouped is significant, as it is a neutral symbol that is part of both sides without belonging to either.

In addition to the local significance, olive trees, and especially olive branches, are generally used to represent peace. Using a peace symbol in this study is crucial as it aims to provide a bi-communal perspective from a divided and conflict-ridden society. Another reason why an olive tree was chosen as the symbol of the narrative ecology framework was because olive trees are evergreen and therefore present in all seasons, just like narratives and stories that are ever present in our lives regardless of place or time.

The Republic of Cyprus flag depicts olive branches; given that it is associated with the Greek Cypriot community, my choice could be interpreted as partial. However, the flag was actually designed by a Turkish Cypriot in 1960 when the Republic was being set up after the colonial era. This was a good example of the blurred boundaries between “us” and “them.” The flag, which is currently identified as the representation of the Greek Cypriot community, was actually designed by a member of the Turkish Cypriot community. This realisation made the choice of the olive tree more meaningful for the research.

The cross section of an olive tree is both symbolically and visually noteworthy. The growth rings of an olive tree do not have uniform boundaries. In other words, they are not actually circular. They look more like waves than boundaries and some parts of the different rings are really close to each other, whilst other parts are more spaced (See Figure 4). Having no rigidly shaped boundaries make the image of the rings more appropriate for this study. According to Cherubini, Humbel and Beeckman et al. (2013), climate change affects the growth of olive trees. These climate changes form the rings of growth in a particular way for the olive trees. They argue that the outside factors shape the olive tree rings as the tree grows. Similarly, it is argued in this study that the social and political environments of the island of Cyprus shape the narratives of the different generations of teachers. Therefore, in using the image of the cross section of an olive tree

that Cherubini, Humbel and Beeckman et al. (2013) have used in their work, I have situated the emergent themes onto the image of the cross section of it. They use the cross section in determining the age of an olive tree. I have used it in narrating the emerged themes and named it the Ecology of Themes.

In the image above, the rings have been highlighted using the themes that emerged from the study. The natural, non-uniform shape of the rings fit in well with the study as they show how each emerged theme almost touches the previous one in places, while getting more distant from it in different places. In other words, the emerged four Gs and their sub-themes have close as well as distant connections to each other.

## **5.2 The First G: Guidelines**

The thematic analysis of teachers' life histories produced guidelines as the first shared, overarching theme. Guidelines in this context refer to the pre-service teacher education and in-service teaching experiences as well as the personal and social aspects of teachers' professional identity constructions. This emergent theme reflects the research question: How are teachers' perceptions of teaching and teachers formed or re-formed during the pre-service and in-service periods? In their life history narratives, participants commented on the teacher education they received. Lortie (1975) and Lacey (1977) explore teacher education and teachers' socialisation processes and hence teacher professional identity constructions. Both explore the link between teachers' identity and teacher education and induction periods. They propose that pre-service teacher education plays an important role in the formation of a teacher's identity. More than four decades later, the participants of this study placed a similar emphasis on the teacher training/education in their life history narratives. In addition to their pre-service periods, the participants also highlighted the link between their personal and professional lives. This is in line with Lortie's (1975); Lacey's (1977); Goodson's (1992); Goodson and Hargreaves' (1996); Sugrue's (1996); McCormack's (2000); Kearney's (2003), Moore's (2004) and Halse's

(2010) works that have been explored in Chapter 2 of this study in connection to teachers' lives and their professional identities. In addition to the emphasis they placed on their personal lives, the participants also stressed the importance of historical, cultural and social contexts of Cyprus in relation to their professional identities. Therefore, colonialism, post-colonialism and post-division periods are depicted in their life history narratives. This shows the blur between personal, political and professional realms in connection to teacher identities (Goodson, 2003; Beijaard et al. 2004, Alsup, 2006; Feridun, 2011) in Cyprus. The life histories of the participants reflect the interconnectedness of personal, professional, social and political contexts in Cyprus. All of these interconnected realms are unified in the teacher education and also in the professional identities of teachers. This perspective is in line with Bourdieu's notion of the "oblate." Bourdieu (1988), quoted in Grenfell and James (1998), explains that state education enables "education, culture, training and career of teachers" (p.39). In this study, these interconnected realms are reflected within the participants' narratives.

Mr P, a first generational cohort participant, said:

The teacher training/education that we received at Morphou Teachers College<sup>18</sup> equipped us with knowledge and skills that we needed for the job. The job was demanding, as we had to teach the children and their parents, especially their fathers, too. We were advised to go to the coffee shops and mix with the villagers after school and especially in the evenings and guide the locals on farming and agriculture etc. Our teacher-training curriculum was contemporary and included the usual subjects like Maths, English, Science, Music as well as Animal Welfare, Agriculture and Dancing. It was designed to help us become the most sophisticated group of people within our communities. It was the British system and it worked well.

Mr P's statement offers an insight into how the trainee teachers were trained to educate not only the children but also to guide the parents and the wider

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<sup>18</sup> This was the multi-national primary school teacher training institution that was set up in 1937 by the British Colonial Administration.

community in light of the “British system.” This statement highlights the systems that were in place during the British colonial period in Cyprus in connection to teachers and the teaching profession. It also highlights the collective professional identities by suggesting that teachers were constructed to be a “sophisticated group.” In his statement, Mr P presents the colonial system as a positive. Another first generational cohort participant, Mr H also points out to the positive aspects of the colonial system in relation to teacher education.

Every morning our teacher trainers would wake us up at six o'clock and would run with us for five kilometres. This is how well organised the British system was. In addition to that we had social evenings once a week where we listened to classical music and learned about ballroom dancing. In addition to the ordinary teacher training, they trained us to be physically fit and socially educated. That is why my generation was different.

Like Mr P, Mr H also referred to the colonial system in a positive manner. His statement expresses an approval and an appreciation of the British system of teacher education/training. He explains that teacher education/training during the British Colonial period included not only the academic but also the social and cultural aspects too. Mr H defines his professional identity as “socially educated” and “different.”

Similarly, Ms C, a second generational cohort participant, portrays a positive perspective regarding the teacher education she obtained:

Most of the teacher trainers who taught us were really good. Of course, some were better than others but if I were to generalise, I would say that they were good. The majority of them taught us things that we would use in our teachings. It was difficult times, yet teacher training was given the importance it needed. The teacher-training curriculum was well designed; it covered Maths, English, Science, as well as Home Economics and Gardening. We had inspirational lecturers who not only provided subject knowledge but also became good role models for us. The knowledge that I gained during the pre-service education was extremely useful, but I became aware of this after I started teaching. For many years I used the information and skills I gained during my training period and helped my students and other teachers.

In her statement, Ms C draws attention to the importance that was placed on teacher training/education even during the troubled period in Cyprus. She evaluates the training that she received and presents a positive perspective. Most of the participants from the first generational cohort and some participants from the second generational cohort expressed positive comments on the teacher training/education curriculum. However, the participants from the third generational cohort portrayed a more critical perspective regarding the teacher training curriculum and regarding the teacher training/education.

Another second generational cohort teacher, Ms A, commented on the difficult times in Cyprus regarding teacher education/training:

Teacher training/education is really important. Unfortunately, people from my generational cohort and I did not receive a satisfying education. Our educators were experienced teachers and head teachers, but they were not teacher trainers. They did not know much about methodology. They were good at guiding us in the right direction according to their experiences. I suppose the events of 1963 and 1974 impacted on teacher training in a negative way. Even though I received my teacher education a few years later, we still felt the hardships. By the way, I am not saying I didn't receive a proper education. Our educators did their best and they also gave us extended teaching practice periods. We learned the job by doing the job.

Ms A's account is ambivalent and conflicted as she expresses the hardships yet claims that the teacher education that she received was good. Although she points out the political and historical complexities and how they interfered with teacher training/education, her professional identity construction focuses on the positive and she claims that she "learned the job." Ms A's professional identity construction is in line with Hunt's (2010) declaration that "identities are tied up with memory and history" (p.106). Ms A's declaration was one of the rare occasions during which a participant elaborated on the ethnic conflict and its direct influence on teacher training/education. Even though she talked about that connection, Ms A

claimed that she still received a “proper education.” This is an indication of how she struggled in acknowledging the troubles and defending her training at the same time. In defending her training, Ms A is producing an account of herself as a competent professional and constructing her professional identity on the basis of a “proper education.”

Unlike the first and second generational cohorts, the third generation reflects a more critical evaluation of the teacher training/education that they received. Mr R commented on both the positive and negative aspects of it:

The teacher education we received equipped us with abundant theoretical knowledge yet not enough practical information. It failed in preparing us for the daily matters like classroom management and the management of parents.

Mr R offers an assessment of the training/education that he received. His attitude about the teacher training/education that he received is different to that of the participants from the first and second generational cohorts. In his statement Mr R points out the defects of the teacher training/education. His assessment of the programme indicates that Mr R has a more analytical outlook on the teacher training/education.

Mr L, another participant from the third generational cohort provided a critical assessment of the teacher education/training. He suggested that the teacher education/training that is being provided does not prepare the teachers for the current needs of the pupils:

Our pupils carry the latest technology in the form of mobile phones in their pockets. In countries like Finland and Norway, children get access to the latest technology in class. They use that technology in aid of their learning. Here we still use pen and paper. We teach handwriting in this day and age where everything is computerised.

Mr L criticises teacher training/education for not being contemporary by comparing it to other systems around the world. His comparison reflects his awareness of the latest trends in education.

When all of the aforementioned statements and the statements of the other participants which were evaluated but not included here are considered, it can be said that participants from the first and second generational cohorts expressed a general satisfaction in and, in some cases appreciation of, the teacher training/education they received. However, participants from the third generational cohort were more critical of the teacher training/education that they received. The difference in approach could be connected to generational expectations and perceptions of teachers and transmission of knowledge. Teachers from the first and second generational cohorts experienced an education system (both as students and as teachers) where teachers were the main sources of knowledge. Teachers from the third generational cohort however, had the chance to access knowledge in different ways. Gilbert (2014) explains that in the digital era, the era that the third generational cohort of participants could be associated with, teachers are the managers of learning rather than the ultimate sources of knowledge. These differences could explain the varying comments on how satisfying the teacher education/training programmes were.

In addition to guidelines, three sub themes have emerged in connection to the collected data. The following figure (Figure 5) shows guidelines and its sub- themes.

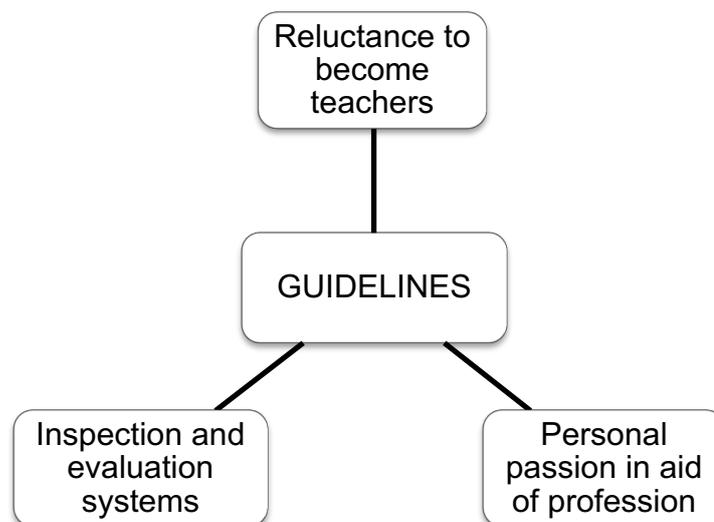


Figure 5: First theme and sub-themes

### 5.2.1 Sub-theme1: The Reluctance to Become Teachers

The process of becoming (someone? something?) is never a calm, linear course. It is a knotty path full of twists and turns and always involves, if only partially and in passing, a process of loss, abandonment or (re)alignment of subjectivity and identity (Halse, 2010: 25).

Reluctance towards becoming teachers across generations and across the divide in Cyprus may signify a conscious or a subconscious resistance of (re)alignment of identity and responsibility in conflict settings. Almost all participants stated that they entered teacher education, and hence the teaching profession, reluctantly. All of those who expressed their reluctance wanted to study something else. Bryant (2004) explains that education is an honour for Cypriots across the border in Cyprus. When education occupies such an important role in the lives of Cypriots, it is interesting that the majority of the teachers who were interviewed did not want to become teachers while their parents persuaded them otherwise. Bryant's statement can be extended to include a generational aspect. Ten of the twelve participants explained that they wanted to pursue a different profession. Some wanted to study a different subject because of their interests, while others did not consider teacher education as an option. When they chose teacher training/education, some chose it because of the financial security it offered, where others chose it to comply the wishes of their family members.

The reluctance that the participants expressed towards becoming teachers was common across generations and ethnicities of the participants of this study. Each one of them who stated a reluctance in becoming a teacher offered a detailed explanation of how they did not want to become a teacher and what changed their minds or, in some cases, forced them to change their minds about teaching. Their "narrative constructions" (Goodson and Gill, 2011) of their choices seemed to reflect contradicting emotions of disappointment, regret, compliance, passion and pride. One of the most dramatic moments during the interviews was when Ms M from the first generational cohort burst into tears and explained how desperately she

wanted to become a journalist when she graduated from high school. When she announced her wish to her mother, however, her mother begged her to become a teacher.

I had to become a teacher. It was my poor mother's wish. Reluctantly, I became one but the wish to become a journalist never disappeared. I carried it with me all the time. Eventually, I started writing in a newspaper after I retired. I did what my mother wanted me to do for more than thirty years and now I am doing what I always wanted to do.

Ms M's compliance did not eliminate her passion for journalism. She obeyed her mother's wishes and became a teacher and continued teaching for the following thirty years. This was a long time to continue a profession for which she initially had had no passion for. She explained that once she retired, Ms M pursued her dream and became a columnist.

Another dramatic example of reluctance to become a teacher was given by Mr S, from the second generational cohort:

I desperately wanted to be a medical doctor. I was a successful student too. But I lost both of my parents during the events in 1963. Being an orphan meant that I had to rely on the financial help of the extended family. Even though I had scored the required grade for the faculty of medicine, I could not ask the extended family to support me financially for the following ten years. Studying to become a teacher was free so that was the only option for a person in my situation and that is what I did. In reality I did not want to be a teacher.

The inflicted trauma of the ethnic conflict shaped Mr S's professional career choice. In a way, his professional identity became his "trauma-coping mechanism" (Wang, 2008). His professional identity was marked by memories of trauma and conflict; however, his life history narrative did not reflect resentment or complaint.

Mr H, from the first generational cohort wanted to study Physical Education.

I wanted to study sports. I did not want to become a teacher and certainly not a primary school teacher. However, there were no universities on the island to offer Physical Education and Sports as a subject. The only higher education option for us was universities in Turkey. I worked hard and prepared for the Sports Academies in Turkey. However, the year I graduated from high school there were a lot of political troubles in Turkey. When it became clear that I would not be able to follow my dream, my mother encouraged me to become a primary school teacher. That's why I attended the Teacher Training Institution.

In his declaration Mr H does not classify teacher training as higher education. He claims that Turkish Universities were the only higher education options and then he reveals that the Teacher Training Institution was an option. His career choice was shaped by his mother's encouragement. His reluctance towards becoming a teacher is not reflected in his narrative constructions. In his life history narrative, Mr H explained how he contributed to the education of a number of pupils and to the education and protection of his community. This indicates that his professional identity narrative was practiced (Goodson, 2013).

Ms U from the first generational cohort became a teacher during the British colonial period. However, unlike the others, she was trained while working as a teacher and she explained that she initially had not intended to do it as a profession. She pointed out that she was passionate about her post in the Cinema for the RAF soldiers in Cyprus:

I was part of a different culture with my RAF Cinema position. I did not want to give that up, but I had to earn money because of family circumstances. When I became a teacher, my life changed. I learned to care about pupils. I was working at the School for the Blind. I learned to empathise and to care about others while working there. I thought teaching would be a temporary phase in my life but soon it became my life.

Ms U's statement is significant as it presents how she wanted to belong to the colonial class in Cyprus. In addition to the colonial depiction, Ms U's statement is also significant as it points out the blur between her personal and professional identities. She claims that teaching was her life. This is a

strong statement, yet it is expressed by most of the participants from the first and second generational cohorts.

As previously mentioned, ten out of the twelve participants stated that teacher training was not what they had in mind for their degree programme. One participant who said that he did want to teach nonetheless explained that primary school teaching was not his first choice. Therefore, only one out of twelve participants made a conscious decision to become a primary school teacher. This reluctance is common to all generational and ethnic cohorts. In search of reasons for the reluctance, all participants who said they did not want to become primary school teachers were asked to elaborate on why. All ten participants who were reluctant to become teachers explained in detail how much they have enjoyed being a teacher after they became one. All of their responses revolved around emphasising how much they had enjoyed their profession and how successful they were as teachers.

During the interviews it almost felt like the participants wanted me to ignore their previous statements that they did not want to become teachers and wanted to make sure that I understood about their competence and success as individuals. They all explained how they adopted and adapted to the professional roles, which they were reluctant about. Ms M said:

Please don't get me wrong. I really did not want to become a teacher but once I started teaching I loved it. Yes, it was not my first choice and I never gave up on the idea of becoming a journalist, but this does not mean that I was a bad teacher. In fact, I scored the highest grade in entering the teacher training institution and I graduated as the first of my year group.

I explained to Ms M that I was only curious and not judgemental and that I was interested in finding reasons why teacher training/education was not an initial choice. However, she ignored my explanations and wanted to make sure that she provided enough details about how she was a successful teacher and that she was recognised as a successful teacher by the Ministry

of Education and by the families who wanted their children to be educated by Ms M. Likewise, when probed about why he did not consider teaching as a career choice in the same way that he considered Medicine, Mr S explained that he “actually” was a good teacher. He explained that once he became a teacher, he learnt how to put the needs of the students first and not to dwell on the past:

I became a teacher reluctantly but once I became a teacher I realised that I could not do the job if I get stuck in the past. There was no time for self-pity. As a society we lived through troubles and education was the key for a better future, but the teachers were the ones who could enable that change. I had to take on the responsibility. My conscience is clear. I did my best. I can gladly say that I was a good teacher.

After the initial two responses I reworded my questions and made sure that I was not perceived as judgemental or questioning. However, the responses I received did not change. All ten of the participants who were asked about their reluctance responded in very similar ways. For example, once Ms D was asked to elaborate on her reluctance towards becoming a teacher, she said: “Yes, I did not want to become a teacher, but I became one and I became a really successful one.” Participants from either community did not like to be reminded that they did not want to become teachers. I worded and reworded the question and I was speaking the same language with some of the participants, yet the response was always the same. They wanted to make sure that I knew, and that it was on my record, that they were good and successful teachers. As explained in Chapter 2, the participants’ professional identity constructions were entangled with their personal identity constructions. Therefore, they appeared to be personally offended by my enquiries about their reluctance in choosing their profession. The similar response across the borders made me realise that Bryant’s (2004) statement about education being an honour appeared to ring true in my participants’ cases.

Only two interviews were planned with each participant. Yet, I had to revisit Mr H for a third time for clarification on one of the themes that emerged.

During this third interview I revisited the same question regarding his reluctance to become a teacher and Mr H said that even the most reluctant of students were “turned” into teachers through the training/education that they received. He said: “The teacher education and training and the internship periods turned me into a teacher. The British system turned me into a teacher.” His reflection on turning into a teacher suggests an identity that is loyal to the British system. This powerful statement reflects belonging through the construction of professional identity. Mr H’s comments on the success of the colonial education system in “turning” him into a teacher: in this sense he constructs himself as a colonial ‘subject’ as well as a teacher. This sense of belonging can be problematical for the generations who argue for independence and freedom, yet it is in line with the Cypriot identity constructions that are explained in Chapter 1. In addition to reluctance towards becoming teachers, inspection and evaluation systems also emerged as a sub-theme as part of the first G.

### **5.2.2 Sub-theme2: Inspection and Evaluation Systems**

The second sub-theme, which emerged in relation to guidelines, is the inspection and evaluation systems. When they were talking about the pre-service and in-service experiences, participants explained about the inspections they underwent during their teacher training/education periods and during and after their probationary periods as newly qualified teachers. Even though they commented on different forms and degrees of evaluation systems, all twelve participants argued that these systems helped them develop professionally. Teacher trainers and education inspectors who are the “significant others” (Pollard, 2014) play an important role in the professional identity formation of teachers.

All first and second generational cohort participants explained that the inspection systems during their teaching careers contributed positively to their professional development. Those participants emphasised the importance of in-service evaluations. The remaining four participants, who form the third generational cohort, put emphasis on the value of the

evaluation systems during the internship periods of their teacher education and training, hence the pre-service training period. This group of participants explained that the in-service period inspection and evaluation systems were “inadequate” and “dysfunctional.”

Mr H, a first generational cohort participant explained that the idea of being inspected at any time during the term meant that the teachers had short-term, medium-term and long-term plans ready all the time. ‘You had to be fully prepared because you did not know when the inspector would turn up.’ During the interview Mr H showed me some of those plans, which he had carefully preserved in folders. They were neat handwritten plans, all placed into organised folders in individual bags, lovingly and carefully preserved against decay with mothballs. Although the ink was slightly faded, the writing remained legible. The folders dated back to late 1950s and early 1960s. In preserving these physical artefacts Mr H seemed to be preserving a sense of who he had been and was still. He told me that he wanted to “pass them on to the new generation of teachers” as those were highly praised plans by the inspectors:

different inspectors complimented me on my planning skills. It was a skill I gained during the teacher training. I was happy that the inspectors recognised it and praised me for it. They were time-consuming but worth it.

Mr H stated that his plans were proof of how successful he was as a teacher. He also explained that the inspectors were fair and well respected:

We respected the evaluation of the inspectors. We knew that they were knowledgeable and fair. In fact, some of them took fairness very seriously. I can never forget my initial year of teaching and the inspection experiences of that year. My wife and I got married before I was sent to that remote village and we set up our first home in the village, two buildings away from the school. As it was a remote village, the inspector who used to come to inspect me had to stay overnight. However, he refused to stay with my wife and me. He said that people would question his fairness if he were to be seen at our house. My wife and I used to carry a single bed into the classroom

and turn it into a bedroom for the night. That is how careful the inspectors were.

Mr H's statement shows how diligent, valued and professionally objective/impartial the inspectors were perceived to be.

In a similar manner, Ms M, also from the first generational cohort, described her experiences of being inspected in a very positive way. During the first year of her teaching she was given a group of eighty students. "Today this would be against the regulations but, in those days, we did not have such regulations." In her remark Ms M emphasised how teaching practices have changed over time. Her main focus was on the inspection systems. The overcrowded class created concerns for Ms M about the inspection and evaluation procedure:

I was dreading having the inspector in my class. I was terrified because I knew that it would be difficult to control the children. When he eventually arrived, he observed me teaching and told me that I should not worry about teaching them everything, which was impossible anyway. He advised me to teach them the basics: "Ms M, make sure you teach them a little bit of maths, a little bit of reading and a little bit of writing". I was glad for the advice and I was really happy that the inspector understood what I was going through.

Ms M recalled being inspected as helping her "develop as a teacher." "I was relieved that he understood the difficulties of teaching such a big group," she said. In both of the abovementioned examples, inspectors were not only evaluating but also guiding the teachers and the teachers perceived them as fair, and therefore respected them. In other words, the inspectors appeared to have helped the teachers in constructing their teacher professional identities.

Mr S, a participant from the second generational cohort, explained that his school day always started an hour before the bell went off for the lessons. He said it was self-discipline and that he was "delighted" that an inspector commented on this and commended him for it. When he was teaching in a

remote village, an inspector came to inspect him, but he arrived really early to see when Mr S would be at school. When he turned up so early the inspector told him his “sense of responsibility would make him a very successful teacher.” Mr S recalled and narrated this event in a proud manner during the interview.

Ms C, a participant from the second generational cohort, also expressed her appreciation towards the inspectors. She gave details of her experience that an inspector turned up at her school simply to praise her, as the parents were telling everybody how successful Ms C was. “The inspector did not come to observe me or to inspect me, but she came to tell me how good I was. This was the best motivation. I worked even harder after that.” All of these remarks showed a positive rapport between the inspector and the teacher and demonstrated that despite the hierarchy there was mutual understanding and appreciation. Perhaps this positive reinforcement was one of the main driving forces of the professional development for the first two generational cohorts of teachers.

Unlike the first and second generational cohorts, however, both of the Turkish Cypriot participants and one of the Greek Cypriot participants of the third generational cohort emphasised the lack of evaluations during their in-service period. Instead, they were evaluated during their pre-service period. Some of them explained the necessity of the evaluation systems while some mentioned that they were happy not to be inspected, as they did not perceive the inspectors as competent in their fields. Ms D (a Turkish Cypriot participant from the third generational cohort) explained that inspectors and the practice of inspection during the in-service period was, and still is, an uncommon practice. She explained that she was observed and evaluated during the pre-service period only:

Our lecturers from the teacher training institution and the teachers of the primary schools where we had our internship periods used to evaluate us. Those evaluations were extremely helpful as they guided us in the right direction and pointed out our strengths and weaknesses. That was a supportive practice. Unfortunately, we did

not have inspectors coming to our classes once we became teachers. I believe there was only one inspector at the Ministry of Education when I was a newly qualified teacher and during my probationary period during which is when you are supposed to be evaluated. Having only one inspector meant that he did not have enough time to inspect everybody.

Ms D expressed the lack of evaluation and inspection using the adjective “unfortunate.” When she was asked to elaborate on the matter during a follow up interview, she said that “it would have been comforting to know whether I was on the right track or not. But the lack of that practice meant that I reached out and got help from more experienced teachers and my own lecturers at the teacher training institution.” This statement is an example of teacher agency and how teachers managed to find their own solutions even if they faced major issues like the lack of evaluation systems.

Mr R, a participant from the third generational cohort, explained that inspections were not in place, but had they been in place, it would have been problematic:

I have been observed during the internship periods of the teacher-training programme. I have never been inspected or evaluated as a qualified teacher. In a way, I am glad because the lecturers from the teacher training institution evaluated my teaching during the pre-service period. They were the ones who taught me the theory and they were the ones who evaluated whether I could transform that theory into practice. The inspectors from the Ministry of Education are usually too busy and sometimes not aware of the current practices and they tend to judge you according to their fixed views. You may ask how I know this when I am not inspected. I have listened to a lot of inspection stories in the staffroom.

This statement is a good example of teacher socialisation, and how pre-service university and in-service school environments help teachers in constructing their perspectives and teacher identities. Even though Mr R did not experience being inspected, he had formed an idea about inspectors and their practices.

Mr L, a participant from the third generational cohort, approached the matter differently and said that instead of inspections and evaluations, which sound judgemental,

Teachers should be provided with the opportunity and the necessary guidance to become better teachers. The idea of somebody else coming into your classroom for a brief time period and knowing what it is like to teach that group sounds unrealistic to me.

Mr L's understanding and response to the situation is in line with the other participants of his generational cohort. They offer critical and individualistic rather than collective identity reflections. These are reflections of the contemporary constructions that are different to the previous two generational cohorts' constructions.

### **5.2.3 Sub-theme 3: Personal Passion<sup>19</sup> in Aid of Profession**

Eleven out of the twelve participants who were interviewed mentioned a personal passion outside teaching, which they used to enrich their teaching. All of those participants, regardless of their generational cohorts, explained that they used their passion or interest in aid of classroom management. They believed that their interests made their jobs "more manageable."

Ms U, a participant from the first generational cohort, explained that she loved playing the accordion in her spare time and during lunch breaks. When she realised that the pupils would come and sit and listen to her playing, she decided to use it as part of her teaching curriculum.

Initially it would be the pupils' reward to listen to the accordion for doing their work quietly and well. In time I decided to incorporate it into a school play/production. All the children and their families were impressed at the end of the year when they presented a play with the accordion as the main music. This became a common practice for me for many years. I think the children enjoyed it as much as I did.

When Ms U was asked to give further details of her passion and how she used it in class, she explained that in those days there were few musical

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<sup>19</sup> The participants used the term passion repeatedly in referring to their interests and hobbies.

instruments and no electricity or television or radio in some of the villages. The pupils who came from such places were really amazed by the accordion and they saw it as entertainment. “I would play it and use it for different subjects. Even for maths. It is surprising what music and sounds can do.”

Mr H and Mr P – both from the first generational cohort – explained how much they enjoyed gardening and growing vegetables. Since agriculture was on the curriculum in those days, it was not surprising that both teachers were equipped with the knowledge to teach it. However, both Mr H and Mr P turned the professional skill into a personal passion. This is a good example of how personal and professional realms are intertwined in teachers’ lives. It also shows that teachers can use their personal passion in aid of a professional one. Mr H and Mr P described that they even got rewards during the competitions of which school had the best gardens, which were organised by the community education boards. Mr H said:

I come from a poor family. My father was a farmer, so I know the importance of soil and production. I was lucky because when I was training to become a teacher Agriculture was one of the subjects of the teacher-training curriculum. That was my favourite subject. I learnt a lot by studying that subject and when I became a teacher I paid a lot of attention to teaching the pupils how to grow vegetables. Growing vegetables with the pupils used to help me build a stronger bond with them. Classroom management was never an issue because of that.

Mr H gave details about how important that skill was not only for the pupils but for the wider community as well. He referred to it as a “life-saving skill:”

In 1964 when we ended up in an enclave, the pupils and I grew a lot of vegetables and fed a lot of families. Those vegetables kept us going in that enclave. I did teach them a “life-saving skill.”

Mr H’s statement explains how he used his passion in aid of the profession. It also elucidates how teachers took leading roles in the community.

Ms A stated that she is passionate about handcrafts:

I believe each school has some sort of an arts and crafts lesson where students produce. When I was in primary school that was my favourite subject. I think most of the students enjoy it because they enjoy the immediate results in the form of a product. This provides a motivation. I do ceramics and pottery in my free time and I love jewellery making and origami and things like that. As I became more experienced, I realised that crafts can be used as projects and not just in arts and crafts lessons. I started using my knowledge and passion in my groups. Children learn many skills like time management, group work and sharing responsibility and many more qualities that they can use in their lives. Planning and including the practical crafts, within the curriculum I was teaching, was not easy but it was rewarding.

Ms A continued to explain how she implemented crafts into her teachings and how children responded well to those sessions. She emphasised that they loved those sessions so much that they behaved well and studied more for their actual subjects, so they could have those craft sessions.

Using their interests to enrich their teaching is a common practice among the participants regardless of their generational cohorts. Mr L, a Greek Cypriot participant from the third generational cohort is passionate about peace and equality. He explained how he uses his passion in his teachings:

Through the peace education training that I have received, I have learnt to be a more accepting and open-minded person. I have also learnt to consider different perspectives and think critically and not in a biased way. When you think about it, these are all qualities that we would like the pupils to adopt through education. I started using the techniques that I have learnt in the classroom. Peace education also involves being at peace within yourself and within your immediate surrounding even if there is no apparent conflict there. Pupils find this fascinating. I have observed that it helps them communicate better within their groups. I have also helped some of my colleagues to adopt a similar perspective.

Through his statement it is clear that Mr L's passion about peace education has helped him adopt an uncommon perspective towards teaching. In the *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Paulo Freire (1985) differentiates between two "educational concepts and practices," which he calls "banking education" and "problem-posing education."

Banking education... attempts, by mythicizing reality, to conceal certain facts which explain the way men exist in the world; problem-posing education sets itself the task of de-mythologizing. Banking education resists dialogue; problem-posing education regards dialogue as indispensable to the act of cognition which unveils reality. Banking education treats students as objects of assistance; problem-posing education makes them critical thinkers (Freire, 1985: p.56).

In this statement Freire explains the differences between banking education and problem-posing education. Mr L's statement indicates that his views and practices are more in line with the problem-posing education model. This model has the potential of encouraging Cypriot teachers and students to become critical thinkers in relation to their "official" histories. This approach has the potential of educating a generation who would be empowered to challenge the on-going narratives and practices in Cyprus contexts. This is a crucial moment in this study as Mr L's declaration in light of Freire's work provides a perspective of how teachers can facilitate change through education.

### **5.3 The second G: Generations**

We define a "cohort" as a collection of people who are born at the same time and thus share the same opportunities that are available at a given point in history. These opportunities are called life chances by sociologists. A "generation" can be defined as a cohort that for some special reason such as a major event (war, pestilence, civil conflict or natural catastrophe such as an earthquake) develops a collective consciousness that permits that generation to intervene significantly in social change (Edmunds and Turner, 2002: p. ix).

This statement provides the basis of my understanding of cohorts and generations in connection to this study. In designing the research, the participants have been grouped into generational cohorts. However, I did not foresee that "generations" would emerge as a theme in itself. It became clear that the participants commented on the characteristics of the cohort they belonged to and also referred to the previous or following generational cohorts in a comparative style. Participants from the first generational cohort expressed a collective identity in their narratives. Ms U said:

Our generation was different. We did not have much, but we were happy to share what we had. That sharing created a community bond. When the troubles began in 1963, we opened our two-bedroom house to two more families. I don't know how we did it, but my husband and I accommodated a group of fifteen people. And it wasn't just about the troubled times. We knew how to share. For example, we were happy to share materials with our colleagues. As I said we were a different generation.

Ms U's construction of a collective identity is in line with Edmunds and Turners' (2002) aforementioned statement. According to Ms U the collective identity of her generation was not only reflected during difficult times but also in the professional settings where teachers shared materials.

Mr P, another first generational cohort participant, explained that teachers were well respected:

Our generation did not see the job as having set times. When we were sent to remote villages we knew that it was our responsibility to provide guidance as well as education. We never thought of a "school day" as the new generation calls it. We were teachers all day every day. But that was my generation.

Both of these statements construct a comparative perspective on different generational cohorts of teachers. They both emphasise nostalgia (Boym, 2001) and a generational memory that is based on sharing and inclusive practice. This portrayal is reflective of practices within each community. However, as the complicated history of events in Cyprus indicates, this sharing was not inclusive of other(s).

Mr K, a second generational cohort participant commented on his generation:

We did not label pupils in our generation. Sometimes we perceived them as difficult, but we tried to teach them. That is how we were educated. We were educated to see student failure as a personal matter. That's why my generation worked hard to get every student reach success. That is how all the educational changes and reforms were a success.

Mr K's reflection of the professional identity of his generation is a combination of the pre-service teacher education they received and a sense of personal responsibility they felt towards their pupils. According to Mr K, that is how his generation achieved educational changes.

In connection to generations, three sub-themes also emerged. The following figure displays these sub-themes.

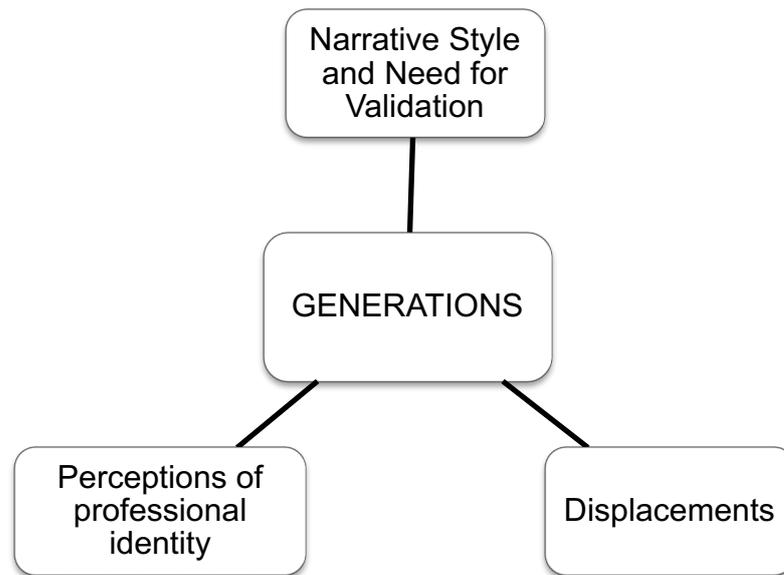


Figure 6: Second theme and sub-themes

### 5.3.1 Sub-theme1: Narrative style and need for validation

Narrative style and validation in relation to generations emerged as the first sub-theme. All of the participants from the first generational cohort, regardless of their ethnic backgrounds, embraced the free narrative style of the initial unstructured interviews. They were happy to contribute their life history narratives with no or minimal prompting. They elaborated on their teaching experiences and their perceptions of their jobs. They also responded well to the second set of interviews during which they were asked to provide clarification and detail on their previous comments. Participants from the second and third generational cohorts had a different style. They needed continuous prompting and reassurance that their narratives were the

“correct” narratives that I was “after.” Goodson (2013) explains that there are different forms of “narrativity” and that people have different narrative styles. The interviews that I conducted, and the narrative styles of the participants have proven that Goodson’s theory is applicable to Cypriot teachers and their narrative styles.

Ms A, a participant from the second generational cohort, continuously sought validation for her narrative. At the beginning of the interview she said:

Let me make sure that I understand what you want from me... You want me to tell you about my experiences as a teacher. I need to understand what the project is so that I can give you the correct information.

After I had told her that whatever she chose to provide as her narrative would be the data that I would work with, Ms A continued to comment on and be concerned about the “right” and “wrong” answers: “I would like to give you the “right” answer. I do not want to guide you “wrongly” so stop me if you think my narrative is wrong.” Ms A’s confusion and search for reassurance was partly because Life Story and Life History interviews are uncommon in Cyprus contexts. In addition to that, Ms A, who claimed to be an independent thinker, displayed signs of being a “scripted describer” (Goodson, 2013) in her narrative style.

Similarly, Mr K, a participant from the second generational cohort, wanted continuous validation for his narrative: “Please stop me if this is not what you are after. I am happy to change the way I talk about my life and about my experiences.” The interview with Mr K was fragmented because of the repeated promptings and reassurance that I had to provide as the researcher.

The need for reassurance was at its maximum during the interview with Ms D. She continuously asked whether she was talking about her experiences in “the right way:”

Are you sure this is what you are after? I mean this is just part of what I experienced...Are you sure this is research material? ...I keep going on, but I am sure this is nonsense...I would not be offended if you choose to omit my experiences from the research.

All of these statements were repeated during the interview. When the recorder was switched off, Ms D's life story became more interesting. She relaxed and provided a continuous, non-fragmented version of her experiences. With her permission, I took notes while she talked, and as soon as we finished the interview, I sat in my car and noted the information she had provided after the recorder was switched off. The need for validation that had to come from me as the researcher showed the different generational approaches to the narrative style of the study. As Goodson (2013) explains some people practice their narratives many times and become more comfortable in sharing those narratives. The first generational cohort of participants displayed this comfort. However, participants from the second and third generational cohorts needed validation of their narratives. This is an indication of how differently professional identities are constructed across the generations.

### **5.3.2 Sub-theme2: Displacements**

The second sub theme of generations was displacements. Eleven out of twelve participants mentioned displacements in their narratives. This is an interesting finding as the participants were sampled through different intermediary contacts and were not chosen with any prior information on their status. Finding that displacements affected almost all of the participants from different generational cohorts was surprising. The idea of displacements was internalised and reflected differently by each participant. All of the participants from the first generational cohort experienced displacements. The Greek Cypriot participants were displaced in 1974 while the Turkish Cypriot participants were displaced in 1963. Only one participant from the second generational cohort, a Turkish Cypriot, did not experience displacements personally or within her family. The remaining participants of this generational cohort were all displaced in 1974. Those who formed the

third generational cohort of the study did not personally experience or could not personally remember the displacements. However, they all came from displaced families. Some of the families were displaced in 1963 and some in 1974. The displacement narratives of this generational cohort were “second hand,” in other words “postmemory” narratives, as they were not the narratives of the experiences of the participants but of their families.

Mr H, a Turkish Cypriot participant from the first generational cohort, explained how he had to help his community move into an enclave in 1963:

I had to help my pupils and their families move to a safer place. I could not just think about my own safety and my own move. We moved as a community. We left everything behind. We could not even take our clothes. It was winter, and we left with nothing. When we eventually made our way to a safer village which naturally turned out to be an enclave because of the amount of people who ended up there from the neighbouring villages, we slept in barns. As a teacher, it was my responsibility to set up a new school. With the help of others, we built a room adjacent to the mosque. The walls were constructed from corrugated iron that people donated from their barns. One person donated us two of the doors from the rooms in their house. We used one of the doors as a door to the schoolroom while we painted the second one with black paint and turned it into a blackboard. Being displaced was difficult but being displaced as a teacher, was extra difficult.

Mr H’s account of being displaced is about his professional identity. His displacement narrative does not imply the trauma of the displacement but the duties he had as a displaced teacher. Mr H’s statement also reflects community co-operation and sharing.

Mr P, another first generational cohort teacher said:

I clearly remember September 1974, as it was a really difficult start of school. Some areas did not have schools, but we had one where I was. It was a makeshift school. People were traumatised, most of the pupils were traumatised but the teachers had to be strong. I had to be strong. Teaching was difficult. We did not have much in schools, but we had too many students.

This statement reflects the psychological and physical difficulties of displacements. Similar to Mr H's comment, Mr P elaborates on the responsibilities of teachers. In both cases the narratives are reflective of the professional identity requirements during the troubled times.

Ms D, who was only four years old in 1974, explained the displacement that she and parents had to go through in detail:

It was very difficult. We ended up in the English sovereign base areas before we could move to this side. Living in tents was difficult. We were all worried. We did not know whether we would be able to go back to our houses or not.

Ms D's narrative is reflective of more adult worries than a child's one. This is an indication of how younger generations internalise the narratives of the older generations. The displacement narratives, which are embedded in the personal as well as the professional identities of the teachers of different generations in Cyprus reflect the traumas of a complicated past.

### **5.3.3 Sub-theme3: Perceptions of professional identity**

Perceptions of professional identities by the participants are previously explored as part of the first G. As explained in the introduction of this chapter, some of the themes are close to each other. Like the olive tree growth rings, they almost touch each other. Therefore, in addition to the professional identity construction that is explored within Guidelines, perceptions of professional identities have also emerged as part of Generations.

All participants commented on teaching as a profession. Four participants from the first generational cohort explained that teaching was a lifestyle for them. They also mentioned that they still felt like teachers even though they retired more than two decades ago. Two out of four of the second generational cohort members mentioned that teaching is a lifestyle and that they cannot imagine themselves doing a different job. The other two

participants from the same generational cohort mentioned the importance of their position but did not see teaching as a lifestyle. Only one of the participants from the third generational cohort thought that teaching is a lifestyle and a powerful tool for social change. The remaining three participants explained that teaching is an important profession but not a lifestyle.

Mr P, a Greek Cypriot participant from the first generational cohort, explained that teaching was a prestigious job and the society placed importance on the profession:

In a way becoming a teacher was agreeing to take on the responsibility. It was an enormous responsibility to be in charge of the education of not just the pupils but the village folk too. I did my best. I taught the pupils in the mornings and their parents in the afternoons or evenings. I also gave advice on agriculture, farming and animals. It was my responsibility and I never complained. I never thought about the extra time that I was giving to the community.

He explained that teachers were well respected, and they did their best to deserve that respect. Similarly, Mr S, a Turkish Cypriot participant from the second generational cohort, explained that he gave up a lot of his time in the afternoons to contribute to the educational policy change in 1987.

We all complained about the education system but when it was time for change some teachers did not want to contribute to it. It was not a perfect plan but without our support it would be impossible. Many of my friends and I, contributed our time and our passion for the profession in 1987 and many years that followed it.

Both Mr P and Mr S spoke about their roles in a passionate way. The same passion was not common in the third generational cohort of participants.

Only Mr L spoke about teaching in an enthusiastic manner:

I have always wanted to become a teacher. I know that teachers can make social change happen. I know that I can contribute to a better Cyprus through my profession.

The other participants of the same cohort did not reflect a similar passion. Ms D, a Turkish Cypriot from the same generational cohort said: "Teaching is a demanding job. I do my best, but I need to switch of from it in order to continue with my daily life." These different perspectives show how the attitude towards the teaching profession and teacher professional roles and hence identities have changed in time and in relation to different generations.

#### **5.4 The third G: Genealogy**

Our parents and other close family members are our earliest teachers and educational models, whether for good or bad, and the lessons we learn from them remain with us and often affect our actions without our conscious awareness, until we subject them to critical reflection (Alsup, 2006: 106).

Genealogy emerged as the third overarching theme as a result of the analysis of the life history narratives of the participants. Genealogy not only represents the family influence on the formal education that a person receives, whether it is primary school, secondary school or teacher education, but also signifies the social and cultural education that is provided by the family. According to Miller (2000), families provide a "link between individuals and the wider social structures" (41). He points out that "families can act as reservoirs of knowledge and skills - so-called *cultural capital* - which they may transmit to their younger generation" (p.43). When these statements are considered, it is not surprising that genealogy has emerged as an overarching theme in this study. As previously stated, most of the participants who were reluctant to become teachers were influenced by their families in choosing teaching as a career. In addition to that teachers mentioned family as a priority in their lives.

Mr R, a third generational cohort participant, said:

I could have gone abroad to study, but family is the most important thing in a person's life. My family needed me to be here so in reality going abroad was not an option.

Mr R situates his family in the centre of his life. His professional identity construction is related to his family situation.

On a similar note, Ms A from the second generational cohort explained that when she had children, she and her husband decided to build a house behind Ms A's mother's house.

I wanted my children to grow up near my family, knowing my family. The house was completed much later than anticipated but I am glad we made the decision. We belong here.

Ms A's statement on belonging signifies a deeper insight than just being part of the family. The boundary between her nuclear family and her extended family is blurred.

Ms M, from the first generational cohort, highlighted a dilemma between professional and family values. She explained that when female teachers were admitted to the Teacher's College during the colonial period they were informed that they would lose their jobs when they got married:

We knew that setting up a family was not an option for female teachers of my generation. It simply was not allowed. They could not stop you from getting married but if you did then you would lose your job. This continued for a while, even after the colonial period. Then they changed the regulation. You could get married but you were not allowed to have children. We entered the profession knowingly but deep down we all knew that setting up a family would be the choice when it came to that. In time the regulations have changed. But I cannot name a single friend who opted to stay in the profession instead of getting married. Some did get expelled but were then called back once the regulations changed.

Ms M's explanation shows that even though family was given a central role in Cypriot lifestyle, female teachers were tested on their loyalties. As Ms M explains, their loyalties were with family life. This statement reflects the complicated nature of family and professional lives for teachers of the first generation. That divide was not in place for the male teachers of the same

generational cohort or for the other two cohorts. However, family values and family wishes have always been important for teachers across generations and across the divide in Cyprus. This is reflected in most of their career choices, which emerged as a sub-theme. The following figure shows the emerged sub-themes in relation to the theme of Genealogy.

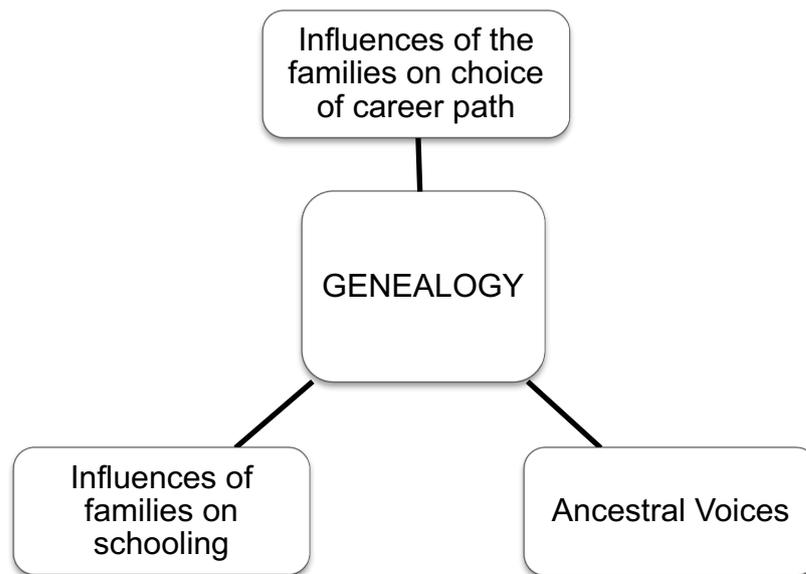


Figure 7: Third theme and sub-themes

#### **5.4.1 Sub-theme 1: Influences of families on choice of career path**

All of the participants from the first generational cohort explained that their parents or family members had influenced their career choices. Three out of four of these participants admitted that their parents made the choice and they had to obey. All members of the second generational cohort of teachers said that they chose to become teachers because of their family and/or financial situation. Some participants from the third generational cohort have stated that they chose to become teachers because of the economic situation of the country. They chose to become teachers as it would give them the financial security that they needed. They also stated that it was a shared decision taken with their families. This finding highlights the family influence on the career choice of their sons and daughters. This was an ongoing influence that affected all of the generational cohorts. Ms U, a

participant from the first generational cohort, explained that she wanted to continue her job at RAF Cinema Corporation when her parents encouraged her to get a more “prestigious job.” Mr P, a Greek Cypriot participant from the first generational cohort, explained that his parents told him to become a teacher:

There was no way that I would go against the wishes of my parents. Teaching was a prestigious job anyway, but the exam was extremely competitive. When I passed the written exam and was successful at the interview, the whole of the village celebrated my success. We danced and sang and had a meal as a village. I was going to be the pride of not only my parents but also my villagers too.

Mr P’s statement highlights the fact that in Cyprus contexts family did not only mean parents but also the extended family and in his case the neighbours too.

Mr R, a participant from the third generational cohort, explained that he and his parents discussed his future in Cyprus and even though he had an option to study something else abroad they decided that it would be the best for him and for the family if he studied in Cyprus. He then explained that this was a shared decision:

My parents did not make me stay here but they helped me realise that I would have a better future if I chose teaching. I do not regret following their advice. They did provide me with the opportunity of doing a postgraduate degree abroad.

All of these statements show the influence of the parents on the career choice of the teachers who were interviewed for this study.

#### **5.4.2 Sub theme2: Ancestral voices and post memory**

Goodson’s (2014) explains how ancestral voices become part of our own narrative. He calls it a “genealogy of context.” In Cyprus the “genealogy of context” links the social, historical and professional realms. Parents’ memories of the past are reflected in the professional contexts of the three

generations of teachers who have been interviewed. Ms U, a Turkish Cypriot participant from the first generational cohort, explains that even though her parents encouraged her to become a teacher, they opposed to her decision of taking up a job in a mixed school in the Greek Cypriot neighbourhood of Nicosia.

They wanted me to become a teacher. They encouraged me to become a teacher but when I told them the school I was going to work in was in the Greek Cypriot neighbourhood, they were alarmed. I had to talk to them for hours before they agreed that it was OK. They never believed that I would be safe, but they were too afraid that if they told me not to take up the job I would not become a teacher. Even though I knew their worries were meaningless, I started worrying myself. I never admitted it though. I knew it was pointless, but I adopted their worries.

Like Ms U, most of the participants explained how their parents influenced their perceptions of teachers, of their societies and of the “other(s)”. However, the participants from the third generational cohort extensively elaborate ancestral voices and “postmemory.” Three out of the four participants from the third generational cohort explain their neighbourhoods and villages before 1974. They talk about life in mixed villages. All of these participants are too young to remember a unified Cyprus with mixed villages. This is an example of Hirsch’s “postmemory,” where memories are passed onto the next generation through narratives. Ms G, a Greek Cypriot participant from the third generational cohort, explains “her” mixed village:

We had neighbours that we really got on well with. The community had no problems. Everything was shared. We used to have weddings in the village where people attended regardless of their ethnic background. It was an amazing village then one morning everything changed.

Even though Ms G was too young to remember, her account is highly detailed and advanced. When asked, she could not distinguish her memories from her parents’ memories.

In addition to the personal perceptions, professional perceptions have also been passed on from one generation to the next. Mr K, a Greek Cypriot participant from the second generational cohort, talks about teaching and teachers before him:

Teachers who got educated during the British colonial period received an education that was designed to contribute to the British values.

When asked to give further information on this statement, Mr K explains that this is what he heard from the older teachers. Ancestral voices were not about family but as Goodson (2014) suggests, they form a “genealogy of context” that includes voices of teachers and voices of the other members of the society.

#### **5.4.3 Sub-theme 3: Influences of parents on schooling**

Influences of parents on schooling of their children emerged as a sub theme in the study. In addition to their own parents’ influence on their career choices, teachers had also experienced the influences of the parents of the pupils on the education system. All of the first generational cohort of teachers and two of the participants from the second generational cohort spoke about how important it was to have the parents “on board” for a better education. Two participants from the second generational cohort and all of the participants from the third generational cohort spoke about how parents “interfered” with the system and how badly they influenced the system.

Mr H, Ms M, Ms U and Mr P, all from the first generational cohort, explained how much they appreciated having supportive parents. Mr H said:

The parents understood that education was vital. They used to come to school and thank me for helping their sons and daughters. Most of them were not educated and they wanted a better life for their children. They all appreciated my teaching and that was the best motivation. They never questioned the way I disciplined the children.

Similarly, Mr P explained that in the remote villages that he taught, he made sure that he communicated with the parents:

It was obligatory for us to live in the villages we taught. That was mainly because we were to educate the wider community as well as the children. In other words, we were to educate the children and their parents. For that reason, I always communicated with the parents. They wanted to make sure that their children were learning. In the very old days the villagers used to decide who would teach in the village school. They used to pay the wages of the teacher. And perhaps that was the reason why parents wanted to influence education even though most of them did not have an education themselves. It probably was the reflection of an old tradition.

Unlike these participants, participants from the third generational cohort spoke about parental influence on education in a negative way. Ms D explained that parents were only focused on the exams for the selective schools:

Most of the parents compare their children's success and want them to achieve better not for the sake of success but for the sake of competition. This puts extra pressure on the children.

The selective school systems are in place both in northern and southern Cyprus and Ms G, a Greek Cypriot participant from the third generational cohort, also repeated Ms D's example.

The generational differences in responding to the parents and their perceptions of their children's education are connected to the teacher professional identities. The first generational cohort of teachers expressed a sense of belonging to the communities they were teaching in. As previously discussed, they implied they felt appreciated, as they were the providers of education. This positive feeling is reflected in how they perceived family interference and influence on their children's education. These teachers reflect it as a co-construction. However, participants from the third generational cohort whose professional identity constructions reflected a less appreciative perspective, see family interference as more negative.

## 5.5 The fourth G: Gateways

The fourth overarching theme that emerged is gateways. As a researcher, I chose to label this theme as gateways instead of borders. Borders suggest closed boundaries while gateways suggest openings and doorways in those boundaries. The gateways that were mentioned by the teachers were of different forms. Some spoke of physical borders and gateways and border crossings while others spoke about professional gateways. Participants from the first and second generational cohorts stated and emphasised the physical borders of Cyprus. For example, Ms U explained how she helped her students to the safety of the enclaves and made sure that they were “on the other side of the border.” This statement is an indication of how physical borders have become part of the professional identity narratives of teachers from the first and second generational cohorts. Similar to Ms U’s statement, Mr K from the second generational cohort continuously referred to divides and stated that we “do not need to have sides. We can live together. And maybe it is time for mixed schools.” Even though Mr K’s narrative was fragmented, the narrative of the physical border heavily dominated it. As reported in Chapter 4, when I first met him, Mr K commented on the sounds that could be heard across the divide. His perspective exemplifies the perspective of his generational cohort. Unlike the first and second generational cohorts, the third generational cohort of teachers commented on border crossings and borders in relation to the teaching profession. In connection to gateways, three sub-themes have emerged. They are reflected in the following figure.

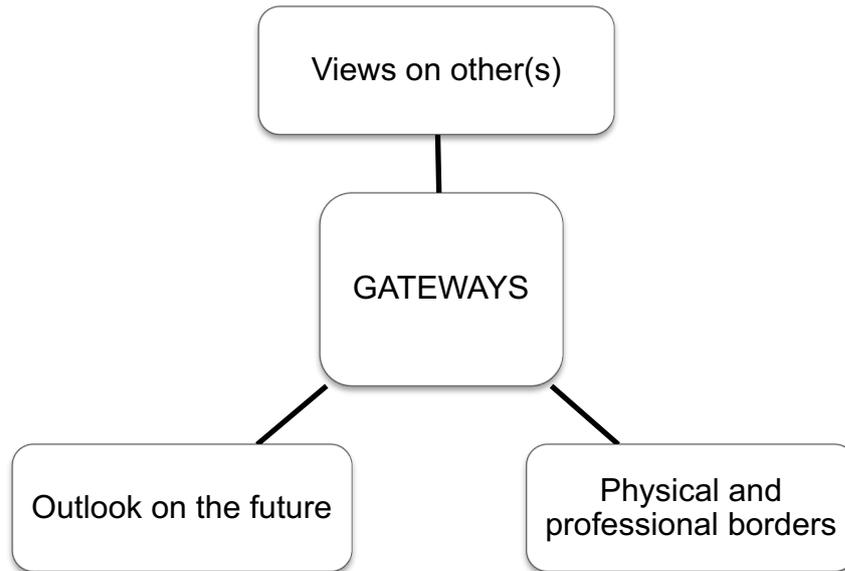


Figure 8: Fourth theme and sub-themes

### 5.5.1 Sub theme1: Views on other(s)

Categorical ethnic distinctions do not depend on an absence of mobility, contact and information, but do entail social processes of exclusion and incorporation whereby discrete categories are maintained *despite* changing participation and membership in the course of individual life histories...ethnic distinctions do not depend on an absence of social interaction and acceptance, but are quite to the contrary often the very foundations on which embracing social systems are built (Barth, 1981: 198-9).

Views on other(s) emerged as a sub-theme in connection to Gateways. Wangler (2012: 198) connects the act of othering to the notions of identity and belonging. She explains that “self-perception” is closely connected to “perception by others” and in turn to the “process of border constructions.” Wangler’s statement is in line with the inquiry of this study. Some of the participants of this study elaborated on the idea of belonging to a group. Some of their comments were more in line with the nationalistic collective identities whereas some of them were more inclusive narratives. Regardless of their political positions, their comments were a reminder of the how interdependent the “us” and “them” debates were (See Chapter 2 for further details).

Some of the comments regarding the other(s) were positive. Mr P, a Greek Cypriot participant from the first generational cohort said:

In my first year I was teaching in a Greek Cypriot school in a mixed village. People realised quickly that I was a good teacher. In fact, a student from the Turkish Cypriot community wanted to join my group. This was not a common practice. Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots had their own schools, but I was such a successful teacher that children from the other community wanted to be part of my group.

In his account, Mr P recalls a positive incident regarding other(s).

Ms U, another first generational cohort participant explained that she had a Greek Cypriot pupil in her group:

I did not see her as different. She was a student like my other students in class. She needed my help as much as the rest of them.

As explored previously, Ms U's earlier statements were more focused on her community members. Her inclusive attitude towards a Greek Cypriot pupil suggests that her professional identity was inclusive of other(s).

Participants from the first and second generational cohorts referred to Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots as the other(s) while participants from the third generational cohort referred to the migrant children in their classes as the other(s). Ms D explained:

I feel really sorry for the *other* children in my group. They do not have similar opportunities as *our* children. They usually come from much poorer homes.

The act of "othering" in Ms D's narrative is intended to reflect her caring attitude, yet it suggests a divide between the children she teaches. The other participant of the same generational cohort provided similar comments. This suggests that narratives of other(s) exist even in divided settings and even in the absence of the collectively accepted other, namely Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots.

### 5.5.2 Sub theme2: Physical and professional borders

Borderlands are sites and symbols of power. Guard towers and barbed wire may be extreme examples of the markers of sovereignty which inscribe the territorial limits of states, but they are neither uncommon nor in danger of disappearing from the world scene (Donnan and Wilson, 1999: p.1).

Even though the borders have checkpoints in places, guard towers and barbed wire mark the northern and southern territories in Cyprus. The existence of these physical borders is reflected in teachers' professional narratives. As previously mentioned in the introduction of the Gateways section, some of the Greek Cypriot participants elaborated on the borders that were set up in 1974. While most of the Turkish Cypriot participants spoke about or mentioned the impact of the borders and enclaves that were set up in 1963 in addition to the ones that were set up in 1974. Their statements indicate the individual and professional identity formations in relation to the social and political contexts of Cyprus (for further details see sections 2.4.1, 2.4.4 and 2.4.5). Mr H explained his experiences of being a teacher in the enclaves:

We did not have proper shelter and we definitely did not have the basic needs of a daily life. The children who came to school in the enclaves were aware of the difficulties. The children themselves were not difficult to manage but the whole situation was.

His statement reflects the difficulties after the events. Similarly, Mr P spoke about the difficulties of teaching in refugee schools after 1974. All of the Greek Cypriot participants from the first and second generational cohorts spoke about the borders that were set up in 1974. Mr P said:

We did not have much, but we opened schools to give the children some sort of normality in their lives. Some of them were the witnesses of traumatising events. Teaching them also involved supporting them.

Both Mr H and Mr P comment on the difficulties of being teachers after the creation of borders

Unlike the first and second generational cohorts, all of the participants from the third generational cohort spoke about border crossings and opening of borders as well as the border crossings as part of their professional identities. Ms D from the third generational cohort explained the personal and professional borders:

I am a teacher at school and I am a caring teacher. I cannot say that I am not judgemental. Sometimes I cannot help judging the parents who do not care about their children. I mean in an emotional way. They provide their children with their physical needs but do not care about their emotional needs. In situations like that I feel more of an educational psychologist than a teacher. I suppose it is part of the job to have these multiple identities and to *travel* between them. When I finish school, I remind myself that after school hours are my own personal time. I try to switch off. It is not easy, but I try.

Ms D's reflection of how she crosses between the boundaries of different roles as part of her teacher identity and how she "travels" between them suggest an awareness of the demands of her job. Mr L, another third generational cohort participant, describes the professional restrictions, in other words boundaries, in the form of the curriculum:

The curriculum implements boundaries on the possibilities of inspiring students. I would like to include more global and important elements in my teachings like children's rights, peace education and culture, and environmental awareness education but I am restricted by the curriculum. I do not like having such set boundaries around what I can teach. The curriculum should allow some flexibility to bring in new knowledge. We can help the pupils to think outside the box by doing this.

Mr L's statement is an important example of how boundaries can be turned into gateways where new perspectives can be brought into the classrooms.

### **5.5.3 Sub-theme3: Outlook on the future; Reconciliation**

The third sub theme that emerged is the notion of reconciliation. Eight out of twelve participants explained that they want a solution to the Cyprus problem. They said that the conflict needed to be reconciled. All of the

participants from the third generational cohort said that they wanted to live in a re-unified Cyprus. Two of the participants from the second generational cohort said that they took part in conflict resolution activities and wanted a better future for their children. Only two participants from the first generational cohort said that they wanted a better future without compromising on the social and ethnic rights. Mr L, a Greek Cypriot participant and Mr R, a Turkish Cypriot participant, both from the third generational cohort explained how peace education and bi-communal activities should be implemented in schools in the form of drama lessons for creating an “empathy culture” for reconciliation and for a better future on the island. Mr L said:

We as the teachers have to take the responsibility to work for reconciliation. We need to teach the pupils and the wider society that we can build a better future. We can reconcile and forgive. Hoping will not bring us the much-wanted reunification. We have to work for it and we have to teach for it.

Even though the participants of this study referred to the notion of reconciliation in different ways, having reconciliation as an emerged sub theme is an interesting finding for this study. It showed that teachers from different generations were not only focused on curriculum but are also involved in the wider social, historical and political contexts in Cyprus.

This chapter reflected the life history narratives of the twelve participants within the emerged four overarching themes and sub-themes in connection to each overarching theme. Professional teacher identity constructions of the participants have been highlighted. This section is crucial as it points out how similar the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot perspectives are within their generational cohorts. Therefore, it can be stated that generational divisions were more obvious than the ethnic ones. In Cyprus, the on-going Cyprus problem is fuelled by ethnic differences (See Chapters 1 and 2) yet teachers’ constructions of their professional identities within the limitations of this study has shown that the similarities in responses are undeniable. I have

analysed the collected teacher narratives in this chapter. The following chapter presents the conclusions and the complexities of this research.

## CHAPTER 6 CONCLUSIONS AND COMPLEXITIES

### 6.1 Revisiting Research Questions

This study focused on the social construction of teachers' professional identities in and through their narratives. Life History Methodology has been used in investigating three generations of Cypriot primary school teachers' life histories against historical, social and cultural contexts in Cyprus. Social constructionism has informed the thesis. Ivor Goodson's *Narrative Theory*, Berger and Luckman's *Social Construction of Reality*, Vivien Burr's *Social Constuctionism*, Maurice Halbwachs' *Collective Memory*, Steph Lawler's *Identity* and Keith Turvey's *Narrative Ecologies* works informed the analytical framework of the study. In conducting the research, two research questions and four sub-questions have been employed.

Research Question 1) How are teachers' perceptions of teaching and teachers formed or re-formed during the pre-service and in-service periods? The conducted research has shown that the pre-service and in-service teacher training is reflective of the shifting historical periods in Cyprus. Influences of colonialism, post colonialism and the post division periods are reflected in the teachers' narratives regarding their education and practices. Participants from the first and second generational cohorts explained that their perceptions of teaching and teachers were formed during the initial teacher training/education as well as through the evaluations and assessments that they received. These participants reflected a collective viewpoint in their professional identity constructions. Their constructions incorporated an appreciation of their pre-service education and active agency regarding the in-service practices. Participants from the third generational cohort presented a more critical perspective of the pre-service and in-service periods. They focused on the missing elements of their teacher training/education and also on the missing assessment system during the in-service periods. Their reflections were of a more individualistic nature and did not reflect shared practices of identity constructions.

Two sub questions have been explored in connection to the first research question.

Sub-Question 1): How does the wider community contribute to teachers' perceptions of their professional identity constructions in state primary schools in Cyprus?

Exploring this sub question revealed the impact of conflict on each society. Each respective community contributed to the teachers' perceptions of their Greek Cypriot professional identities or the Turkish Cypriot professional identities. Influences of their family members have also been highlighted. Participants from the first and second generational cohorts reflected a sense of belonging to their communities. Participants from the third generational cohort were more critical of their communities. However, they reflected similar perspectives in relation to the influence of their families on the social construction of their professional identities.

Sub-Question 2) In what way does memory inform teacher identity construction in Cyprus contexts?

Exploring this sub question revealed that memories of the colonial period and memories of the conflict shaped the professional identity constructions of all of the participants, regardless of their generational or ethnic differences. "Collective memory," "postmemory" and "selective memory and forgetting" arise in connection to teachers' individual and collective professional identity constructions.

Research Question 2) In what ways are the teachers' perceptions similar or different across the divide in Cyprus?

The conducted research showed that teachers' perceptions and practices are mirrored across the divide in Cyprus. The differences are related to generational differences rather than ethnic ones. This is an interesting finding which may be explored in connection to the conflict in Cyprus. A

further study might ask: “When the professional identity constructions of the teachers are so similar across the divide, can teacher narratives be employed in reconciling the conflict?”

Sub-Question 2) What are the factors that shape teachers’ perceptions and practices?

Colonialism and the ethnic conflict are family influences which have emerged as factors that shape teachers’ perceptions of their professional identity roles and practices.

Sub-Question 2) Are there any shared practices that can unify teachers on a viewpoint in Cyprus?

When I employed this question, I was not aware the abundance of commonalities of teaching practices across the divide. The finding that these practices are common suggests that the problem lies in lack of communication and lack of agency in enabling that communication.

## **6.2 Research Project Findings**

The most important finding of this study is that despite the borders and segregated school systems and teacher training/education programmes, Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot teachers construct their professional identities in a very similar manner. As the themes and quotations have indicated, generational differences are more obvious than the ethnic differences when professional practices and identity constructions are considered. When teacher identity constructions are investigated, it became apparent that acts of memory, especially generational memory together with social and political issues help shape those constructions across generations. The influence of immediate and extended families on education was another finding of this study. The fourth finding is about the perceptions of teachers and how they reflect on the wider social and political issues as part of their teacher identity roles in conflict ridden and divided Cyprus.

Some of the participants openly offered their views on other(s) and borders. As reported previously, during the interviews, some of the teachers mentioned their roles in building those borders as part of their professional responsibilities. Others mentioned their dreams of demolishing those borders. In mentioning these, the teachers admitted their professional responsibilities for a better future.

The key findings of the study are presented under four emergent categories: 4Gs, Guidelines, Generations, Genealogy and Gateways. Each of these categories is closely connected to teachers' professional identity constructions. Guidelines reflect teachers' perceptions regarding pre-service and in-service teacher education periods as well as the social and cultural influences on teacher identity constructions. In Guidelines, reluctance in becoming teachers and personal passion in relation to their profession and inspection and evaluation have emerged as sub themes. Participants provided an evaluation of these periods and reflected how they constructed their professional identities through the teacher education that they received and through their personal interests.

The study is designed as a generational study, but Generations was not anticipated as a theme. The theme of Generations indicated displacements, the need for validation of narrative styles and professional identity perceptions as the emergent sub themes. Genealogy and family influence in education contexts revealed that the family structure of Cypriot communities influences the education and career choices of children. Gateways, which is the fourth emergent overarching theme, has been the most surprising one as Cypriots usually avoid talking about the other(s) and borders and a possible reconciliation. As part of this theme, it became apparent that participants from the third generational cohort were more open about borders, other(s) and possible reconciliation. Participants for the first and second generational cohorts were more judgemental in relation to other(s) and borders.

### **6.3 Originality and Contribution to Knowledge**

This study reflects a bi-communal perspective on Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot teacher professional identity constructions in divided Cyprus. It is an intergenerational study which analysed teachers' life history narratives. The emergent four Gs are adaptable to different educational settings. Another contribution to knowledge is the declaration that teacher identity constructions and teaching practices are common across generations in Cyprus even after forty-four years of division. This study has shown that the life histories of teachers are important as they link personal, professional, political and social realms.

This study has also shown that the life history narratives of Cypriot primary school teachers gave way to the emergent themes which include *reluctance* in becoming teachers, personal *passion* in aid of the profession, narrative style and the *need* for validation, inspection and evaluation systems and *respect* for inspectors, *displacements*, family *influences* on education, ancestral *voices*, physical and professional *borders* and views on *other(s)*. All of these emerged themes include an abstract concept. For example: becoming, respect, passion, need, displacement(s), perceptions, influences, voices, other(s), borders and reconciliation. The collected lengthy life history narratives of Cypriot teachers were narrowed into the emerged themes. In concluding the study, I suggest that those themes can be broadened with the abstract concepts that they include. Those concepts can form the basis of a further study in connection to teachers and teacher professional identities in conflict ridden societies. In other words, the abstract concepts can form a transferable and generalisable basis that could inspire a future study.

### **6.4 Limitations of the Method and Suggestions for Further Study**

Time was the main limitation of this study. Adopting the silent position during the first set of interviews meant that the participants from the first generational cohort provided extended narratives. These were rich sources

of data yet transcribing them was difficult. If I would conduct this research again, I would allow myself more time between transcribing and revisiting the participants for the second time. Another limitation of the study was having only two interviews. Although these interviews provided the required data, they did not allow for extra conversations. These extra conversations are the tools of attaining an insider position. If I were to conduct this interview again, I would organise at least three interviews with the participants. This is mainly because the rapport between the participants and myself improved during the second interviews and I strongly believe that a third interview would provide the opportunity to receive more detailed stories. More participants should be involved in the research. In conflict-ridden Cyprus, employing teacher narratives as tools for understanding the past is crucial. As Goodson (2013) explains participants learn about themselves and their own cultures while narrating their life histories. Cypriot teachers can develop a better understanding of the traumatising past and can move towards a better future in Cyprus.

As indicated in Chapters 4 and 5, Cypriot teacher identity constructions are interlinked with historical and cultural contexts in Cyprus. These constructions affect and are affected by social contexts. Therefore, the commitment of Cypriot teachers across the divide can contribute to social reform and perhaps to conflict resolution. Even though the social and political arenas limit teachers' responses to the "official histories" in school curricula, their life history narratives can provide the required tool of sharing and reaching out to the wider communities which can help overcome the acts of "othering." The emerged four G's are an indication of how powerful teacher narratives can be within their respective communities. They are also an indication of how those communities help shape teacher professional identities. In addition to that they are also sign of how similar teaching practices are on both sides of the divide, and in segregated educational systems. If teachers can focus on similarities rather than "differences" or "othering," more inclusive environments can be created, not only in educational settings but also within the communities of Cyprus in general.

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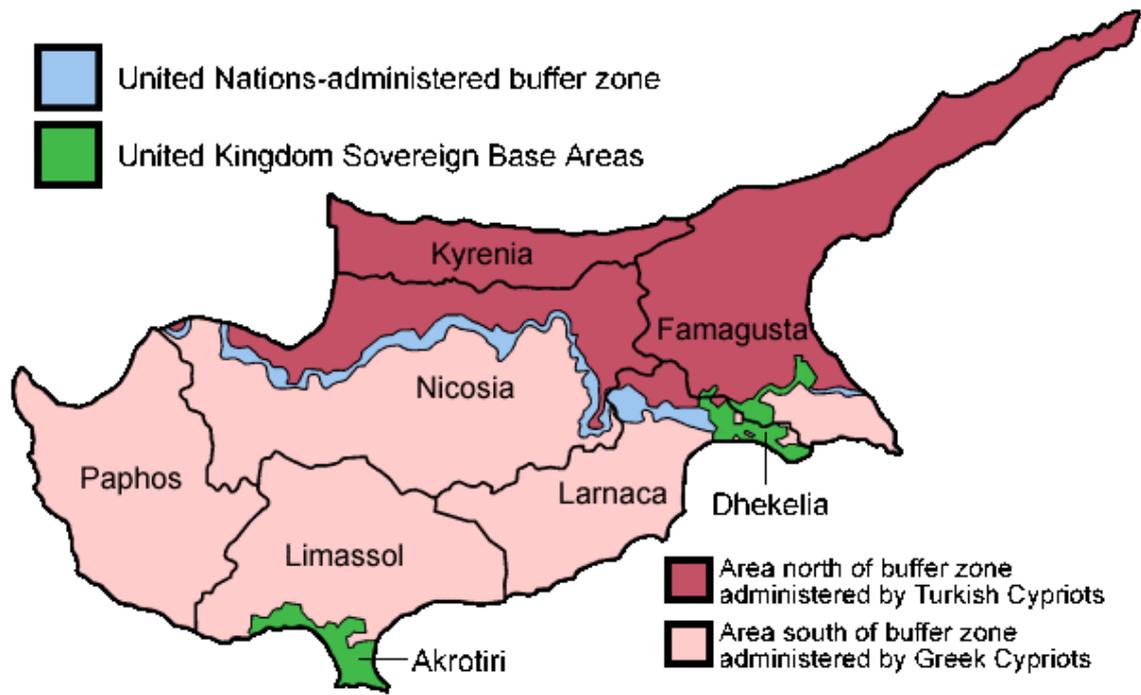
[http://www.uncyprustalks.org/nqcontent.cfm?a\\_id=2466](http://www.uncyprustalks.org/nqcontent.cfm?a_id=2466) (Espen Barth Eide's statement)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United Nations Buffer Zone in Cyprus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Nations_Buffer_Zone_in_Cyprus) (Map of Cyprus)

<https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/> Accessed in August 2018.

## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1 - Map of Cyprus



[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United\\_Nations\\_Buffer\\_Zone\\_in\\_Cyprus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Nations_Buffer_Zone_in_Cyprus)

## Appendix 2 - Participant Consent Form

- I agree to take part in this bi-communal study on the social constructions Cypriot state primary school teachers.
- The researcher has explained to my satisfaction the purpose, principles and procedures of the study and the possible risks involved.
- I have read the information sheet and I understand the principles, procedures and possible risks involved.
- I am aware that I am required to provide my life history regarding my teaching experiences and I am also aware that my life history narrative will be used as data.
- I understand how the data collected will be used, and that any confidential information will normally be seen only by the researcher and her supervisors and will not be revealed to anyone else.
- I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason and without incurring consequences from doing so.
- I agree that should I withdraw from the study, the data collected up to that point may be used by the researcher for the purposes described in the information sheet.
- I understand that I have the right to veto parts of or the complete transcript of any particular interview that I provide.
- I understand that the researcher has the right to veto parts of or the complete transcript of any particular interview that I provide if she feels that it will offend or harm a person or institution.
- I am aware that I can contact the researcher

By email: O.Dagman@brighton.ac.uk

By telephone: (0044) 7732963276

- I am also aware that I can contact the Doctoral College at Brighton University to report a misconduct of the researcher.

Doctoral College

By telephone: (0044) 1273644533

Address: Doctoral College for School of Education

Falmer Campus, University of Brighton,

Brighton

East Sussex

BN1 9PH

Name-Surname:.....

Signature:.....

Date:.....

### **Appendix 3 - Participant Information Sheet**

- This is a bi-communal study and it aims to collect teacher narratives from Northern and Southern Cyprus.
- The main benefit of the study is that it will provide knowledge about and for Cypriot primary school teachers in a unified study.
- The risk of the study is that participants may reveal personal data that may upset themselves or others within Cypriot contexts. Such sensitive data will not be used in the study.
- If participants feel distressed or upset at any stage of the interview, the interview will be stopped and will not be continued.
- If participants reveal a need for support, they will be guided to professional bodies or institutions.
- Anonymity will be maintained throughout the study.
- Confidentiality is another important theme in the study. However, if the interview reveals instances of criminal activity, violence or abuse, information will be disclosed to relevant authorities.
- The interviews will be an hour in length.
- There will be a minimum of three interviews with the possibility of more interviews, depending on the data that will emerge as a result of the initial interview.
- Participants have the choice to attend the interviews at the Home for Co-operation building in the UN controlled buffer zone. If you choose to be interviewed there, the travel expenses will be paid for.
- The interviews will be recorded and transcribed within two days after the interview. As soon as the interview is transcribed, the participants will be given a copy of it. They will also be given the right to veto and remove parts of it or all of it.
- If the researcher feels that parts of or the complete interview will harm or offend others, then those interviews will be vetoed and not used in the study.
- Participation is voluntary, and you can withdraw from this study at any time without giving a reason. Your life history narratives will not be used in the study if you choose to withdraw.
- Your life history narratives will be used to provide an understanding about teaching practices and teachers in Cyprus. Your name or personal information will not be used or revealed within the study.
- Your narratives, in the form of recordings and transcripts will be kept in a safe, cabinet and will only be accessed by the researcher and the supervisors. They will be kept safe for 10 years and then they will be destroyed safely.

## Appendix 4 - Invitation

Dear Madam/Sir,

My name is Ozlem Dagman and I am currently doing a PhD at University of Brighton in England. I am interested in doing a bi-communal study on the social construction of Cypriot state primary school teachers and investigating how teacher training/education systems for primary education have changed since the colonial period.

Primary school teacher narratives in the form of life histories and historical documents regarding teacher training/education will be used to inform this study.

The initial interview themes are as follows:

- Pre-service teacher education/training curriculum.
- First day of teaching.
- Probationary period.
- Work environment/School culture in school 1.
- Work environment/School culture in school 2.
- Wider community (of their schools).
- Teacher perspectives on 'others' and 'borders'

A minimum of three interviews will be conducted with each participant.

If you would like to get more information or if you would like to discuss the possibility of contributing to this study please contact me on [O.Dagman@brighton.ac.uk](mailto:O.Dagman@brighton.ac.uk) or on 0044 7732963276.

Yours faithfully,

Ozlem Dagman.

## Appendix 5 - Translator Consent Form

- I agree to take part in this research as a translator.
- The researcher has explained to my satisfaction the purpose, principles and procedures of the study and the possible risks involved.
- I am aware that I have to respect and at all times abide by the confidentiality and anonymity principles of the study and will not repeat or reveal the information contributed by the participants or by the researcher.
- I declare that I will fully translate the participants' contributions and will not hide information or change information during the translation procedure.
- I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason.
- I understand that I have to respect the confidentiality and anonymity principles of the study even if I withdraw from the study.
- I understand that I can contact the researcher

By email: O.Dagman@brighton.ac.uk

By telephone: (0044) 7732963276

- I am also aware that I can contact the Doctoral College at Brighton University to report a misconduct of the researcher.
- 

Doctoral College

By telephone: (0044) 1273644533

Address: Doctoral College for School of Education

Falmer Campus, University of Brighton,

Brighton

East Sussex

BN1 9PH

Name- Surname:.....

Signature:.....

Date:.....

## **Appendix 6 - Ethics Checklist**

- As a researcher, I have ensured the quality and integrity of this research.
- I have explained the study in detail and informed the participants about the nature of their involvement in the study (See Appendix 3 - Participant Information Sheet).
- I have invited the participants to contribute to this study (See Appendix 4 -Invitation).
- I have sought informed consent of the participants (See Appendix 2) and the translators (See Appendix 5).
- I have followed all the required steps in ensuring the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants within the limits of the research (See Appendix 3 – Participant Information Sheet for further details)
- I have taken all the necessary precautions to avoid harm to the participants, institutions, translators, intermediary contacts and myself.