The Cyprus Problem in the Discourses of Greek Cypriot MPs and the Impact of These Discourses on Collective Memory[1]

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to reveal what the narrative of the Cyprus Problem was in the discourses of Greek Cypriot MPs in the post-2004 Annan Plan Era and how these discourses affected the collective memory of the society. The data of the research consists of in-depth interview with 10 deputies who served and still actively serve in the Cyprus Parliament. The result data which is obtained from in-depth interviews with MPs were analysed using the contextual analysis method. Interviews with MPs, the narrative of the Cyprus Problem, expectations for the solution of the Cyprus Problem, Türkiye and Turkish perception, perception of the future, collective memory were analysed within the theoretical framework. When the findings of the research are examined, it has been revealed that Greek Cypriot MPs consider the events of 1974 to be the most traumatic memory in the collective memory of Greek Cypriots.

Keywords: Remembering and Forgetting, Collective Memory, Political Discourse, The Other, Greek Cypriot Community, Greek Cypriot MPs.

1. Why And How Do We Remember? The Role of Remembering and Forgetting in Reconstruction of Today

The past is undoubtedly seen as the main actor in the formation of the present and an important reference point that shapes our assumptions about the present. As a common belief, it is thought that the events that occurred and happened in the past could be known in many ways. However, contrary to this general belief, the past is a fiction; It can be said that it is a memory area that is reconstructed according to the time in it and the needs of this time. Jan Assmann also underlines that the past is shaped by the context and needs of the present, saying that "the past is a structure arising from the context of the current time and the need for meaning" (2018; 40). Assmann also claims that the past can only emerge if a relationship is established with it and that the past is "reconstructed by remembering". Especially with the developments brought by the tradition of nationalism, it has become a dominant in interstate statements, remembering the past - great heroism and victories or shocking great disasters – and the systematic transfer of memories of the past to new generations through commemorations and celebrations has become a very important topic. Because nationalism claims that every person living in the world is naturally a part of a nation and has a common identity through elements such as common destiny, common past and common memories. This common past and with it a common destiny found the definition of friends and foes. This whole constitutes important parts of national identity.

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National identity becomes the main reference point for the preferences, perceptions and behaviours of states (Smith, 2004: 24). This shows how important the definition of national identity and past is in interpreting what is happening in our political life today. For example, Turkish and Greek nationalisms and national identities define friend and foe in the common past of their own nations with references to each other.

National identities, which define the "Other" while defining themselves, are frequently used politically, as in the Cyprus problem. In this remembering practice, there is a selective remembering according to periodic needs. This leads to the development of different discourses. In the construction of national identity, memories that were thought to be negative in the past are often not remembered; On the other hand, glorious heroism and great victories are the preferred reference point in this construction. At this point, the construction of national identity determines a careful and selective method while telling the historical events to the society and tries to construct the identity as pure, clean and especially free from the burden of the past. "..the essence of the nation is that all individuals have much in common, and at the same time they have forgotten many things…all French citizens celebrate St. Barthelemy's Day[3] and the XIII. Century South must forget the massacres. " (Renan, 2016: 38).

As it is understood from here, the past is a phenomenon that is purified from historical realities and shaped according to needs, and societies and nation states generally construct a clean and glorious past. Accordingly, we can define the construction of the past as the construction of memory. As in the construction of nations, the past and history appear as very important figures in the construction of memory. The selected and desired history is transferred to memory through history books, national textbooks (Sancar, 2016: 18) and various tools. Even though it is built, the tight bond that memory establishes with the past and historical realities enables it to be shaped according to the conditions and requirements of the moment (Bilgin, 2013: 28-32).

When talking about recollections of the past, where the memory of the past is formed or how it is formed also becomes an important issue. In this direction, it is possible to say that memory is formed in society. So, the memory of the individuals living in the society is formed together with the memory of the society, and the socialized memory is remembered for generations. Hence we can claim that what we remember and forget shows that memory is built in society. How and in what way the society remembers / is remembered or forgotten / made forgotten about the events in the past is important in political decisions and social tendencies. Studying how this process works, how and why the past is remembered, and how memory is built is important in understanding the political decisions and movements taking place today.

2. Halbawch's Collective Memory Theory and Its Scope

While the discussion on memory continued intensively in the scientific world, the concept of "collective memory" emerged, especially in the nineteenth century, with the belief that memory is a social phenomenon. The concept of collective memory was first used by the Austrian novelist Hugo Von Hofmannsthal in 1902, but the first thing that comes to mind when the

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[3] The St. Bartalmay Massacre (Massacre de la Saint-Barthélemy) was the great grave massacre of Catholic gangs and the assassinations of Huguenots (French Calvinist Protestants) during the French Wars of Religion in 1572. During the massacre, which lasted about two weeks, between five thousand and thirty thousand, died in France. For detailed discussion, see Iwona Irwin-Zarecka, Frames of Remembrance the Dynamics of Collective Memory (2009)

concept of collective memory is mentioned has always been the French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs[4] (Olick & Robbins, 1998: 106).

The reason why Halbwachs is the first thinker[5] to be referred to in many studies is that he has examined the concept of collective memory sociologically and developed a theory on this subject (Olick, 2008: 153). Halbwachs' interest in memory is mainly based on Emile Durkheim[6] and Henri Louis Bergson[7], who were prominent thinkers of the nineteenth century in France and also Halbwachs' teachers (Olick and Robbins, 1998). Ricoeur states that memory has been seen as an individual phenomenon throughout history, and with Halbwachs' daring approach, collective memory has emerged by assigning a social/collective mission to memory. At this point, Ricoeur mentions that we are indebted to Halbwachs for bringing the concept of collective memory to us (2017: 139). Because before Halbwachs' work, it was never in question for social scientists that memory could be social.

So, what is collective memory, which is located directly opposite the individual memory and points to the collective memory of the society? What are the limits and scope of this memory? How and where is this memory formed? How do collective remembering and forgetting processes work? How are memories formed/constructed in collective memory? Most importantly, how are the memories in this memory transmitted from generation to generation? The above questions are to be answered in this study.

The concept of collective memory is much more complex and difficult to explain than one might think. The point where the concept becomes most complex is where its boundaries are drawn. There is no definite and clear answer to what exactly is meant when talking about collective memory. Many social scientists take the collective memory approach in different ways from their point of view. In addition to this, another problem experienced by the concept is that it is sometimes used synonymously with other memory types such as historical, cultural, social and social in social sciences or it is used incorrectly in close meanings (Kansteiner, 2002: 181).

Although a sharp distinction cannot be made between them, in fact, all memory types have different dynamics within themselves. Of course, there are areas where these memory types intersect and converge, but they all point to a different memory, and it is a very wrong tendency to use them interchangeably. For example, the concept of collective memory is often seen as synonymous with social memory. However, collective memory is more inclusive than social memory and there is a difference between them. There is no certainty about the definition and content of the concept of collective memory, both in the discipline of collective memory and in different interdisciplinary approaches.

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[4] French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs, who made a great impression with his work The Social Frames of Memory (Les Cadres Sociaux de la Mémoire) published in 1925, is considered the main actor and pioneer of collective memory studies (Olick & Vinitzky-Seroussi & Levy, 2020: 27). Halbwachs' theory of collective memory and Les cadres sociaux de la mémoire, published in 1925, and La Topographie légendaire des Évangiles en Terre

[5] Halbwachs' work in the field of memory has led to his being described as the modern father of memory studies by the historian François Hartog (Cited from Hartog, 2013, Halbwachs, 2019: 9).

[6] Between 1898 and 1901, Durkheim taught Halbwachs at the École Normale Supérieure (Higher Education School), one of the most important educational institutions in France, which was world-renowned, and where many philosophers were trained; taught him a lesson.

[7] While studying at Henry IV High School, Halbwachs met and took lessons from his teacher, H. Louis Bergson. With his admiration for Bergson and his growing interest in philosophy, Halbwachs began to shape his thoughts. Although Halbwachs stands against him on some issues, he states that he owes a lot to Bergson and was inspired by him a lot (Halbwachs, 2018: 19-20).

However, the only consensus on collective memory is that the concept is a memory that can be shared among other members of a nation or religious group, an institution or society (Wang, 2008). Collective memory basically refers to how the past is collectively remembered, forgotten, or interpreted (Halbwachs, 2018; Çiftçi, 2019: 1).

Collective memory, which is considered as a reconstruction by Halbwachs, has a very valuable and critical place, especially in politics. What is mentioned here is that societies collectively develop a historical and political consciousness (Halbwachs, 2018). Collective memory is a concept that we encounter frequently, especially in the media. Werth (2009: 17) states that the concept of collective memory is generally used by politicians in times of crisis or when talking about events such as ethnic violence.

Halbwachs argues that memory is a collective phenomenon rather far from individuality, defines collective memory as follows: "collective memory is the memory structured by group identities, the childhood of individuals, their neighbourhood and common relationships, common political or commercial lives, i.e. people with possible certain intersections. a type of memory they create" (2018).

Halbwachs also emphasizes that memory is not just an individual phenomenon, but a relational phenomenon in terms of family and friends, and a social and collective phenomenon in the social circles of social groups (Bosch, 2016: 2). Contrary to popular belief, when the concept of collective memory is mentioned, it is not about a past that individuals live at the same time or in the same place, but rather the common knowledge of the past (Halbwacsh, 2018; Atik, Erdoğan, 2014: 3).

While Halbwachs considers memory as a collective phenomenon, he argues that the memory of societies is formed by the individuals who make up society. According to him, the individual does not remember by himself; remembering is a collective action, not an individual action. Therefore, someone always reminds the individual. At this point, Halbwachs, who says "a witness always gives us ourselves", states that the witnesses are the greatest helpers in the act of remembering (Halbwachs, 2018: 29-38).

Halbwachs's thoughts on the importance of witnesses in remembering can be summarized as follows: "A group's past experiences bring the past to the present with the recollection of the present through the use of witnesses" (Halbwachs, 2018: 33; İlhan, 2015: 1402). At this point, Halbwachs argues that when memories are supported not only by the individual but also by other witnesses, the confidence in the remembered thing will increase (2018: 29).

Emphasizing that remembering is a collective action, Halbwachs states that "we never remember alone" and emphasizes that remembering cannot occur unless it is reminded by another individual (1980). Therefore, just as remembering is collective, memory is not an individual but a collective phenomenon, and according to Halbwachs, it is more accurate to talk about collective memory rather than individual memory.

In the context of collective memory individual memories are not important. What is sought is the items that reflect societies, such as libraries, museums, monuments, place names, and history books, which can be considered as fingerprints depicting societies (Halbwachs, 2018; Atik, Erdoğan, 2014: 3). Halbwachs explains that collective memory is a generalizable image for society and an element that enables the members of society to act together with the following statements: "Collective memory is the group seen from within… It [collective memory] provides the group with a self- portrait that emerges over time; because collective memory is an image of the past and allows the group to identify itself with a total set of images" (Halbwachs, 1980: 86; Hasanov, 2016: 1436).

Halbwachs, who established his theory with a social constructionist perspective, argues that the past is reconstructed in the current context (Halbwachs, 2018; Coser, 1992). Based on Halbwachs' present-day approach, Nora emphasized that groups refer to collective memory to interpret the past and that these memories are independent of the past (Nora, 1996). Collective memory can also be defined as "the past knowledge that individuals have not experienced themselves but learned from cultural artifacts" (Halbwachs, 2018; Atik, Erdoğan, 2014: 3).

The political aspect of collective memory should also be mentioned here. Nora claims that groups specifically chose certain times and people to commemorate; deliberately eliminates some and erases memory; he also claims that these groups support collective memory by inventing tradition. Nora underlines that collective memory is an object of power, emphasizing that collective representations are again chosen by the power (Nora, 1996). For example, the memories of societies are being rebuilt in line with current needs. Political powers and governments can interfere with the memories of individuals in this sense. Even in identity construction, the reconstruction of this memory has an important role.

Stating that memory cannot be considered separately from a social environment, Halbwachs argues that an individual memory is not possible based on this idea (Halbwachs, 2018). According to him, individual memory is constructed within social institutions and structures. From this perspective, Michael Schudson expresses that memory is completely social with the following sentences: "Memory is primarily social because it is embedded in institutions in the form of rules, laws, standardized procedures and records rather than individual human minds" (2007: 180). Social frameworks are of great importance in shaping memories (Dessingué, Winter, 2015: 96).

According to Halbwachs, time, space, space and language constitute the social frameworks of memory (2019) Understanding an individual memory can only be achieved by evaluating it in the context of a group. The group referred to here may include a family, an institution, or nation-states. In summary, it is up to the individual within the group to remember; according to him, the group's share is to build memory (Halbwachs, 2018). A memory that is tried to be remembered is of critical importance in both time and space. Holidays, commemorations, or special days of societies clearly illustrate the importance of space and time in collective memory. The fact that especially those who have been in power for a long time in Türkiye celebrate the conquest of Istanbul with the big organizations they organize every year is a good example of this situation. Time and space are very crucial concepts in collective memory.

Based on Bergson's understanding of time, Halbwachs evaluates time as a frame of memories. Collective memory is time dependent and cannot be separated from it. The continuation of the collective memory depends on the people who will carry this memory from generation to generation. The relationship between space and memory is also an issue that Halbwachs insists on. According to him, a place is related to what happens there. So much so that spaces are more active than not thought on collective memory. Spaces are the only places where collective memory is kept alive, sustained and reconstructed. Christians created places to keep Jesus alive and that they attributed as sacred over time are a good example of this situation.

3. **The Scope and Function of Discourse and Political Discourse and Critical Discourse Analysis**

Discourse emerged with the idea that language is an action that constructs social realities; it is a special concept that is defined differently depending on the study and field it is addressed (Demircan, 2020: 80; Sözen, 2020: 5). When we look at the etymological origin of the concept of discourse, it is seen that it is derived from the Latin verb "discurrere" or "discursus" (rush) in Late Latin, meaning to speak; in Medieval Latin, meaning to reason, to run, to run back and forth, to hurry (Akşin, 1999: 9; Barthes, 1993: 9; Duman, 2018: 9; Kalkan, 2015: 128; Sözen, 2017: 17; Demircan, 2020: 82).

The word discourse is expressed as *discurse* in English, *la discourse* in French, and *diskurs* in German (Glück, 1993: 145). The purpose of giving the equivalents of the word discourse in different languages is that the word has different meanings depending on the language used.

Every discourse includes a set of preferences that sometimes emerge consciously and sometimes subconsciously (Nacar Logie, 2015: 21). Therefore, context information, in other words, who says a discourse, to whom it is said, on what subject, why, when and how it is said is of great importance (Ervin-Tripp, 2014: 11). In this respect, it is necessary to emphasize that context information is vital for healthy communication. Every discourse that is disconnected from its context or whose context is unknown will cause communication to be unhealthy.

In a society or culture (regardless of the type or variety), if there is a language, there are also various discourses. In addition, discourses always have a side, it is never possible to talk about a neutral discourse (Sözen, 2017: 25).

In this direction, Gee emphasizes that every language has a political aspect, regardless of where and when it is used, by talking about the political background of the language (1999). The basis of Gee's claim is the idea that language is surrounded by various ideologies in the social world and that language is surrounded by political discourses that cannot be considered separately from it.

With the discourses used in politics, politicians aim to influence the target audience and convince them in line with what is desired and needed. Politicians who set out for this purpose can strengthen their words not only with words but also with their body language and the correct pronunciations they use.

Based on this, it is known that politicians who have the power of discourse, are strong in their speech and use body language well have more persuasive skills. In addition, politicians who have these characteristics are more likely to come to power than others (Nacar-Logie, 2015: 14).

Political discourses are phenomena that vary according to social structures. The historical, socio-cultural or anthropological differences of societies determine both the content of political discourse and how this discourse will be realized. In other words, it is impossible to create a political discourse independent of the needs, values or beliefs of the society (Nacar-Logie, 2015: 14). Political discourses, which are created by considering the sensitivities and value judgments of society in a historical context, are related to many different disciplines such as political science, linguistics, and sociology (Dorna, 1995: 132).

Politicians who aim to influence and convince the society addressed resort to political discourse. In this context, the purpose of political discourse is "to generally make society or any community think, to convince accordingly and eventually to mobilize" (Nacar-Logie, 2015: 23).

As is known, discourses are a source of power for politicians and come before even actions. According to Morris, the subject of political discourse is the search for approval of a certain

form of social organization (1946). In this context, Dorna draws attention to the fact that political discourse establishes an interaction between the members of society and states that political discourse has various functions.

The functions of political discourse, which Dorna divides into four categories, are as follows: 1) structuring function, 2) decision-making function, 3) educational function, 4) therapeutic/treatment function (1995: 132-133). It would be useful to briefly touch on these four functions.

What is meant by the structuring function is that discourse acts as a glue in the political system and that there can be no politics without speech and discourse (Almond and Powell, 1966). The decision-making function, on the other hand, is the view that the act of decision-making is at the center of the political process and that, in this context, the government always needs to persuade, convince, produce and provide information (Deutsch, 1963).

The educational function is the view that politics has an educational role (even if it is equipped with manipulations) and provides a structuring and coherent discourse in order to gather support, dominate information and facilitate the change or reproduction of the political system. The educational function emerges as a result of other functions.

The therapeutic/curative function is the view that political discourse (and the ideology it expresses) aims to bring symbolic coherence to the entire intellectual mass that constitutes the organization of the self (Ansart, 1976). In this context, political discourse provides meaning and combats the revival of doubts; it tends to ensure the permanent rationalization of all experienced relationships. Political discourses are discourses that do not present a specific structure as a type. These discourses derive their power from their relationship with society. In this context, Cobby (2009) claims that political discourses have three basic components: "theatricality", "mythicality" and "perception of sincerity".

According to Cobby (2009), political discourses have a theatrical feature because the discourse turns into a theater on the political stage. Political discourses are mythical because they focus on disguising reality and reflecting an ideal world (Omar, 2006: 7). Political discourses, without exception, want to create a "perception of sincerity" in society. Politicians need to establish this perception of sincerity because the common values of the segment they address will be binding for them.

The roots of critical discourse studies can be found in rhetoric, text linguistics, anthropology, philosophy, social psychology, cognitive science, literary studies and sociolinguistics, as well as applied linguistics and pragmatics (Wodak, Meyer, 2015: 2).

Critical discourse analysis, unlike classical discourse analysis, adopts a more problem-oriented and interdisciplinary approach. Furthermore, critical discourse studies are not only interested in investigating a single unit of language, but also in analyzing, understanding and explaining social phenomena that are necessarily complex and therefore require a multidisciplinary and multi-method approach (Wodak 2012; van Dijk 2013).

At this point, it should be noted that the phenomena that are the subject of research in critical discourse do not have to be very negative or vitally important social or political events, experiences or facts. Critical discourse studies can focus on any social phenomenon because every issue that concerns society is open to criticism and no issue should be perceived as simple or taken lightly.

The most distinctive feature of critical discourse solutions is that they address social problems. In addition, in critical discourse solutions, discourses are ideological and have a historical

aspect. In addition, discourse analysis in critical discourse solutions is interpretative and explanatory (Fairclough, Wodak, 1998: 271-280). Critical discourse analysis is used in cultural studies, critical linguistics research and critical discourse analysis.

For example, religious discourse analyses, verbal discourse analyses of politicians, and analyses of textbook discourse are common types of analyses in critical discourse studies. Sözen states that these types of analyses are intensively studied in Continental Europe (2017: 139). According to van Dijk, phenomena such as racism, inequality, and injustice are very suitable for study in discourse analysis. However, it should be noted that critical discourse analysis aims to provide a perspective rather than a solution to these phenomena. The discourse analyses performed reveal the problems and deficiencies in society and make them visible (2003).

4. Method

In the 2021-2026 term, there are a total of 59 MPs from 8 political parties (56 MPs) and 3 religious group representatives (3 MPs) in the Cyprus Assembly. The parties in the parliament in the 2021-2026 term and the number of seats won by the parties according to the votes they received in the 2021 elections are as follows:
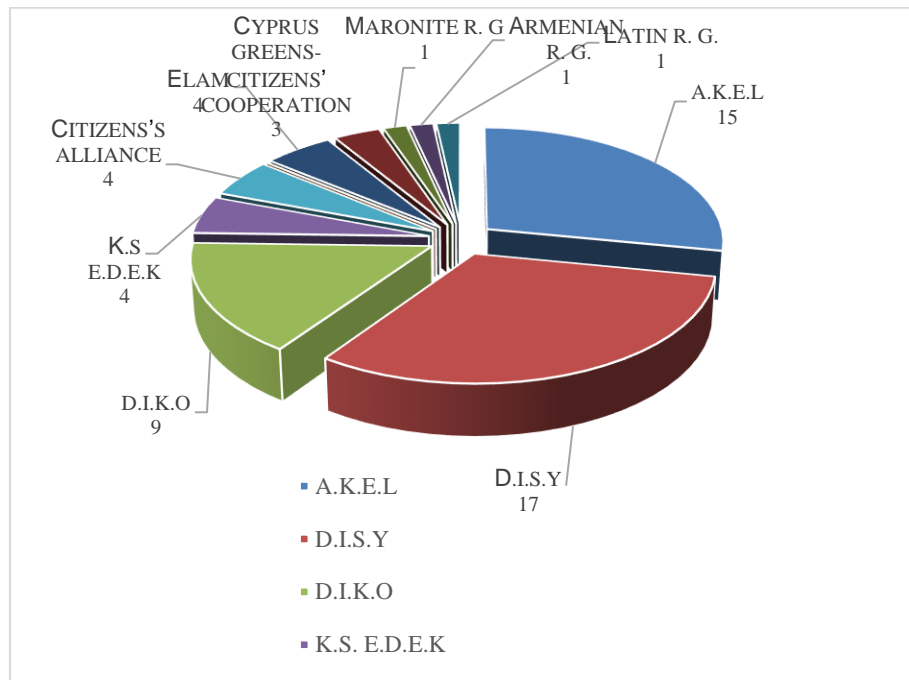
Graph 1: Distribution of Members of Parliament by Party in the Cyprus Parliament (2016-2021 Period)

The ages of the deputies who will take part in the study will be taken into consideration and especially the deputies who were directly or indirectly affected by the conflict in the period after 1960 when the conflict was intense will be selected as participants. Assuming that the age of remembering in the study is the age of starting primary school (7), it is very important for the participants to be of an age to remember the 1974 Cyprus Operation - which had a great impact especially on Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots - in order to achieve the aim of the study.

In this context, the ages of the deputies in the parliament were examined and almost all of the deputies were found suitable for the study. The life stories of the deputies were examined in

detail and their average ages were calculated. When we look at the Cyprus Assembly, the average age of the deputies in the parliament is 55. The youngest member of the assembly is 32, and the oldest member is 70.

It was planned to include the deputies in the research by taking their ages into account, and in this direction, the deputies born in 1966-67 and before constituted the target audience. It is seen that 71% of the Cyprus Assembly was born in 1966-67 and before. Therefore, the majority of the assembly meets the target audience condition determined for the research. 16% of the assembly was born before 1979, and 13% before 1990. In this direction, when the ages of the deputies of the Cyprus Assembly are examined, it is seen that the majority are of an older age, but there are also young deputies. In light of the information mentioned above, the criteria for MPs to be included in the study are as follows:

• Being willing to participate in the study,

• Being of Greek Cypriot ethnic identity (having at least one Cypriot parent),

• Being born in Cyprus, living in Cyprus or growing up in Cyprus,

• Being a member of parliament in the Cyprus Assembly, primarily in the 2021-2026 term, or having served as a member of parliament in previous terms,

• Knowing English or French,

• Being born in 1966-1967 and before, (Since the age of recall is considered the age of starting primary school (6-7).

The data required for the part of the study focusing on MPs will be collected using the in-depth interview technique, which is one of the most effective tools of qualitative research (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2006).

With the interview technique, which is widely used in qualitative research, both the participants can tell about themselves directly and the researcher can get closer to the inner worlds of the interviewees. The researcher can learn about the facts, events or situations that are important for the participants through the interviews (McCracken, 1988; Johnson, 2002; Tekin, 2006, p.102).

4 MPs from the AKEL party, 1 from the DISY party, 2 from the Cyprus Greens-Citizens' Cooperation party and 3 from the KS EDEK party were included in the study. 4 of the MPs were women and 6 were men. And all the MPs were over the age of 65.

The native language of the researcher (Turkish) and the native language of the target audience (Greek) are different from each other. Therefore, in order to avoid any problems, English, which is the language that both the researcher and the participants can speak in common, was used in the interviews. According to the information obtained from the CVs of the members of parliament in the Cyprus Assembly, it was learned that all members of parliament were fluent in English. However, since in-depth interviews were planned, it was planned to receive translator-interpreter support from time to time in order to encourage the participants to speak in their own language and express themselves better. The fact that the participants included in the study live in a country different from the country where the researcher lives makes it difficult to meet face-to-face with all participants and poses a problem in terms of arranging the interview time. In addition, the global pandemic (Covid 19) and restrictions during the period when the interviews were conducted also prevented the study from being conducted face-to-face.

For these reasons, although the original plan was to conduct semi-structured interviews face-to-face, in order to eliminate these problems, the study was planned to be conducted online using internet-based applications such as Zoom and Skype. It was planned to prepare a semi-structured interview form for use during the interviews and to direct open-ended questions to the participants.

The most important reason for designing the interview form as semi-structured is to allow the participants to answer the questions posed to them relatively more comfortably. In addition, it will be easier to reach in-depth information about the relevant topics and events thanks to the semi-structured interviews created with open-ended questions.

The semi-structured interview technique to be used in the research was applied in parallel with the prepared interview form. It was planned to record the interviews with a voice recorder and to analyse them by transcribing them. The pilot study of this research was conducted in the fall of 2020-2021. Expert opinions were consulted for the previously prepared open-ended questions and the interview form was finalized in the light of the feedback received. The interview form was prepared carefully because the research topic is a political and social issue based on the conflict and disagreement experienced in Cyprus and touches on very sensitive issues for the participants.

The questions to be included in the interview form are grouped under 6 headings. The interview form primarily included a socio-demographic information form, and the first section of the form included questions focusing on personal life stories, the second section included questions about the years of conflict, and the third section included questions about specific events that occurred during past conflict periods. The fourth section included questions about the perception of the other (Turkishness), and the fifth section included questions about memories in the collective memory and coexistence. The last section included questions about the perception of the future. The semi-structured interview form created to be used in the research is presented in the appendix. As a result of the research, the interview records conducted with Greek Cypriot members of parliament were first transcribed and then translated into Turkish.

Both descriptive and content analysis methods were used in the analysis of the obtained data. Stone, Dunphy, Marshall and Ogilvie (1966: 213) stated that "Content analysis is a research technique used to derive systematic and impartial results from certain characters defined in the text" and indicated that content analysis aims to provide impartial and systematic information. In this context, the meanings of the data obtained with content analysis can be discovered.

In the descriptive analysis method, various themes are reached with inferences made from the literature and suggestions are made in relation to the research questions (Yıldırım, Şimşek, 2008:224). In descriptive analysis, it is essential to present the data obtained in the research by making direct quotations. The findings obtained as a result of the interviews with Greek Cypriot deputies will be evaluated within the framework of the theory of collective memory.

5. The Cyprus Problem in the Discourses of Greek Cypriot MPs

This section will include the basic content analysis of the findings obtained as a result of in-depth interviews conducted with 10 members of parliament who are actively involved in the Cyprus Assembly or who served in the assembly in the past on the Cyprus Issue. In this section, the analysis of the findings obtained as a result of the interviews conducted with Greek Cypriot members of parliament will be presented in 7 categories.

In this section, where the content analysis of the MPs' discourses in the context of the Cyprus Problem will be included, first the 1974 Cyprus Operation and its results will be mentioned in the MPs' discourses, and then the analyzes will be included under the headings of the Cyprus Problem and expectations for its solution, the attitudes of N. Turks and N. Greeks in the Cyprus Problem, the transfer of negative memories from generation to generation, and collective memories. Finally, in this section, analyses will be presented under the headings of the Cypriot perception of the Greek Cypriot members of parliament and the media and what needs to be done to solve the issue.

5.1. 1974 Cyprus Operation[8] and Its Consequences in the Discourses of Members of Parliament

The 1974 Operation, which resulted in the settlement of Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots in the south and north of the island, emerged as the most important memory in the memories of Greek Cypriots. It is possible to say that the 1974 Cyprus Operation was the greatest chosen trauma of the Greek Cypriots, as it was previously included in the Cyprus history textbooks and constantly referred to in the statements of the Cypriot presidents.

All participants stated that the 1974 Cyprus Operation and what happened during that period were the most unforgettable times for the Greeks. There are a few important elements that need to be mentioned at this point.

First of all, the island of Cyprus has been a country where conflicts and disagreements have occurred at various times, starting from the 1950s until the 1980s. However, interestingly, a limited number of participants mentioned EOKA, TMT or other different formations that caused unrest on the island. The 1974 Cyprus Operation was always at the forefront of almost all participants' discourses regarding conflict periods.

On the other hand, the participants did not mention much about England, which ruled the island during conflict periods, and the problems it created. Therefore, it is possible to emphasize that there is selective remembering here.

National identity construction determines a careful and selective method when explaining historical events to the society and tries to construct the identity as pure, clean and especially free from the burden of the past. At this point, Ernest Renan emphasizes that it is necessary to get rid of the weight of the past in the construction of nations and that societies ignore the shameful crimes against humanity in their past and says the following: "..the essence of the nation is that all individuals have many things in common and at the same time they have all forgotten many things… all French citizens must forget St. Barthélemy Day and the massacres of the South in the 13th century." (2016: 38).

As can be understood from this, the past is a phenomenon that is purified from historical realities and shaped according to need, and societies and nation states generally construct a clean and glorious past. At the same time, it is seen that events that will make a person's own identity or ethnicity look bad are often ignored.

The participants who were interviewed connected the end of almost every conversation to 1974. All participants included in the research, without exception, believed that the 1974 Cyprus Operation put the island on an irreversible path.

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[8]While the Turks and Turkish Cypriots, call this operation **''1974 Cyprus Peace Operation''**; The Greeks and The Greek Cypriots call it **''1974 Turkish Invasion of Cyprus''.**

At this point, a participant expressed her thoughts about the 1974 Cyprus Operation with the following sentences: "The Turkish invasion in 1974 deeply affected the island. This was a period of unforgettable painful experiences for all the islanders" (66, Female).

A participant who stated that the 1974 Cyprus Operation left unforgettable painful memories and deeply affected the people of the island expressed his views as follows:'' You asked me, what is your most negative memory? The period in which the Greeks, the Greek community, me and even all the people of the island have the most negative memories is the events of 1974. It is the treacherous coup that Türkiye carried out on the island. I had just gotten married in 1974. I think it had been about a year since we got married. My wife was pregnant. I can never forget what happened at that time, the days of pain and suffering we went through. I may not have lost my first-degree relatives, but I lost very close friends and neighbours during that process... ''(Male, 68).

Another participant stated that with the 1974 Cyprus Operation, the island had entered a point of no return and that nothing was the same anymore, and expressed his thoughts with the following sentences, especially touching on the issue of missing persons whose fate was unknown:

''1974...Invasion, war, separation, population exchange. This was an incredible shock for me. It was a very, very big shock. It is very difficult to explain. It was clearly seen that there were conflicts, especially in some regions. All these beautiful cities of Cyprus had taken a shocking turn. I also want to mention the consequences of the invasion. You know, if you buy a newspaper here on Sundays, you will see that there is often a funeral for a missing person. As a result of the invasion. And these people had been missing for forty years. And since then, there is the Greek Genetic Research Institute, where the relatives of the missing people have given DNA samples. And using these samples, they managed to find the relatives of the missing people and their skeletons. Can you imagine what this means? Waiting for 40 years to find your relative, not himself... Waiting to find his bones…'' (Woman, 67).

In this context, it can be seen that the 1974 Cyprus Operation emerged as a situation of vital importance in Greek Cypriot politics. It has been revealed that Greek Cypriot MPs used the words "occupation and invasion" predominantly when talking about the 1974 Cyprus Operation. A deputy who mentioned the 1974 Cyprus Operation defined 1974 as a Turkish invasion and said the following: "With Türkiye's invasion of the island in July 1974, devastating times began for the island" (Male, 68).

Another participant defined the 1974 Cyprus Operation as an invasion and Türkiye as an occupying power and said the following: "The occupying power, Türkiye, invaded the island in 1974. Türkiye, which invaded the island, forcibly displaced the people of the island; it victimized all the people of the island. It caused unforgettable pain" (Female, 65).

5.2. The Cyprus Problem Approach and Expectations for the Solution of the Problem in the Discourses of the Members of Parliament

When we look at the findings regarding the participants' views on the Cyprus Problem, it is seen that all the interviewed participants, without exception, describe the Cyprus Problem as a multi-faceted, multi-headed and multi-factor problem. However, all the participants stated that many actors play a role in the Cyprus Problem and that the main actors are Greek Cypriots, Turkish Cypriots, Türkiye and Greece. In addition, the participants shared the common view that in addition to these actors, the EU, the US and the UK also have an active role in the issue.

A member of parliament emphasized the above-mentioned situation with the following sentences that different actors play a role in resolving the problem in both its national and international dimensions:

''There are many actors in this problem. First of all, Türkiye, the two communities in Cyprus: the Greek and Turkish communities. And of course, there are also Greece and England, which are guarantors, on Türkiye's side. In terms of the international dimension of the problem, it needs to be solved with Türkiye. As for the internal dimension of the problem, it needs to be solved between the two communities'' (Woman, 67).

Many of the participants stated that Türkiye and Greece were more involved in the Cyprus Problem than the Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots. In addition to this situation, many participants stated that they were extremely disturbed by the interventions made by Türkiye and Greece in Cyprus. The interference of Greece and Türkiye in the internal affairs of Cyprus and the pressure and coercion they exerted on the Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots were a situation criticized by the participants. The participants emphasized that the Turkish Cypriots were also under domination, not only by mentioning Greece but also by mentioning Türkiye. In parallel with these thoughts, one participant interviewed said the following:

''If we were left alone, and if the two communities that were left alone were living together. I do not believe that the path is irreversible. I insist that Cyprus must be reunited in order to offer a peaceful hope to all the inhabitants of the island. I think that we must get rid of the oppression of both Greece and Türkiye. Especially Türkiye'' (Male, 66).

Discourses such as "Türkiye uses the Turkish Cypriots, dominates them, and the Turkish Cypriots are guided by Türkiye" are a situation explained often by the members of parliament. All the MPs interviewed stated that Türkiye was intervening in the island and especially against the Turkish Cypriots.

One participant explained her ideas about Türkiye using Turkish Cypriots and directing them according to their wishes with the following sentences:

''Türkiye's ambitions on the island are never-ending. In addition to dividing the island, I think it uses the Turkish Cypriots as a tool and holds them captive. Türkiye, which uses the Turkish Cypriots for its own national and international interests, should stop doing this. Otherwise, problems will continue to occur'' (Woman, 68).

An interviewed MP explained that Türkiye can directly intervene in the TRNC and that Turkish Cypriots cannot decide on any issue without Türkiye by giving an example from the negotiation processes held in Crans-Montana in 2017:

'' ... But things are different in Türkiye. Türkiye is directly involved in the occupied territories in the North. Türkiye is present and involved in daily politics, daily economy, daily social activities, daily religious activities. Türkiye supports the successful regime there in every aspect of life. In fact, there can be no institution that has any function there without Turkish money. And of course, Türkiye is making very important decisions, for example, Türkiye recently decided to partially open Cyprus Closed Varosha Region (Maraş)[9]. Turkish Cypriots cannot decide on the Cyprus issue without Türkiye. It is known that in the negotiations, for example in Crans-Montana, Türkiye is the one who makes the decisions. Of course, there are some

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[9] The Cyprus Closed Varosha Region (Maraş) 7, located within the borders of the TRNC, was partially opened to public use in September 2020 after being closed for approximately 46 years.

Turkish Cypriot citizens involved in the process, but Türkiye makes the real decisions on natural gas/hydrocarbon issues, for example (Woman, 68).

It was observed that issues such as "governance and power sharing", "ownership", and "right of return" were frequently discussed by the MPs during the meetings. All the MPs stated that they saw these issues that were waiting to be resolved as the biggest obstacles to resolving the Cyprus Problem.

A MP interviewed stated that solving the problem was quite difficult and that even if the problem was solved and the island was reunited, new problems that needed to be solved would arise:

''This is a very difficult problem. It is not impossible to solve, but it is very difficult. Let's say the problem is solved. The island is reunited. What will happen next? It is not that simple. Where will the new arrivals settle? Who will take how much part in the administration? Many more social and economic problems will arise'' (Woman, 65).

A participant who shared similar ideas on this issue explained that the path to solving the problem would be through the finalization of many other issues waiting to be resolved:

"If we want to solve the Cyprus Problem, we must first follow a well-planned and well-founded path. There are many problems waiting to be solved. These problems feed the Cyprus Problem. The reunification of the island will not be the solution to the problem" (Woman, 66).

The best solution to the Cyprus Problem is a "bi-communal, bi-zonal federation", as stated by all members of parliament. Without exception, all the MPs stated that they thought that the divisions on the island could be resolved through a 'bi-communal, bi-zonal federation'. A participant who expressed his views on the solution of the problem on the island stated that there could be no alternative solution to the problem and that a bi-zonal and bi-communal federation was the best solution with the following sentences:

 "What is needed to resolve the problem on the island is the 'bi-communal, bi-zonal federation' proposal that we (referring to the Greek side) have been constantly emphasizing. This is what the island needs. I think it would be logical to focus on this solution instead of looking for different solutions" (Erkek, 67)

Another participant explained that a bi-communal and bi-zonal federation is necessary for a solution, but that Türkiye has expectations and demands that go beyond this proposal:

''I think that a bi-communal federation, which has been worked on extensively, is the most useful and functional solution for the island people. I cannot help but mention that Türkiye is unfortunately looking for different proposals. Türkiye comes to negotiations with unacceptable demands and proposals. However, a bi-communal and bi-zonal federation is the most logical solution for all of us'' (Male, 61).

A member of parliament who was interviewed criticized the political positions of the Turkish Cypriots by stating that the "two-state" solution proposal offered by Türkiye meant that the problem was not solved and with the following sentences:

''... And especially with the attitude of Türkiye and the Turkish Cypriot leader Mr. Tatar that we should reach a solution based on two states, the solution of the problem becomes more difficult. This situation makes it very difficult to reach an agreement. But from my perspective, from my party's perspective, we believe that a solution is essential. A solution and the unification of the country are essential'' (Male, 60).

5.3. Attitudes of Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots to the Cyprus Problem in the Discourses of Members of Parliament

According to the findings obtained from the interviews with the MPs, both the Turks and the Greeks made mutual mistakes in the Cyprus Problem. Although the MPs stated that mutual mistakes were made in the current state of the island, they also stated between the lines that the Turkish side had a greater share in what happened. In addition, Türkiye is again the party that caused the disagreement in the steps taken towards the solution of the problem.

In the interviews conducted with the participants, all participants, without exception, stated that what happened (what happened in Cyprus during the conflict periods) was not fair and that neither side deserved it. One participant expressed his views on this issue with the following sentences:

 "Nobody deserved this, neither the Turkish Cypriots nor the Greek Cypriots. This war deeply wounded both communities" (Male, 68).

However, there is an important point to be emphasized here. Although the participants stated that neither side deserved what happened in general, between the lines they repeatedly stated that the primary reason for the negative situations experienced on the island was Türkiye, Turks and Turkish Cypriots.

One participant expressed his thoughts on the above-mentioned situation as follows:

"I do not find what happened fair. No, it is not, everyone is at fault, but I also do not find what Türkiye and the Turks did fair at all" (Male, 68).

The Greek MPs interviewed frequently made statements criticizing Türkiye for its negative attitudes towards the solution of the Cyprus Problem. Regardless of which political tradition they come from, all MPs stated that Türkiye put the island on an irreversible path with the 1974 Cyprus Operation.

Moreover, in the ongoing search for a solution that has been attempted for years, Türkiye was sharply criticized by all the Greek Cypriot deputies interviewed for its uncompromising/uncompromising attitudes and stances. The MPs interviewed described Türkiye's attitude in solving the problem with expressions such as "making things worse", "causing trouble", "irreconcilable". Some MPs took their views to a further stage and made statements stating that Türkiye was not actually looking for a solution.

The opinions of the MPs regarding Türkiye's attitudes towards the solution of the Cyprus Problem are as follows:

''Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots experienced the same pain. Neither community deserved this. I personally think that Turkish Cypriots are toys in Türkiye's hands. In my opinion, the Turkish Cypriots are quite innocent, the real culprits or, let me say, the ones at fault are the Turks and Türkiye'' (Male, 66).

'' I do not see the fault of the island communities in the problems experienced on the island. I think that England provoked the division of the island, and that Türkiye caused this. In my opinion, Turkish politicians are more problematic'' (Female, 68).

'' There is a problem on the island that needs to be solved quickly. The failure to solve this problem affects all the people of the island. Türkiye is undermining the solution processes with unfair and unfounded demands. I do not think Türkiye is looking for a solution. They are wasting time trying to buy time'' (Male, 67).

Regarding the attitudes of Greek Cypriots towards the problems experienced on the island, the MPs mostly stated that the Greek Cypriots suffered a lot and had a hard time. Stating that the Greek side is trying very hard to solve the problems and that they want a solution to the problem, the MPs described the Greek side as the side that "makes an effort", "strives", "does its best" and "strives non-stop for the good of the island" in the solution of the Cyprus Problem.

It has been observed that the MPs, especially because they have a political identity and are affiliated with certain parties, try to create the perception that they are working hard to solve the problem and develop intercommunal dialogue during the meetings by giving examples from their own work.

One MP expressed that they were working hard to solve the problem in their own party and in Greek politics in general with the following sentences:

''If I must speak on behalf of my own vision and party, we are trying all means of dialogue so that the two communities can live together again without any problems for the reunification of the island. We are in constant talks with some Turkish Cypriot parties. For example, we are planning some special events to see what can be done and how the lack of contact among young people can be addressed...'' (Male, 67).

5.4. The Transmission of Negative Memories from Generation to Generation in the Discourses of Members of Parliament

Collective memory is a type of memory that refers to how the past is remembered, forgotten or interpreted collectively in a society and can be passed down from generation to generation (Halbwachs, 2018; Çiftçi, 2019: 1). Contrary to popular belief, when the concept of collective memory is mentioned, it is not a past in which individuals lived at the same time or in the same place, but the shared knowledge of the past (Halbwacsh, 2018; Atik, Erdoğan, 2014: 3).

The interviewed MPs are individuals who have intense and vivid memories of the periods of conflict. Most of the participants who witnessed the periods of conflict were studying at university during these periods. Some were doing their military service, and some had entered business life. Quite a few of the participants were married during conflict periods.

Most of the participants had lost many relatives, not first-degree relatives, but second and third-degree relatives, in the conflict. It is particularly important to note that almost all the participants had lost several close friends and neighbours during the conflict. For these participants, who were young at the time, these losses/deaths were memories that left quite negative emotional traces.

A member of parliament interviewed talked about his experiences in 1974 and his relatives whose fate was unknown, saying the following: Of course, I was still a student at the time. So, I had no other role. My cousins are still missing. We don't know their fate. Of course, I can imagine that they are dead by now. It was August 1974. They were arrested by Turkish soldiers, and we have not heard anything about their fate since then. I think that is what war does. It kills people. It destroys their characteristics. This is why we should not allow wars (Male, 66).

The interviewed participants talk with nostalgia about the relatives and friends they lost during the conflict periods. The participants, who shared very emotional memories, occasionally shed tears during the interviews.

There is an issue to be particularly emphasized here. The emotional memories mentioned above were a phenomenon frequently observed in older participants. It was observed that older participants became very emotional in their narratives about the losses in question. These

participants talked about their experiences and losses at length and repeatedly emphasized that it was impossible to describe the longing, pain and anger they experienced.

One participant who was interviewed expressed her memories of those times in long descriptions as if she were reliving them:

''When the Turkish invasion took place, I was still a young person. My aunt had lost her son during the fighting. We saw that he was wounded, but we couldn't find him later. I was living outside the village. I was on the veranda of my house on the stairs. And I saw my aunt coming. Of course it was summer, his face was red and sweaty. And her face looked like a haunted animal. Her eyes were red. She looked at me and said if he's here. And I said yes. And she felt it. She felt it right away. It was impressive to see her and her son reunited. It seemed to be moving... ''(Woman, 61).

Another MP interviewed described a memory that stuck with him during the conflict:

''I will tell you that we did not lose any close relatives in my family. And we had relatives and friends who were refugees. I had a cousin who was wounded in the apartment during the bombing of Türkiye. He was a soldier, and he was taken to the hospital in Morfu. Morfu is now under Turkish occupation. And the night Morfu fell to the Turkish army, the people evacuated the hospital and brought a lot of wounded soldiers because they were in my father's village. We woke up in the middle of the night, we went to where the people were coming from because there was someone wounded. And there were eight wounded soldiers in our house so there was no place to put them. Everyone was taking the wounded people out of the hospital. And it was a terrible experience because people were wounded. They couldn't sleep. They were screaming. They were crying. I mean, their experiences must have been really, traumatic because they had post-traumatic behaviours. It was traumatic to see their families come after weeks of searching because they didn't know where to find them and I could see the mother reunited with her sons. It was a surprising and impressive experience'' (Woman, 65).

One participant who was interviewed mentioned his negative memories of the conflict periods on the island as follows: "Especially the events of 1974 are still in our minds, in everyone's mind. My two uncles were soldiers at that time. They fought and had bad experiences" (Male, 67).

In fact, almost all the participants talked about many negative memories at length, but when topics were brought up regarding positive memories, they could not even give examples. Only a few participants mentioned positive memories of the periods they lived together. A member of parliament who recounted his experiences before the division of the island shared a positive memory about Turkish Cypriots as follows:

"I think you mean a teacher. There was a teacher in our village. He would come to the mosque at certain times. He was a very talkative and sweet person. He would tease us children. He would even say things in Greek. He would sometimes give us candy. I cannot remember his name now, but his face is still in my mind" (68, Male).

It is possible to say that older MPs have more positive or negative memories of Turkish Cypriots. In parallel with this situation, one MP interviewed emphasized that people currently living in Cyprus and around 20-30 years old have never had any contact with Turkish Cypriots, and said the following:

''Those currently living on the island, who are a very small portion, witnessed what happened on the island before 1968 and lived side by side with Turkish Cypriots, are more in need of the future and well-being of the island. In addition, if you talk to people who are currently 20-30

years old, they have never seen Turkish Cypriots, lived with them or even had any communication with them. Therefore, it would not be right to say that they hate or love Turkish Cypriots. Young Greek Cypriots have never shared anything with Turkish Cypriots'' (Male, 68).

MPs who stated that they had positive memories generally told stories about their Turkish neighbours, Turkish mosque imams, and Turkish neighbourhood friends. Some participants talked about their relationships with Turkish neighbours that they heard about from their elders (mother/father/grandmother/father). One MP mentioned his positive memories from the past as follows:

"Our house was in a coastal town by the sea... We used to play games on the street in the summers with our Turkish neighbour children and the imam's son. I remember their names. Ahmet, Şinasi, and Yusuf. Who knows where they are... Maybe your work will be a tool, and I will find them, or they will find me" (65, Male).

Almost all interviewees stated that they shared their memories of the conflict periods in Cyprus with their relatives (spouse, children, friends). Participants emphasized that they sometimes told their children about all the memories that came to their minds during the conflict periods (which were mostly negative and painful memories) and all the difficulties they experienced during that period. Similarly, they also mentioned that they listened to and learned many memories from their elders.

An interviewed MP stated that he sometimes tells his children and even his grandchildren about his experiences during conflict periods as follows:

''And I tell what happened in 1974, why we experienced these tragic events, thinking that we should try to prevent similar events from happening in the future, and I think we need to do this to reunify our country. I tried to talk about this issue with my grandchildren, but not very often'' (Male, 66).

A member of parliament explained that he shared his experiences and what was happening on the island with his child with the following sentences:

''We talk about what happened. Many times. Yes, we do, we talk about what happened. We talk about the people. We refer to names that we think are guilty. I told my son what happened to my country. I wanted him to learn the past from me. When he came back from school, we would talk about what he was taught. Sometimes he was really in pain'' (Female, 66).

A member of parliament explained how he told his son about the events of 1974 with the following sentences:

"I really had to tell my son the story, and I told him what Türkiye did." (Male, 68).

A member of parliament who was interviewed gave the example of his son and mentioned that they talked about what happened on the island. The participant's comments on the subject are as follows:

''.. Maybe he was studying geography and maybe he saw the map in class. He looked at his atlas. And then he was so shocked. He came home and said, mom, Türkiye is so big. It's such a big country. Why do they want to take part of our country? And he wrote a letter to the UN Secretary General. So, he was either going to middle school, maybe he was going to ninth grade. And he said, you know, they have a very big country. Why do they want to take my country? And that was his understanding of things. And we talked all our lives. We talk and we will talk...'' (Woman, 65).

With the above example statements, we see exactly how collective memory works and how it is transmitted from generation to generation. These memories, supported by communicative memory and transmitted from generation to generation, constitute the collective memory of societies. With this memory transfer, all traumas and pain experienced can be transmitted to future generations. In this direction, thanks to this transfer, the individual can adopt and internalize an event that occurred while he was not even alive, as if he had experienced it himself.

This situation is also frequently encountered in interviews. The elderly participants with children mentioned that they occasionally tell their children about their memories; at the same time, they hear many stories and memories about the experiences from their elders. One participant who was interviewed stated that she often told her children about her feelings about the conflict periods and the painful memories that she could not forget and that she wanted them not to forget what happened:

"I remember those days very well. I have never forgotten them... I have two sons, and I tell them about all the pain we experienced at every opportunity. I want them not to forget. I want them not to forget how we came to this day and what we went through" (Woman, 65).

This example emphasizes the main function of remembering. As previously stated in detail, one of the most important reasons for remembering is "not to forget". Societies and individuals try to prevent cultural amnesia (forgetfulness) by trying not to forget events and facts that have traumatized them and are of great importance to them (Connerton, 2011: 12; Le Goff, 1996). In addition, the fact that people who have witnessed the disasters experienced by societies will pass away again prioritizes the transfer of experiences from generation to generation, and societies transmit these experiences as cultural heritage across generations in this way (Assmann, 2018: 18).

According to the data obtained from the participants, their elders mostly tell them about their memories of the events of 1974, which contain very negative memories. This is a subject that needs to be focused on. Because the events of 1974 were very challenging for both Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots. This history, which mostly contains pain, suffering and bad experiences, is engraved in the memories of the younger generations and thus continues to alienate the opposing group.

Volkan said, "The transition between generations occurs when an adult unconsciously externalizes his traumatized memory onto the personality of a developing child. The child becomes a reservoir for unwanted pieces of responsibility from the previous generation. Because adults have influence over the child, the child absorbs (swallows) their wishes and expectations and is forced to act accordingly. "It becomes the child's duty to grieve for the trauma of his ancestors and to reverse the feelings of humiliation and helplessness associated with this trauma" (2000: 57), clearly revealing that traumatic memory is transmitted from generation to generation.

5.5. Turkish Cypriots in the Discourses of Members of Parliament

In the questions asked to reveal the Greek Cypriot perception of the Other, all participants described the Turks as friendly, friendly and good people. However, there is a big contradiction. The participants who claimed that they did not have negative perceptions of the Turks, except for 1 or 2, did not have any Turkish friends. It is open to question how the participants who stated that they did not have Turkish friends in the interviews had a good impression of the Turks.

The interviewed MPs stated that they had a limited number of friends from Turkish MPs. What is in question here is not a close friendship. The Turkish friends mentioned by the participants were people they came across in active work environments and did not have close relations with. The participant views on this issue are as follows:

"There are Turkish politicians and MPs that I meet from the north. We meet with all of them from time to time. They are all good people who work for both communities" (Male, 68).

An interviewed MP described Turkish Cypriots as friendly and approachable people, and that they were like Greek Cypriots:

''... In the Cypriot community, we have good people and friendly people. So, we have very nice and good people, but we also have people who are aggressive, who are dangerous to other people's lives. The situation is the same in the Turkish Cypriot community, and to be honest, I was there with one hundred Turkish Cypriots the other night. If you didn't know who Greek Cypriot was and who was Turkish Cypriot, you wouldn't be able to tell us apart. We were the same'' (65, Male).

In addition, most participants expressed negative opinions about the questions asked to understand whether there was a feeling of hatred between Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots. According to the participants, it is not possible to talk about a feeling of hatred between the two communities. However, the participants also emphasized that some extremists may have a feeling of hatred.

A participant expressed that only extremists may have a feeling of hatred in them with the following sentences:

"I was living in Strollos, where Turkish Cypriots do not live, but I can say that we have different approaches from the Greek Cypriot community to the Turkish Cypriot community. We have extremists and the Turkish part. Therefore, it is possible to talk about hatred for them" (Woman, 66).

The participants in the interview emphasized that the young Greek generation has sharper and greater prejudices against Turkish Cypriots. The participants stated that the lack of communication has a great effect on this negative perception of the young generation. This finding is quite striking. Considering that the island was divided in 1974, it is necessary to question the underlying reason why these young people, who have had almost no relations or communication with Turkish Cypriots, have such negative perceptions and thoughts.

This research has revealed that the stories and memories they hear from their elders, school textbooks, politicians and the media have a serious impact on young people's negative perceptions of others. The MPs have personally mentioned the bias of the history textbooks taught in schools by talking about the problems in the education system and the polarizing aspect of education and have approached this situation critically. A MP who mentioned the problematic state of the education system and the fact that history textbooks do not include multiple perspectives and are written from an alienating perspective expressed the need to revise history textbooks with the following sentences:

'' ... The main reason for this is education and the education system. Unfortunately, we are taught in schools that Turks are our enemies. This is not a good thing. And I think the first step we need to take is to change our history textbooks. This is a prejudice that exists in both societies. It does. This is mutual miscommunication'' (Male, 66).

5.6. Collective Memories in the Discourses of Members of Parliament

The age range of remembrance, called the reminiscence bump in the literature, is quite important. In its most basic terms, the reminiscence bump is that the most vivid and easily remembered memories of middle-aged and older individuals in the past are the memories they experienced between the ages of 10 and 30.

In autobiographical memory studies, the reminiscence bump is considered one of the phenomena that have been repeated many times in different studies and the same results have been obtained. It would not be wrong to say that the reminiscence bump is valid not only for autobiographical, that is, individual memories, but also for collective memories (Öner, Gülgöz, 2018: 46) and therefore is also related to historical memory.

In this study, the reminiscence bump has proven its validity. Most of the interviewed participants mentioned memories they experienced between the ages of 10 and 30. However, the participants mostly mentioned negative memories from the past. This data can be considered important at one point. Because the memory mound phenomenon, which suggests that the age of remembering is between 10 and 30, does not provide any data on whether the memories are positive or negative.

This study revealed that the memories recalled are mostly negative. Although the interviewed participants claimed to have positive memories, they mostly talked about their negative memories at length but could not give examples of positive memories. It would not be wrong to say that the Greek Cypriot MPs interviewed had very few positive memories in their memories. A limited number of participants only mentioned their Turkish neighbours and mentioned the positive memories in their memories.

One participant expressed that Turkish Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots have a common past and many things in common:

"And of course Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots used to live together, work together, have fun together. They used to live together without any problems" (Male, 67).

An elderly MP, who emphasized the common past of the two communities, gave an example although he had not witnessed it himself and emphasized the common past and said the following:

''Unfortunately, I am not that old, and I am also lucky. But I will give you an example from 1948, that is, before I was born. At that time, Greek Cypriots and Turks, that is, Turkish Cypriots, launched a very big attack against the British colonies together. This was the miners' and builders' strike. It was started by Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots together. In other words, as I said before, Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots used to act together'' (Male, 66).

As mentioned before, the most negative memory of the participants in the interview is the 1974 Cyprus Operation. All participants who witnessed the conflict periods stated that the pain and memories experienced during those times are still very fresh and that the wounds have never healed. One MP who was interviewed expressed his feelings with the following sentences: "We committed crimes against each other on both sides. But that does not make what Türkiye did to my country fair. I do not think it is fair. Not only the 1974 period but also what happened before in the 1960s is still in my mind as if it were yesterday" (Woman, 65).

5.7. Media in the Discourses of the Members of Parliament

All the MPs interviewed stated that it was difficult to bring the two communities closer together because there was little or even no communication between the Turkish Cypriots and the Greek Cypriots. According to the research findings, this situation emerged as a common opinion of

all the participants in the research. When the participants were asked what should be done to bring the two communities closer together, all participants emphasized that developing dialogue was very important.

A member of parliament who thinks that inter-communal contact should be increased explained his views with the following sentences:

 "We should abandon the negative language and increase contact to bring the island people closer together. We are carrying out many activities and activities for this'' (Male, 68).

All participants stated that they would be happy if the island were reunited, but that it would be difficult. There was no participant who did not want the island to be reunited. They stated that it would be possible to live together on the island as before, but that this would not be an easy thing at all. It was observed from the statements of many participants that their belief in this situation was quite low. Furthermore, many participants who participated in the research stated that there would be social problems among the island people if the island were reunited.

Some of the participants stated that the media has a great power in remembering and forgetting events. This is a situation frequently emphasized in the literature on memory. Through media and communication tools, what is in the memory can be passed down from generation to generation. Media is the most powerful tool for memory transfer. A member of parliament interviewed stated that the media distances societies and said the following:

"In today's technological age, I think the media is also a factor in what is happening. I think that being able to access everything so easily and accessing some information without thinking about whether it is right or wrong creates distance between societies" (Woman, 66).

6. Conclusion

As a result of in-depth interviews conducted with Greek Cypriot deputies, it was concluded that the 1974 Cyprus Operation was the most negative traumatic memory for both them and the Greek Cypriot community. Since the deputies were individuals over the age of 65, they had many individual memories of the events of 1974 and mentioned many negative memories of the events of 1974. The idea that 1974 had led the island to a point of no return was widespread. All deputies used the words occupation and invasion together in the interviews.

It was observed that descriptions such as "occupying power, occupying state" were occasionally used when referring to Türkiye. Regarding the Cyprus Problem, the general tendency of the deputies interviewed was to see Türkiye as the actor of both the problem and the lack of solution. It was revealed that there was a common belief that Türkiye was using and manipulating the Turkish Cypriots. The MPs, who believe that the events on the island affect both peoples and that no one deserves these events, find the Turkish Cypriots and Türkiye more responsible for what happened in their detailed explanations.

The MPs, who explained at length that the Greek Cypriots were greatly affected by the problems experienced on the island and suffered greatly, frequently emphasized that the Greek side made great efforts to solve the problem, but the Turks displayed an "uncompromising" and "difficult" attitude. The MPs who had vivid memories of the conflict periods on the island, spoke of their negative memories in detail, but could not give examples of positive memories from the periods when there was no conflict. A few MPs mentioned some positive memories of the Turkish Cypriots.

All MPs stated that they told their children and grandchildren about what they experienced during the conflict period on the island. This situation constitutes a clear example of the transfer of collective memory from generation to generation. The MPs also stated that the deficiencies in the media and the education system prevented peace between communities and prevented dialogue between communities. Based on all these narratives, it has been understood that to ensure rapprochement between communities on the island and to break down stereotyped prejudices, history education that embraces multiculturalism and distances itself from the hegemony of official narratives that respect differences is necessary.

In addition, it seems very important for Greek Cypriot MPs to change the language of discourse they adopt and use the language of empathic communication and to distance themselves from discourses that will fuel hatred in society. Increasing intercommunal dialogue between Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots and carrying out studies in this direction will also be able to remove the obstacles to social peace.

Thinking about how memories that have been traumatically captured by the past and minds that have learned to remember and not forget as the sole purpose can be freed from this can be an important step in rapprochement between communities. Focusing on the positive aspects of others instead of looking at their negative aspects and aspects that will cause hatred can also lead to a change in the perception of others in society.

What Cyprus needs is for the weight of the past not to stand in the way of the future and to understand that forgetting is not such a bad thing. Because it seems that the elements remembered and reminded in Cyprus have not been beneficial in solving the problem so far; perhaps what needs to be done is to try to forget.

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