"Where are the Women?" Peacebuilding in the Frozen Conflict in Cyprus

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Abstract: *Following the social upheaval and a war in 1974 between Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots the island nation has been separated by a United Nations buffer zone designated as the 'Green Line'. As a result of this, there has been an ongoing peace process to bring the 'frozen conflict' to a close. The question this piece seeks to examine is "Where are the women" in peacebuilding. Further exploring how patriarchy is embedded in the security culture of the two communities, how the involvement of women in peace negotiations is supported by civil society peace groups and online activism and how the locational space of women has changed over time. My theoretical framework applies a feminist lens to observe why women have been excluded from public political life. Patriarchal nationalism, militarisation and a hyper-masculine culture have dominated the lives of women ensuring they remain in the private of Cypriot life. The construction of traditional gender binaries of masculine and feminine consequently has been exacerbated by the rhetoric instigated by the United Nations in the Women, Peace, and Security agenda by failing to acknowledge the essentialist notions these uphold. I conclude by stating that, though over Cyprus's history, some progression has been made upon women's inclusion in the peace process, this has not been enough. Though aided by civil society and online social media activism, neither the state nor the United Nations has adequately guaranteed women's inclusion in peace negotiations. To remedy this, gender consciousness must be developed.*

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Introduction

In 1990, world-renowned feminist international relations scholar Cynthia Enloe posed the question: "where are the women?". In asking this, Enloe prompted us to explore where women are located both at the international and local levels as a means of understanding global politics through gender (2014). Though an often overlooked island in the Eastern Mediterranean, Cyprus's rich cultural and political history has made the nation a breeding ground for a masculinised, nationalistic, patriarchally led society and serves as a vital case study in exploring how this culture can mute women's voices through control from religion, the military, the home and identity. With this premise in mind, I will be aiming to analyse "where are the women" in peacebuilding in the 'frozen conflict' in Cyprus. By this, the primary focus is to explore where women are in the peace processes in Cyprus by following a timeline of their inclusion and exclusion.

This article builds on the Cypriot feminist literature to locate women's specific locations surrounding the peacebuilding processes on the island, intending to engage women's voices in defining their own experiences as women through conflict and peacebuilding. Conducting interviews with men and women from across the island was the method used for obtaining primary data, which is embedded throughout the piece alongside analysis of the literature. Theoretically, this piece is informed by feminist international relations theory surrounding issues of patriarchy, gender binaries, militarisation, and nationalism. I explore how patriarchy is ingrained in security culture, followed by a discussion on how civil society groups and online activists aid women's involvement in peace processes and finally investigate how women's locational spaces from the private to the public spheres have developed.

In this article, I have briefly conceptualised feminist studies within International Relations and why this is relevant to the Cypriot case. Further to this establishing how historically Cyprus is in the hyper-

masculine, nationalist, patriarchal position explored militarism and 'othering' in dominating women's societal location. I go on to distinguish the methodological approaches I used to obtain the interview data, which I will embed within my secondary data research. The Turkish Invasion/Peace mission of 1974 will be the onset of my analytical discussion. I will explore how the effects of colonialism, post-colonial restructuring, conflict, and the post-conflict era have all worked in unison to embed patriarchy within the security culture. I will also explain how women were excluded from the peace processes in the late 20th century and focus on the lack of bicommunal rhetoric, even in civil society. As we move into the early 00s era, the international community's role will be the focus of further discussion. Marked by the failed UN-led Annan Plan and referendum and Cyprus's accession to the European Union as a divided nation, I consider what this has meant for women's inclusion in the peacebuilding process. I determine that the legal ratification of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women's inclusion in peacebuilding, despite theoretically changing the system, did not provide sufficient implementation to guarantee women's inclusion in the negotiations for the Annan Plan and EU Assession. Finally, I evaluate the progression and failings that women's inclusion in peacebuilding has made in recent history, through civil society, social media, and UN-led initiatives. In my analysis, I will be discussing both the Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot communities, and the other smaller communities present on the island. It must be said that much of the literature focuses on the Republic of Cyprus, and therefore it will be featured more extensively. Ultimately, in examining my primary research question, I have concluded that though women's inclusion in peacebuilding has changed over time, especially in more recent years with the growth in the bi-communal civil society sector and social media, there is still much more to be achieved. Most prominently, these achievements must occur through the complete deconstruction of masculine/feminine binaries that are present in the state. Further, through dedicated efforts to de-

essentialise the United Nations Women, Peace and Security agenda and ensure its implementation in Cypriot society.

An Overview Connecting Feminism, Security and Cyprus

Enloe tells us that to understand the world, we must investigate masculinities and femininities in all aspects of international political life and conduct gender-curious research (Enloe, 2014: 5). By this, we can assess how gender permeates everyday life, whether public or private (Tickner, 1997). In categorising the binaries of masculinity and femininity, we understand that gender does not merely relate to women or women's issues but also to men, further establishing cultural and social constructions (Butler, 1990; Tickner, 1997: 615). This premise of the masculine and feminine binary will inform the analytical discussion and will be embedded throughout to detail the relationship and space women control in the area of peacebuilding in Cyprus. This section will detail an overview of feminism and security and why this can be applied to Cyprus through an understanding of its history.

We see the violence women face in both war and peace almost every day (Zalewski, 2013). Through violence, we discover insecurity and the necessity for the security of women's everyday livelihoods on a global and local scale. In exploring masculinities and femininities over time, perceived notions of the workings of these processes become apparent (Enloe, 2014: 31). Exploring gender with a feminist lens, especially in a Cypriot context, will benefit the discovery and analysis of women, where they are and what has been done to shape their lives, politically and socially (Enloe, 2010; Enloe, 2004: 4). Patriarchal systems, such as those in Cyprus, structurally marginalise the feminine and enhance the traditional binary gender roles in the public and private (Enloe, 2004: 5). In these political institutions, power is exhibited in the space to provide dominance over women, as Foucault has suggested (1982: 791). Male patriarchal

domination is further maintained as evidenced in Cyprus, where despite the United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 (United Nations 2000) detailing how peacebuilding must include women, they never have properly done it (Porter, 2003).

Tickner writes that feminist scholarship "defines security as the physical and economic security of individuals as well as states" (2018: 15). Security studies tell us that these male-led, patriarchal, hyper-masculine security-based institutions that lead the processes of peacebuilding disregard a poststructuralist view of women and gender and opt for an essentialist outlook that reduces the public locational space women can secure. In the construction of gender and women in the UN security discourse, a binary logic is assumed (Shepherd, 2017). With security and peace being gendered concepts (Tickner, 2018), masculinities and femininities reproduce in this area of the international. The UNSCR 1325 systematically claims that women require protection from the militarised constructions of men as the higher power in peacebuilding processes (McLeod, 2016). In arguing this, McLeod (2016) believes women are often portrayed merely as victims in conflict and post-conflict scenarios, however, positioning them as active participants in the peace process reframes their role and lifts the limits imposed on them. The resolution does not call out the masculine cultures that are primarily responsible for women's issues in everyday and extraordinary facets of life, promoting the notion of the man as the protector (McLeod, 2016). By representing women through femininities in the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) agenda, the UN is failing the conflict resolution process, according to Porter (2003: 250). Hunt and Posa write, "allowing men who plan wars to make peace is a bad habit" (2001: 38), and the UN is responsible for not actively lessening this. The discourse and language in the WPS agenda function paradoxically: while focusing on women, it tends to pay little attention to them (Shepherd, 2017: 102). A poststructuralist feminist lens has been the focal point of the most relevant feminist literature. The literature demands that justice be found for women in peacebuilding processes. My work will assume the details of the

literature I have reviewed and embed them within my analysis of the frozen conflict in Cyprus and what this has determined for the role of women in peacebuilding through patriarchal societal values and nationalistic tendencies.

But first, to understand where the women are in the Cypriot peacebuilding process and why the feminist literature applies to it, we must also focus empirically on Cyprus itself. Though issues on the island can be traced back hundreds of years, since the end of 82 years of colonial rule by the British in 1960, Cyprus has been in a state of conflict, now more of a 'frozen conflict', between the two main ethnic groups on the island the "Greek Cypriot's" and "Turkish Cypriot's" (Ker-Lindsay, 2015). Following independence, ethnic rivalries were cultivated under a dialogue of enosis (union with Greece), resulting in the 1974 invasion by Turkish troops, dividing the islands' territory as it remains today. This has been followed by the issue of bicommunality/bi-communal relations, that is, how people from around Cyprus work together as one to build relations into a more state-wide, cohesive sect, to benefit the production of peace, which at this time was non-existent. Demographically, multiple ethnic groups on the island face the effects of the conflict such as the Maronites, Pontians and Armenians who make up a small sect of the population (World Population Review 2023). Cyprus's history has developed in a way which contributes to the idea that women are not worthy of a public location in a patriarchally-led society (Papastavrou, 2012). In muting women's voices, society in Cyprus is controlled by men through religion, the military, the home, identities, and attitudes, all superseded by nationalist rhetoric (Joannidis, 2012; Efthymiou, 2016; Vassiliadou, 2002).

The Greek Orthodox church has historically determined where society is mentally located in Greek areas of the state (Papadakis, 2005: 115). Likewise, the military incites a masculinist rhetoric (Efthymiou, 2016). The church and military lack modernity and prohibit sociocultural change (Sotiriou, 2021: 15).

Efthymiou (2016) writes that men and masculinity have sought to militarise women to a position of inferiority. With compulsory male military service, men are placed in a position of 'duty and honour' that completely juxtaposes what women and femininity do. The binary notions of femininity and masculinity are constantly reproduced in the state, effectively ensuring that society functions to oppress women (Efthymiou, 2019). With the militarisation of women, Åhall (2016) writes that women are assumed into a normalised position of militarised ideas of life, needing protection and saving by men. This patriarchal idea means women aren't included in peace processes as they are not seen as something worthy of space and time within the public. With the military claiming a stronghold on the nation, women's rights are portrayed as unimportant to the 'real' threat that faces the country (Demetriou, 2012: 64).

The effects of the binary purported when men/boys go to the military are felt in the lives of women, specifically in the home, which is the man's domain where he is catered for by his wife and daughters (Hadjipavlou, 2010: 100). The domestication of women occurs when they feel it is their duty to raise sons who can continue their father's legacy by offering them to the military (Hadjipavlou, 2010). Hadjipavlou (2010) writes that the narrative society purports marginalises the female perspective due to its connection to femininity and, therefore, weakness. If the mother and the daughter are assumed to retain one specific role in the private, they are perceived to not belong in the public. This allows men to be at the forefront of nationhood, while women are seen as the reproducers of tradition (Eriksen, 2017). The attitudes Cypriot society holds, and the state's identity are detrimental to finding a public space for women. Identity is determined by ethnicity before all else, on the Greek or Turkish axis (Joannidis, 2012). In disregarding gender, there is no way people on the island can break free from the performative gender roles they have created for themselves, as Butler (1990) would say. If attitudes in society lead towards masculinity equalling value, women become 'othered', observed as weak and worthless to society. Lacking a public role dictates that this patriarchal thought process permeates the island's institutions, including the binary

constructions of political parties, restricting women from entering political life (Hadjipavlou and Mertan, 2019: 131).

Women's historical erasure sustains itself through ethnic nationalism affecting women's everyday lives and space in peacemaking. Cyprus's security culture is informed by rigid patriarchal binary nationalism (Vassiliadou, 2002). Nationalism has functioned as a tool of sustained male suppression. There has never been a feminist movement in Cyprus due to the dominance of the national problem (Hadjipavlou and Mertan, 2010). Vassiliadou (2002) stated that Greek Cypriot nationalism and patriarchy sustain each other by promoting masculine rhetoric; to save the country, you must fight for it. Excluding women's voices means they will never be deemed worthy or nationalistic enough to stand up for their country. This stems from Cyprus' history but is bound by sustained ethnic conflict. The war in 1974 solidified these ideas of strength in masculinity and weakness in femininity through the politics of ethnonationalism (Anastasiou, 2008). From 1974 onwards stood a slight chance that decolonisation could begin alongside processes that provide women a public space (Kamenou, 2020). However, nationalism proved too robust after the war and has remained so. Nationalism has cooperated with androcentrism, hyper-masculinity and patriarchy to erase women from the peace process.

Methodology

With the intent of contributing to the analysis of "where are the women" in Cypriot peace negotiations, I have conducted interviews with women and men from various communities on the island. The interviews progress the understanding and thoughts directly of the people of Cyprus and the Cypriot diaspora, similar to the 2010 book "Women and Change in Cyprus" by Maria Hadjipavlou. The interviews I conducted were semi-structured, allowing for free-flowing conversation to occur and genuinely

understanding my participants' thoughts and feelings on the topics we were discussing. As Adams (2015) stated, semi-structured interviews are an effective method which allows the interviewer to ask open-ended questions with the ability to develop more independent and insightful conversation, further stemming from the original questions. Despite the relatively small sample size, this approach turned out to be the clearest way to have influential and deep conversations with my participants. Through the research, I encountered some potential limitations such as the small sample size. Only interviewing 10 participants suggested that I did not have a breadth of views that would benefit the study. For future research, more participants would be beneficial. Likewise, a more representative sample would translate the study into a more general analysis of the issue of peacebuilding, however, this would be beyond the scope of this paper.

I reached out to people who have knowledge and interest in the Cyprus issue through social media and email. Considering the target population, Cypriots both in the country and via the diaspora, it was vital that the interviewees had a specific understanding of women's role in peacebuilding to ensure meaningful and informative interviews on the topic - this dictated the choice of my sample group. Overall, I completed ten different interviews. Two interviews were with men and eight with women. Primarily, I wanted to hear women's voices on the matter. The participants that I chose came from a range of backgrounds. Disregarding the ethnic identity that has for so long been decided for them in place of Cypriotness (Joannidis, 2012), three participants identified as Cypriots. Further, four Greek Cypriots, one person who identified as a Turkish Cypriot, an American Cypriot and a Pontian Cypriot. I gathered consent forms and, before I began the interviews, I ensured that all felt comfortable with the conversation topics. I conducted the interviews in person and online, taking all the proper steps towards anonymity and confidentiality to guarantee the participant's safety and the interviews' success. There were six questions that I asked the participants, but in the nature of a semi-structured interview, the discussions had space

to progress into further conversation. The questions included a discussion on what women's roles within

the peace movements are, why they are important and more general questions on unification and the

role of the UN, EU and technology on the peace process.

For my research and analysis, I have used the parts of the interview that accurately applied to what

I aim to determine where the women are in Cyprus peacebuilding and what people's differing views may

be. I have also sought to unpick the workings of nationalism, militarisation and essentialisation that are

present in the conversations. In my analysis, I will refer to the participants by numbers 1-10 when

discussing their interviews.

A Post-Conflict Society and Post-Conflict Restructuring

To trace where the women are, we must understand the climate of Cyprus in the years leading up

to 1974 and the post-conflict restructuring and peacebuilding attempts that followed. Enloe writes that

nationalism is sprung from "masculinised memory, masculine humiliation and masculinised hope" (1993:

45). Understanding the invasion of Cyprus resounds in explaining how masculinism prevailed and reduced

women's inclusion in peacebuilding.

The conflict that erupted, spearheaded by EOKA B (Greek Cypriot Paramilitary) and the TNT (Turkish

Cypriot Paramilitary), carried devastating losses on either side, both had casualties and refugees, forced

to flee their homes to safety (Dikomitis, 2012). The survivors were traumatised, and trauma is gendered,

spilling into everyday mainstream consciousness (Papastavrou, 2021: 45). There was immense tragedy

and loss on both sides of the conflict fronted by nationalistic thought processes, which were hyper-

masculine and featured no compassion for each sides communal loss (Volkan, 2008). Speaking of EOKA B,

participant 10 stated that EOKA belongs to "a period in the recent history of Cyprus that is in our shadow

and has blighted every other day". She believes that those in the Republic believe, just as they did post-1974, that the coup "is the most sacred moment in the history of Cyprus". This dedication to the cause has controlled the island nation and prompted a form of gendered nationalism (Walby, 2006: 118).

Gendered societal positions, which through nationalism amplified during the war, arguably presented themselves dramatically during the British colonial rule of Cyprus. Fanon (2001) explained nationalism bridges the gap between colonial and post-colonial periods. This nationalism was exacerbated by the British 'divide and rule' policy (Demetriou, 2019; Savvas, 2020). Speaking on colonialism, participant 10 stated that she believed the state had never truly been decolonised from this period. The divide-and-rule policy forced the relatively harmonious divisions of religion along the Orthodox and Muslim lines into the ethnic division of Greeks and Turks, each tied to a "motherland" that could protect them (Menelaou, 2019). Colonialism and decolonisation are gendered phenomena (Zalewski, 2015). They have aided in women's non-participation in the early peacebuilding in Cyprus by instating traditional gendered roles in the public and private domains (Hadjipavlou, 2010).

Colonial effects were responsible for the faltered decolonisation. With the invasion of 1974, the modernisation of society was stunted (Papadakis, Peristianis and Welz, 2006). Modernity on the island was, and still is, based upon "Westernness" accompanied by European Greekness (Papadakis, Peristianis and Welz, 2006). Post-colonial societal reconstruction was demarcated by Eurocentric national identity, presenting itself in androcentric, hetero-normative perceptions of gender (Kamenou, 2019). Reflecting this draw towards Eurocentrism in its connection with anti-Turkishness was civil society. Civil society post-1974 predominantly functioned along ethnically divided lines, with no genuine bicommunal efforts as today. For example, in the summer of 1974, a women's movement, 'Women Return', marched upon Varosha to safeguard its 'Greekness' (Charalambous, 2020). Speaking to the Greek Cypriot Female MP,

she stated that this women's group was vital in "fighting against occupation". Even today, the women who are active in the public sphere, such as Participant 9, are not aware of the power that nationalism and militarisation have on the thought processes of those who make policy and live in society (Hadjipavlou and Mertan, 2010: 256). Consequently, this has prohibited women's rights and spatial location in peacemaking becoming necessary in the years of decolonisation and the lack of a substantial feminist movement (Papastavrou, 2021). Even women's groups such as 'Women Return' were not focused on ensuring rights for themselves but rather on protecting the homeland from the 'enemy'. Men and masculinity in war and the post-colonial period have sustained the definition of women as weak and not worthy of a seat at the table (Tickner, 1997). In the interview with participant (10) aged 75, who is well acquainted with issues relating to women in peacebuilding in Cyprus, she stated she felt in the 70s and 80s, women's voices were actively marginalised by those in charge of peacebuilding, the participant was at the intersect of ethnicity and gender, trying to bring peace but intersectionally being negatively impacted by her gender and ethnic identity (Ilmonen, 2017). The post-colonial identity of Greekness through Westernness, and Turkishness dominated the chances of women being welcomed into peace processes in the post-conflict period (Hadjipavlou, 2003). Women were nowhere to be found in peacebuilding efforts. Though civil society was enriched it was not towards peacebuilding.

After the war early intercommunal talks that occurred were performed by men in a public location, politically and militarily, the very people directing the conflict (Antonopoulos, 2019). With Greek, Turkish and British mediators all being men, it is evident that women were not included in the peacebuilding process in the post-war period, though they were just as implicated by the war (Hadjipavlou, 2010: 44). Porter (2003) details when men responsible for conflict are responsible for the negotiation of peace, the reality of the situation prevents any lasting and legitimate peace. Removing women from the equation suggests both sides have not had the chance to view society and peace from a non-masculinist approach

and also sought to prohibit any future possibility of peace therefore gendering peacebuilding. Any attempts at peace did not seek to integrate women's war experiences, resulting in the continuation of ethno-nationalist rhetoric during peace negotiations (Özkaleli and Yilmaz, 2015: 52). When viewing how the location of women in peace talks has changed over time, it is evident that nationalism and the idea of 'the Cyprus problem' grew out of the assumption that the chances of reunification remained low, accepting the male-dominated view that peace was not possible (Papastavrou, 2012).

The functionality of peacebuilding links back to the role of militarisation in the state during this time and the heightened masculinity that ensued (Cockburn, 2001). These processes began to control society in the post-colonial and conflict restructuring of society; the approach was gendered (Asadi, 2012; Sjoberg and Via, 2010). The militarily led sides have capitalised on the threat of the 'other' to militarise younger generations to ensure their complete dedication to patriarchal nationalism. Militarism functioning in Cyprus has grown out of the "us" vs "them", and "self" vs "other" narratives that commenced with British colonial practices (Papastavrou, 2021). The war militarised the nation, leading them to believe in the protection the military provides. For the Turkish community, the 'Turkish Peace Forces' saved their people from interethnic violence (Jensehaugen, 2017). Doing this provided the new de facto state of the 'Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus' a military faithfulness from its citizens (Özkaleli and Yilmaz, 2015). Essentialist patriarchal constructions of women's military protection define the identity of both Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots on the island.

Increasing the military presence inexplicably links to territorial changes that the war presented. Militarisation was deemed essential to the Greek Cypriot state surrounding discourse around the border to enforce the idea that they are masculine and heroic even in the face of such loss (Efthymiou, 2019: 29). Hypermasculine hegemonic masculinity and identity cultivates how securitisation of the buffer zone has

manifested. This entails the demand that certain power relations must be sustained, keeping the 'motherland' safe and society functioning (Maruska, 2009: 237). Greek Cypriot post-war nationalism situated itself almost entirely around the border explains Papadakis (2005). Lefevre (1991) states that spaces of representation are the spaces produced by people's everyday lives, with Kitchin writing about the weaving of a person's livelihood through these spaces (2009: 270). The space that splits Cyprus in two is not different; it occupies a space in the minds of the people that has justified the concentration on the 'Cyprus Problem'. Justifying the 'Cyprus problems' space in the social consciousness has limited women's inclusion in peacebuilding. What is important to note here is that men on the island did not view women's trauma as a consequence of the changes in the territory and the memory attached to displacement. Rather, this fuelled women's exclusion from public life (Papastavrou, 2012). Women had no space to be politically and socially active when men did not validate their grief. The only grief they could hold was for the nationalist cause, to not feminise themselves (Vassiliadou, 1997). The same applied to men in the post-war reconstructive period. In public settings, from ceasefire negotiations to village café meet-ups, social dictations at the intersection of gender, nationalism, and militarism prohibited any show of emotion or grief that could be perceived as femininity (Efthymiou, 2019: 38). National mourning was acceptable but only through a lens of bitterness and hatred towards the 'other' and what they had taken, instead of through emotion, vulnerability, and suffering (Zembylas et al. 2010, p.566). Participant 3, a Cypriot student, proclaimed that women's voices have never truly been listened to, even through substantial communal loss. Politically, the Republic had power over what citizens were allowed and not allowed to grieve for, impacting societal locations and placing it within hypermasculinity and patriarchy, silencing women's voices.

Academic Myria Vassiliadou (1997: 96) wrote about how her Cypriot identity card first stated where she was from, her surname, and then her mother's maiden name. Vassiliadou relayed that this is how the

state viewed her and how she was taught to view herself. First, she belonged to her ethnicity, then to her

father and then mother. Vassiliadou perfectly conceptualises the space women have had in society since

the breakdown of colonialism, the fragile constitution, intercommunal violence, and the war of 1974.

The Role of the International Community

In the transition from the post-war period the early 2000s marked renewed prosperity for citizens

in the Republic, while continuing anxieties for Turkish Cypriots in the North. The catalysts for this fear and

happiness were the failure of the UN Annan Peace Plan and the ROC's accession to the European Union.

After decades of stalled talks between Greek Cypriot leader Glafkos Clerides and Turkish Cypriot,

Rauf Denktas they finally began a new UN-sponsored round of peace negotiations. In November 2002,

Kofi Annan presented the most comprehensive peace plan yet (Loizides and Antoniades, 2009). The

referendum results displayed the Greek Cypriots voting 75% against the plan while, Turkish Cypriots voted

65% in favour (Menelaou, 2019: 43). Both leaders refused to show support for the plan, whereas the

international community, including Turkish President Erdogan, pledged their support. So why did these

negotiations fail to gain support from the majority of Greek Cypriots? As Mirbagheri (2010: 151) and

Michael (2007: 587) state, international pressure was insufficient to end the frozen conflict and the top-

down approach proved detrimental (Loizides and Antoniades, 2009: 613). Overwhelmingly is the case that

Cypriots were not themselves included in plans writing and inner workings. Incidentally, neither were

women occupying any space in discussions at an official level in the creation of the Annan Plan (Demetriou

and Hadjipavlou, 2020). Major takeaways from my research included the difference in views by different

identities. Greek Cypriots on the more generally wanted unification, Turkish Cypriots specifically stated

that they wanted peace but as long as it was equal for the whole island and not just specific parties. Those

who identified as Cypriot tended to want peace but stated that this was to be peace without foreign interests remaining in the country.

When women are included in peacebuilding at the official level, statistically there is a more significant chance of finding longer-lasting peace through more successful and thorough negotiating (United Nations Secretary General, 2010). Though not to assume the essentialist positioning that women are inherently and biologically peaceful (Shepherd, 2015; Myrttinen, 2019: 91), rather, women must be included as they live different experiences than men (Shepherd, 2015). When speaking to Participant 10, she stated when she is active in civil society, she becomes more invested in peacebuilding believing she has more to lose societally from the processes failing. Though men are peacemakers too and can negotiate successfully in many instances of long-lasting peace, in Cyprus, the patriarchal values that are upheld are drastically embedded into the security culture, just as they were 30 years before the referendum. The plan's failure exhibits how entrenched gender binaries prevail in Greek Cypriot society. Women often don't control their own voting decisions. Instead, on the local level, the family's patriarchal figure, whether the husband or the father, usually determines how the vote is decided (Hadjipavlou and Mertan, 2010: 249). This exhibits how a male figure determines women's positionality at the local level through the votes of the referendum or the international level in the early 2000s era of peace negotiations.

A further discussion of the failures of the Annan Plan leads to the "fundamental misreading of Cypriot civil society and the conflicts internal dynamics" (Michael, 2007: 598). Annan did not account for the local factor (Mirbagheri, 2010), and the UN ignored civil society. Schwabenland et al, (2017) theorised that women function at the heart of civil society organisations, pointing to spaces in society which recognise women as being allowed. Though they are meant to be the centre of civil society, denoting areas such as the feminist movement, women were not awarded a place at risk of displacing the Cyprus

conflict in importance. As Foucault (1982: 791) writes, institutions are designed how they are to ensure their preservation, which is how civil society groups functioned in the early 2000s. As Hadjipavlou and Kanol (2008) researched, social infrastructure was insufficient to ensure that women's rights and public societal location took precedence over the Cyprus conflict. Though civil society was present, it was not heeded by the UN, nor the drafting of the plan and women remained in the private. This displays a lack of awareness by the UN relating to women's inclusion in peacebuilding in the early 2000s. Greek Cypriots believed that the Annan Plan marginalised their voices and, within this, was the greater marginalisation of women's voices (Hadjipavlou, 2010). Women were not yet active in civil society peacebuilding at the local level, and at the international level, they were excluded from the process.

Walking the line between the East and West has been identity-defining for Cypriots (Papadakis et al, 2006: 56), with a formal decision dictating the state's accession to the EU. The EU stated in early accession processes that the ROC would be allowed to join the bloc, whether unified or divided. In the absence of the Annan Plan, the Republic of Cyprus joined the EU divided on May 1st 2004, while North Cyprus remained isolated. Turkish Cypriots felt abandoned by the international community and considerable bicommunal barriers grew (Krasniqi, 2019: 309). Social issues were marginalised, including women's social, legal, and political rights (Vassiliadou, 2002: 476). Participants 1, 5 and 10 discussed how they believed the European accession had not done enough to invigorate the island towards peace. Instead, as Participant 5 stated, it has made the situation worse. Nationalism grew in the face of EU accession in the Greek Cypriot community, creating a narrow perspective on what is essential to women's rights, women were 'given' equal legislation in the aftermath of accession to promote the national issue (Vassiliadou, 2002: 476). Clerides (2020) has written on how EU membership has increased women's pay in the Republic but does not detail a change in the systemic patriarchal nationalism that dominates political rhetoric, as has been displayed through my meeting with Participant 9, an MP in Cyprus. She

suggested that the EU has played a vital role in providing basic principles to society. But, it has not done much else, failing to break down roots in society. Instead, in joining the EU in 2004, Cyprus has relied on presenting itself as 'Western' to promote the othering of the Turkish Cypriot people (Phillipou and Theodorou, 2014). Through EU accession, it appears women have been 'awarded' rights. In reality, it has magnified the roots of patriarchal nationalism whereby men have bestowed this gift to women. Shepherd conditions that agency is a product of empowerment that must be afforded by men only after a woman has been vulnerable (2017: 117). This applies to the rationale for decision-making in peacebuilding, with Shepherd explaining that women are included based on the discrimination and violence they have faced rather than just being allowed into the room.

An essential point in discussing the integration of the international community into Cyprus is the UN Security Council Resolution 1325, the starting point for the UN WPS agenda. The analysis laid out above coincides with a time of positive political movement in the UN. However, in Cyprus, these advancements failed to enact change for women's inclusion in the early 2000s period. Through all of the referendums and negotiations, from peace to EU accession, the UNSCR 1325 called for women to be included both top-down and bottom-up, this did not occur. The new resolutions acknowledged that women have been "active in peacebuilding and conflict prevention" and also recognised their "right to participate as decision-makers at all levels" (Cohn, 2008: 185). This was the first international recognition that peacebuilding must include women. The document remained "within the confines of modernity", exacerbating essentialism (McLeod, 2016: 276). The resolution only featured one reference to nationalist sentiment and minimal reflection on militarisation, ever present in the Cypriot context. 1325 did not dismantle the gender-based binaries in post-conflict political decision-making (Myrttinen, 2019). In Cyprus, gender binaries ensure women remain in the private (Hadjipavlou and Mertan, 2010). With the ratification of 1325 in 2000, the Cypriot government, through ratification, declared they would strive to

include women in peacebuilding and decision-making at the political level. Yet, in the early 2000s, they were not included at all (Papastavrou, 2012: 99). Even with the creation of this landmark document for women's rights in peace and war, social expectations continued to denounce women from peacebuilding spaces (Hadjipavlou and Mertan, 2019: 126).

Though, as Hadjipavlou and Mertan have stated, there was "emancipatory potential" in the immediate creation of the report (2019: 128), it was not calibrated for use on the local level with no establishment of a National Action Plan (Demetriou and Hadjipavlou, 2018). Moreover, the resolution was not powerful enough to ensure government included women in peacebuilding at a top-down level. For example, in the parliamentary elections of 2001, only six of 85 women candidates were elected for office (Pavlou and Christodoulou, 2015: 10), all but guaranteeing women remained in the private domain (Vassiliadou, 2002). When speaking to Participant 5, he claimed women should be participating in the peace process, as they have the "ability to be the voice of reason and of righteousness". Participant 1 stated she believed women were more "open-minded and forgiving", and therefore better at peacebuilding. It is this which identifies one of the primary issues of UNSCR 1325, as it marks women as an addition to peacebuilding for their peaceful ideology, rather than aiding in providing intelligent expertise to a post-conflict situation (Myrttinen, 2019: 91). The unsuccessful early implementation of the WPS agenda has promoted essentialist gender ideas, as recognised in my participants, by failing to work to prevent the continued progression of a society dictated by gendered binaries displaying that patriarchy is ever present in the post-1325 period. Another key takeaway I discovered when speaking to the men I interviewed and to those who identified as Greek Cypriot was when asking about women in power and peacebuilding they followed the rather essentialist views linking "women and children". This notion is exemplified in the UNSCR 1325, it appears these thoughts have been carried through to the continued development of the hyper-masculine rhetoric that dictates the country.

Positively, this has ensured the creation and use of bicommunal civil society women's groups working to break gendered notions of masculinity/femininity in society to help generate a societal location for women beyond essentialism. This has been undertaken by groups such as the Gender Advisory Team and Hands Across the Divide. Though changing from 1974 into the early 2000s, women's inclusion did not change enough to provide a voice. Men dominated civil society, and though changes occurred at the grassroots, there was a reluctance to include women in these spaces. Even with the ratification of the UNSCR 1325, during significant moments of Cyprus's history, such as the Annan Plan and EU Accession, they were excluded from the public. It was not until the early 2010s that we started observing some differences in how society behaves, and women's voices in peacebuilding began to be heard.

Civil Society, social media the UN and the Future

More recently, significant social changes have prompted a new world for the socio-political agency of women focusing on bicommunality. Developments in technology, political climate, international mediation, and civil society have altered women's participation in peacebuilding, providing more entry points to join public spaces for the first time.

Civil society promotes a functioning fundamental democracy, facilitating regular and sustained participation by citizens (Gramsci, 2011). Gramsci explains civil society entails a wide range of organisations and ideologies that work to challenge or uphold the current cultural hegemon, thus acting as its own democratic body. Civil society occupies a space between the public and private where voices can be heard and understood outside of the state and familial space. The framework of liberal peacebuilding suggests that civil society opens a space where the government cannot deliver, acting as a guarantee towards basic democracy on issues relating to human rights and peacebuilding through "civil

education, training and advocacy" (Paffenholz, 2022: 59). This access to civil society makes it imperative for women to participate in running activities, local services, and fundraising for causes inside and outside the status quo (Schwabenland et al, 2017). In Cyprus, without any natural progression of women into official peacebuilding, this is viewed as an essential mechanism in the process (Demetriou and Hadjipavlou, 2018). Speaking to Participant 2, she explained that she felt women had been disregarded by mainstream political movements, and grassroots groups allowed her to become civilly engaged in peacebuilding. Two of the island's most successful feminist civil society groups are the bicommunal and pro-Cypriot Gender Advisory Team (GAT) and Hands Across the Divide (HAD).

GAT has focused its leading cause on the progression and implementation of UNSCR 1325 and its sister resolutions in Cypriot peacebuilding (Demetriou and Hadjipavlou, 2018). Speaking with Participant 6, a member of GAT, she stated that the gender perspective of masculinities/femininities had yet to be included in the peacebuilding process. In negotiations of the 2010s, GAT has provided recommendations to politicians detailing gender inclusion in the process suggesting gender-sensitive provisions be included in any future peace plan in governance, property, economy, and citizenship (Demetriou and Hadjipavlou, 2020: 4). The recommendations reside to restrict any potential progression of Cypriot society's patriarchal nationalism and militarist culture (Demetriou and Hadjipavlou, 2020: 6). GAT has failed to identify any progress made by the UN or the government in the implementation of 1325 in peace negotiations, and highlights obstacles faced by the WPS agenda (Demetriou and Hadjipavlou, 2020: 7). Though facing issues integrating women into the higher echelons of decision-making, GAT has provided a civil space for women against marginalisation by the patriarchal hyper-masculine workings of the state and, in doing so, are developing gender consciousness in society. GAT provides a feminist route in exploring how the patriarchal culture imposes at every step of decision-making instead of aiming to work alongside the dominating narrative that women's rights are not important due to the 'frozen conflict' (Byrne, 2020)

Hands Across the Divide is a registered NGO, formed to progress commonality and communality between Greek, Turkish, Maronite, Armenian and Latin Cypriots (Ladini, 2009). Vitally HAD has one organisational structure, rather than the traditional two, influencing the groups to work together in a rarely observed way (Papastavrou, 2021). With its primary goal of working towards sustainable reunification and ceasing 'othering', the group focuses its resources on educating and highlighting the importance of power structures (Papastavrou, 2021: 72). HAD uses transnational feminism to discuss gender as opposed to the dominant state discourses (Papastavrou, 2021: 73). The grassroots group operates to engage women in more local peacebuilding matters than GAT through understanding women's rigidity in the private sphere while still acknowledging everyday issues they have outside of the scope of the 'Cyprus problem'. Although civil society groups on the island remain associated with the 'Cyprus problem', until society progresses or unification occurs, gender issues of patriarchy and masculine/feminine binaries will continue. Applying the intersection of both is paramount in enhancing women's space in the peacebuilding processes. The formation of Cypriot-based feminist groups such as HAD and GAT is a step toward women's engagement in politics and decision-making outside masculineness. Analysing the discussions with participants makes apparent the level of a feminist lens certain people had, making their discussions more poststructurally feminist. These participants had been active in some way in civil society. By this logic, they were more understanding of the power dynamics between men and women across the island and this informed the interview more delicately as there was greater gender consciousness in the discussions we were having. This is evident in the way civil society groups like GAT and HAD function in Cyprus. It is important to say however that this is not the view of the majority of the island and potentially a limitation in my sample.

A noticeable progression in civil society is through the advanced use of social media for matters relating to peacebuilding, working to bridge the gap between communities in a way that has never been

seen before. Social media can be a space where people become interactive, regardless of distance or separation, where counter-hegemonic opportunities arise against the dominant discourse, promoting a proper peace education (Naseem and Arshad-Ayaz, 2020: 2). In post-conflict areas, social media can aid cooperation between groups and provide some social cohesion, eroding dominant nationalist rhetoric and begin socio-politically engaging people in promoting peace (Baytiyeh, 2019: 74). Social media sites facilitate interactions and prompt a sense of community fostering new networks between people (Naseem and Arshad-Ayaz, 2020). In the case of Cyprus, this manifests through supporting bicommunality.

In advancing peace processes, social media engages civil society to cultivate conversation along bicommunal lines and initiates dialogues once only open in the public political sphere (Hadjipavlou, 2010: 75). Moreover, social media moves these public spaces into everyday life, which for women in Cyprus is essential when taught to remain in the private (Hadjipavlou, 2010), further enhancing democratisation (Bratic, 2016). This has led to the promotion of online activist pages such as The Cypriot Story, Root to Vine and Generation for Change Cy, amongst many others who work to promote bicommunal networking towards a united Cyprus. These pages have directed their content at younger social media users amassing a significant following amongst members of the Cypriot diaspora. What these pages have in common is the highlighting of one Cypriot culture outside Greece and Turkey's influence. They are all run by women. When speaking to many of my participants, they all displayed the same view that technology and social media had bestowed them the ability to interact with the 'other' community, humanising them in a way never before experienced. Seibicke writes that social media plays a significant role in women's advocacy, providing an opportunity for them to influence the political agenda (2017: 123). Karayianni and Christou (2020) declare that social media provides a space for stimulating resistance against misogynistic discourse which sustains the 'Cyprus problem', acting as a tool of resistance to amplify women's voices in a way never exhibited in Cyprus en masse. This resistance has spilled into feminist discourse on peacebuilding

at a grassroots level. For example, the Instagram page Root to Vine regularly posts interviews between women discussing what the 'Cyprus problem' means to them, giving them a voice to promote their peacebuilding agenda outside the political. Enloe details how these processes break through the wall of masculinity that dominates traditional forms of media getting women involved at a local level (2014: 19). The more people become activated on social media towards the female-led bicommunal agenda, the more influential discourse on non-patriarchally led peace will grow.

Despite the promising online growth of civil society groups and activism, there are still aspects of both Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot society that continue to be heavily influenced by hegemonic masculinity, and several examples can be seen through TV News. On both sides the media is a crucial player in assisting national imaginings of the 'enemy' (Sahin, 2022: 53). The press has been at the centre of these national struggles, and still today, defence and national guard issues are featured almost daily in the TV news (Efthymiou, 2016: 415). Sahin and Karayianni state the political elite shapes the media discourse around peace suggesting responsibility for the hyper-masculine rhetoric presented in the news about the 'Cyprus problem' (2020: 1371). Young women have reported that they have struggled to manage the "competing and conflicting" messaging they receive from the media against their personal desires. The national narrative's reproduction prohibits women from removing themselves from the femininities that have been assumed upon them at the demand of patriarchy, marginalising their voices and reducing them to the private (Hadjipavlou, 2010: 42). Encouragingly, this may not continue for the rest of Cyprus's history, with initiatives in place that are seeking to raise the platform of women and give them a voice.

One of these initiatives derives from the UN peacekeeping force (UNFICYP), alongside the secretary general, who releases a report detailing the plans for peacebuilding and peacekeeping around every six

months. The latest report, released in July 2022, incorporates an entire section on gender, women, peace, and security (Secretary-General, 2022). Points of the report include ensuring the preservation of youth-led projects, which focus on enhancing women's space in peacebuilding, mentioning its ethos of aiming to guarantee the support of gender mainstreaming (Secretary-General, 2022: 8-9). This report comes shortly after the latest Security Council Resolution 2493 from 2019. Though still purporting essentialist notions of gender and victimhood (Zalewski, 2015), the report renews the efforts towards prevention of conflict, promotion of women's groups and planning in post-conflict societies (United Nations, 2019: 2). As with early resolutions, however, it neglects to feature any dissection of gender binaries created in societies and promoting the invisibleness of masculinities while prioritising consideration for femininities in post-conflict societies (Myrttinen: 2019).

Finally, the publishing of the Cypriot NAP for gender equality 2021-2025 is a further UN-led initiative aiming to provide vital responses in aiding the progression of women's inclusion in public peacebuilding life (ROC Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2021). The plan sets the framework for promoting women in peacebuilding spaces, from civil society to the judicial protection of women's rights. The plan falls short, however, in many substantial areas. It features an incredibly resolute nationalist sentiment in its depiction of the 'frozen conflict' not accounting for the communal losses of the war. This is further reflected in that the report was only released in Greek essentially promoting the 'us/them' narrative. It reduces the likelihood of reunification and encourages patriarchal nationalism, diminishing women's inclusion in peacebuilding.

These contributions of UN-led policy fail among one principal feature: they do not guarantee any form of implementation. Davies and True write that much of the expectations of gender mainstreaming and the realities of it do not correlate in a post-conflict society (2018: 3). In the Republic, despite

referencing expanding the number of women in office in the NAP, in the most recent elections, only seven seats were taken up by women, with numbers as low as the 2001 election (Parliament CY, 2021). A significant change is the election of Annida Demetriou as President of the Parliament, the first woman elected in this role (Parikiaki, 2021). Consequently, when women are included in peacebuilding and politics, as Waylen identifies, they are made to feel isolated from the wider negotiation group (2014: 509). For women to be included and accepted in peacebuilding, there must be a systematic deconstruction of gender binaries continually purported by the UN and governments. In Cyprus's case, this presents itself in the desisting of the nationalist culture. Participant 8, for example, stated he felt that social media had done more for women's inclusion in peacebuilding than the UN had ever done. This is something which NAPs on gender equality must focus on to develop women's inclusion beyond civil society.

Unification is a primary goal of citizens of both North and South, but what kind of unification differed between the participants of my research. Many believe that unification can only occur with the complete decolonisation of the island, away from Greece, Turkey, the UN, and the UK, with peace decided by and for Cypriots. Another interviewee said she did not want to see unification if it meant any semblance of a Turkish government. Others said that they wished for peace but ensured it must guarantee safety and a bicommunal governance structure. Another viewpoint my participants conveyed was that they were unsure what peace and unification could appear to be in reality. However, what is paramount to the future of Cyprus is that women are included in all levels of any future peacebuilding, with gender consciousness developed from a young age as a pillar of prevention.

For the higher echelons of politics, an excellent place to begin undertaking women's complete inclusion would be ensuring women from both sides are present in the weekly trilateral meetings that occur between the Presidents of each community and the UNFICYP President (Secretary-General: 2022).

This would establish the demand for women to be present at all levels of the peacebuilding process. Furthermore, the movement toward unification will ensure the establishment of meaningful negotiation outside the domain of patriarchy, where women can express their experiences in a political space (McLeod, 2019). Without deconstructing patriarchal narratives sustained by nationalism and militarism, there is unlikely much to be changed about women's inclusion in the peacebuilding process, despite current movements in civil society and social media. Until the gendered binaries within the public and private domains are dismantled, patriarchy will remain embedded in the security culture. The space of women will largely remain unchanged.

Conclusion

In this study, I have aimed to detail how women have been excluded from the peacebuilding process, focusing on the Cypriot case. Speaking to my participants of all genders and communities, they shared the joint agreement that in moving forward with negotiations for peace, government and society must include women in all stages of the process. To enhance the chances of lasting peace, this must become a vital factor in the composition of peace negotiations.

Women's inclusion in peace processes has changed over time, although it has not advanced enough. The growth in bicommunal civil society has enriched women's activation into the public and political spheres. Likewise, the progression of online activism has created a platform to be public within the private. However, the issue is that the state has not dismantled patriarchal nationalism to develop women's inclusion in peacebuilding. The essentialist language used by UN discourse, which upholds binaries of gender, grants the reproduction of the hyper-masculine nationalist functions and is ingrained within its security culture. Women's locational space in society must move past the traditional gender

roles and private sphere into the public. To promote bicommunality, the state must politically include women. Systematic nationalistic processes such as the military, religion, education, traditional news media, and the fortified border crossing must all experience modification.

Peacebuilding processes are likely to define the history of Cyprus for years to come. Until women are granted inclusion in all facets of these processes, reunification ideas that are free from the domain of hyper-masculinised, patriarchal nationalism will not exist. Therefore, women must be included in peacebuilding for reunification and a solution to this age-old question. When women's experiences are provided with a platform to be heard, meaningful negotiation is established (McLeod, 2019). Ultimately, for the future of the island, women's inclusion must evolve further towards a deal for lasting and fair peace.

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