3
Testimonies of Fragmentation, Recollections of Unity

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And we stand patiently, by the hour, by the day, counting those who have returned, thinking about those who have not …
How frightful! To count the living so as to be able to estimate the dead ….
Dear God, maybe today he'll come …
Maybe he'll come …
I don't know: Missing? Prisoner?
Dead? No, not dead …
He's a prisoner. He must be ….
He's being held … and maybe he'll come today ….
Maybe.
But there are so many. How will I be able to find him? How will I know him? His hair will be longer, his beard will have grown. His clothes will be torn. His face will have a new, strange look…
Dear God, maybe today he'll come ….
Maybe he'll come …."

(Andros Pavlides, *Cyprus 1974, Days of Disaster, In Black and White*: 115)

Introduction

In this chapter I Cyprus' examine the events of 1974: the coup inspired by mainland Greeks against the legitimate government of Cyprus headed by Archbishop and President Makarios, and the subsequent Turkish invasion which divided the island. I concentrate on reactions to loss among Greek Cypriots, because with a few notorious exceptions that affected the Turkish Cypriots, most losses and disappearances were Greek Cypriot.

Figure 1 *L'enlevement des Sabines*, by Nicolas Poussin, c.1637 (Musee de Louvre, Paris. Reproduced by kind permission of the Trustees).

A number of issues arise when looking at the problem of missing persons. First, one can look at it in terms of what happened. This is important from a historical, legal, and therapeutic perspective, for the survivors and relatives. This is the most opaque area for investigation. Many have personal and political interests to conceal events. But the issue also raises epistemological and methodological problems. Here we can turn to art. Let us look at a painting of a 'reconstruction' of a single traumatic event such as Poussin's *L'Enlevement des Sabines* (Figures 1 and 2). This profoundly disturbing but brilliant painting depicts the moment the Romans, lacking spouses, acted on a prearranged signal to capture the Sabine women. The reader will forgive this attempt at drawing parallels between the writing of ethnographic reconstruction and the composing of a painting, but my purpose here is to suggest that we can learn from such an exploration. Traumatic events affect an ordinary, quotidian, routinised collectivity and atomise society. A single threatening outside event, such as a war or a collective abduction of women (even if 'mythical'), shatters routinised life between individuals. To describe such events as ethnographers we therefore have to concentrate on individual experiences. Yet we also need to convey the larger picture. We cannot do that just through a grouping of isolated snapshots of individual experiences. We also need to engage in a reconstruction that requires artifice, much like that employed by

Figure 2 *L'enlevement des Sabines* (Detail).

an artist constructing his/her painting. Poussin's painting is powerful because although it appears 'realistic', it aspires to convey something more than a snapshot of a particular incident. The painting's figures are structured in a way that can never be captured by any imaginable photograph/s of such a particular incident. The event, like a war, is too total, encompassing, multidimensional, and traumatic in the emotions it generates and its effects, to be encompassed by a series of photographs or testimonies. They have to be combined together creatively. In Poussin's painting, the figures are too impossibly crowded to convince the viewer that such an abduction could really have happened that way, yet its construction possesses an immense depth, giving the viewer the impression that the action could equally be comprehended if viewed from within the picture. Like any cunning artist, Poussin strove for effect, and effect requires the staging of drama. Poussin built up paintings such as this through arranging little clay figures in strategically placed groups in a small boxed theatre set to enable him achieve the most effective fluid dramatic combination of bodies within a three-dimensional space. He then sketched the resulting combinations of figures. The brilliance of this painting emerges out of its exploration of time and space-volume. A single traumatic event is captured diachronically, beginning with the trigger (the signal given by the single silent standing Roman figure to the left), and its result, the various abductions of the Sabine women. The painting insinuates a diachronicity which we as viewers grasp intuitively as an unfolding event, whilst being led away

from it. And we are led away by the cunning artifice of the artist in his intention to choreograph movement to depict a collective internal condition (fear) kaleidoscoped through the motions of various bodies. He links the interlocked flailing bodies through the movement of arms which give direction, the backward fearful glances, and the complex triangular dispositions of colour. Although the canvas is filled with figures, each cluster is self-contained in its fear and their key source of terror lies behind them, invisible or glimpsed at. Terror emerges from the cracks of uncertainty. The centre of the picture is an empty space from where ripples of fear emanate. It shows the precise moment when an interacting assembly, a community, is dissolved into individuals each locked in by their fear, trying to escape from the canvas. The artist's genius is that he *structures confusion* for the eye of the beholder when we know that in such a situation, just as the entry of an army into a village, there were no spectators, only participants, and that the participants were all imprisoned in their own worlds trying to escape from a source of danger.

I give this digression through a reference to a work of art and its construction because in dealing with such traumatic events when social order breaks down, we as ethnographers have to work with individual stories. But we are also concerned with how these individual stories can be linked together, much like an artist, knowing that there is no observer has to work backwards as it were, to create in the mind's eye of the beholder a totality like in a work of art. We have to structure confusion, isolation, and fear. To effect this in words is probably more difficult than in images. But we can draw inspiration from the problems faced by artists when attempting to deal with the violent breakdown of order and pattern, and we can be stimulated to recognise that artifice can sometimes enhance our appreciation of events. To try to capture what happened after a single traumatic event that atomises society through fear is analogous to what Poussin suggested in this picture. Each individual has his/her own story – in some respects they are all similar – but they have also disappeared. As we shall see, sometimes we have the look on their faces, which can tell us what was going to happen to them, but we can never be sure. Sometimes we have photographs, which I will examine. But in most cases we just have to piece together what happened, and there seems to be little information. Nevertheless what people think (or fear) happened is critically important because it affects how they perceive their situation, their actions, and how they represent themselves. As Zur noted 'chaos enters the memory as an impression of chaos without taking on meaning. For traces to remain in memory, the experience must be structured; what is well remembered is what is found in memory as organised units, and ordered memories hang on ordered experience' (1998: 161).

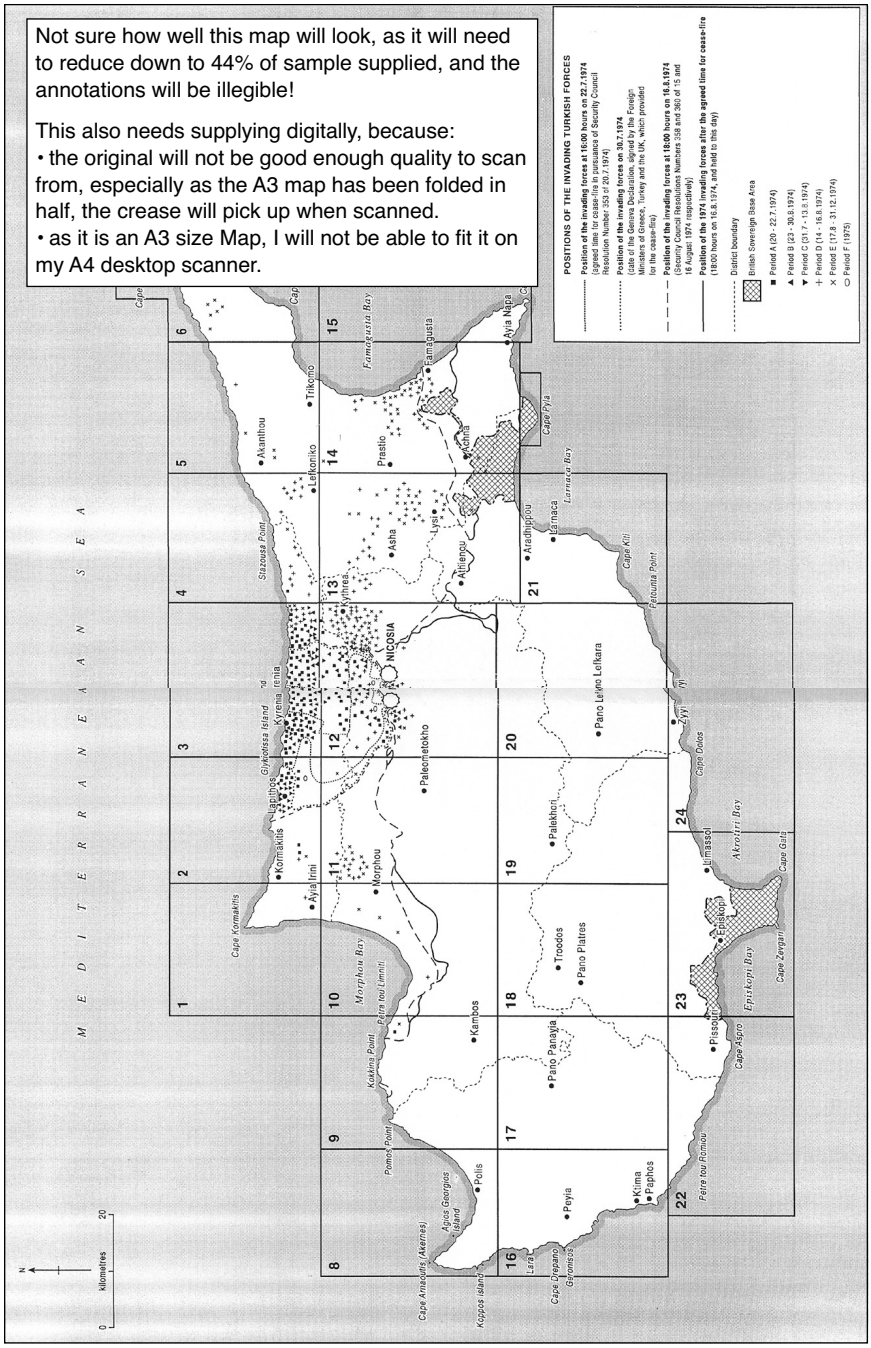
Nor is our knowledge of the events and the disappearances fixed or complete. During my periods of intermittent fieldwork from 1996 to 2000 new information was coming to light, and is still emerging, that helps explain certain actions by various participants, including official representatives of the relatives of the

missing and state officials throughout the whole sorry period after the invasion and during the coup. This book also deals with the twists and turns of the negotiations over the missing because it helps explain the political manipulations of Creon's modern heir, the nation state.

A second issue concerns how individuals reacted to their losses. This is a huge topic dealing with matters of memory, representation, therapy, and narratives. I will be dealing with this throughout this book. The final issue concerns the diplomatic and political efforts to resolve the issue – or keep it alive. In short, with the relationship between Creon's heir, the modern state, and Antigone's heirs, the relatives of the missing, or the unburied. As Cyprus is a small country and a modern western democracy, individuals are keenly observant of the actions of state officials, able to represent themselves, and generally able to speak out, in contrast to, for example, certain central and south American countries, and Turkey which has a huge list of disappeared persons. Thus we cannot treat the relatives purely in terms of their often-concealed responses to loss, as Zur (1998) was obliged to do when she worked in incredibly difficult conditions among Guatemalan widows. Thus the three clusters of issues (what happened; how relatives reacted to their losses; and the diplomatic, bureaucratic, and political attempts to deal with the issue), cannot be treated either analytically discrete, or as causally unrelated. What relatives then thought happened affected how they responded to their losses, and what they now think they were *made* to believe also currently affects their actions, with implications for the diplomatic and bureaucratic efforts to resolve the problem. Rather than presenting the current contemporary understanding of what happened in 1974, I begin with how relatives perceived the situation *then*. I will then discuss how subsequent disclosures in the mid-1990s about the 1974 events raised some serious questions about the motives and positions taken by the political representatives of the relatives of the missing. We can be stimulated by the efforts of artists, such as Poussin, to structure confusion to understand how unrepresentable traumatic events experienced by participants can be presented to outside observers, such as a reader of a text or a viewer of a painting.

Experiences and Reactions to Loss Among Greek Cypriots

We need to examine how Greek Cypriots 'disappeared' or went 'missing' (i.e. the actual situations and their representation), and how the disappeared or the missing emerged as a distinct mental, social, and political category. The major initial difference between the Greek and Turkish Cypriot experiences of loss is that the former disappeared in a short period (less than four weeks) in a context of massive and total dislocation. Due to the confusion and the close concatenation of events it was sometimes difficult to specify whether individuals died during the coup and the first invasion, although disappearances during the second



Map 3 Distribution of Greek Cypriot Missing Persons, 1974.

invasion are much clearer to identify. Nevertheless even during the second invasion it was (and is) uncertain whether individuals had died as a result of military engagements with the Turkish forces, or disappeared after being taken into custody. Thus was particularly the state of knowledge for many years among Greek Cypriots, and this uncertainty was exploited by the Turkish Cypriots who claimed that Greek Cypriot missing were casualties of the coup which were then blamed on to the Turks. As will emerge, there is some element of truth in this, but Greek Cypriot authorities vigorously contested this claim. Nevertheless the truth is probably somewhere in between these two positions, although it should be stated from the beginning that both I and investigative Greek Cypriot journalists experienced major difficulties in obtaining precise information from both the Greek Cypriot authorities and the representatives of the relatives of the missing. Although officials claimed to be protecting the interests of the relatives, the degree of secrecy surrounding the details of the disappearances and the problems over the lists, coupled with their apparent eagerness to present the issue at international fora, raised serious questions which are only slowly being answered. It also weakened the credibility of the Greek Cypriot authorities. However, it has to be acknowledged that a substantial number of the missing Greek Cypriots were civilians in areas overrun by the Turkish army, whilst others were young men in the National Guard. It is indubitable that the majority disappeared during the second phase of the Turkish invasion. This profoundly influenced how Greek Cypriots visualised their situation. Map 3, produced by the Republic of Cyprus for the UN, indicates the distribution of Greek Cypriot missing.

One should begin by treating such maps with some caution. It should be recognised that they are political documents as much as humanitarian ones, and therefore potentially contentious. This is particularly important because the Turkish Cypriot leadership has claimed that the missing Greek Cypriots died in the coup and invasion and not in custody, and therefore that Greek Cypriot claims are baseless. Greek Cypriots have not, since 1974, cast similar doubts on Turkish Cypriot claims on their own disappeared, and consequently the map submitted by the Greek Cypriots requires a more agnostic initial approach. This map can be seen in assisting the scientific scaffolding constructed by state authorities around a particular issue, but built out of testimonies of loss. There is no doubt that the greatest number of missing persons were located in the area around Kyrenia and Lapithos, the stretch of coast that bore the brunt of the resistance to the amphibious landings by the Turkish army. The map explicitly links the advance of the Turkish army with the disappearances. The map is unclear as to the disappearances in the south of the island. These could have been individuals whose origin was in the south, or individuals last sighted in the south. Alternatively it could be that the disappearances occurred there. My own knowledge of specific cases suggests origins or last sightings rather than location of disappearance, which is impossible to ascertain by definition. We should

therefore take the map to indicate last sightings. Although we are dealing with testimonies, this is what the authorities and we have to work with. It is worthwhile to correlate the missing with specific events in specific periods:

Table 3.1 Numerical Distribution of Greek Cypriot Missing Persons by Period

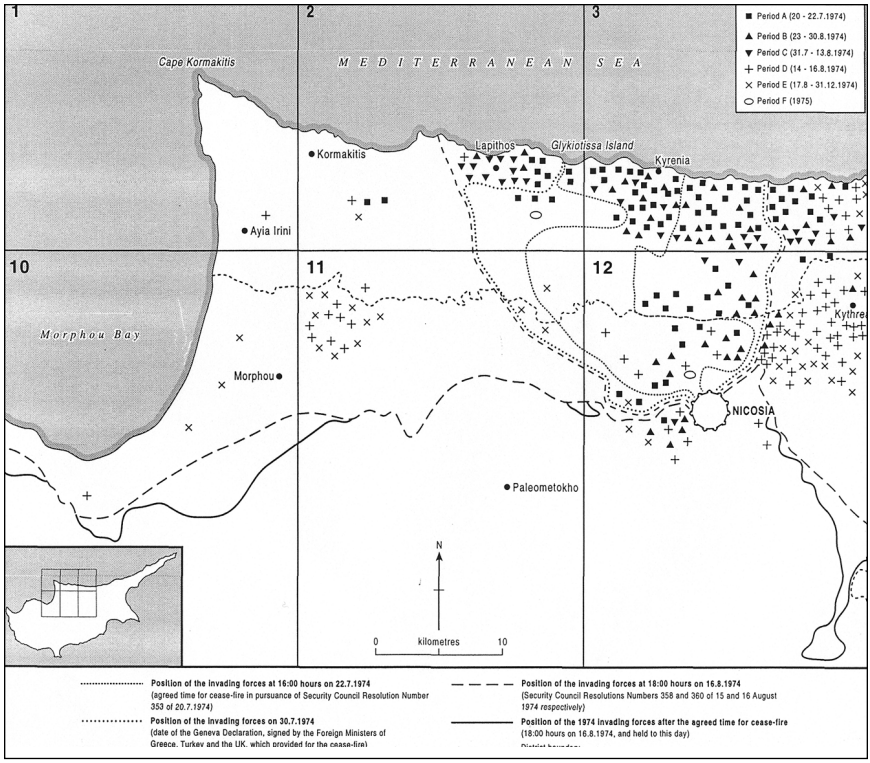
Period	Number of missing	Major contemporaneous events
20/7–22/7/74	267	First Turkish landings. Intense resistance by Greek Cypriots
23/7–30/7/74	170	End of 'first round' of the invasion; cease fire on 30 July
31/7–13/8/74	131	Turkish army begins second round on 8/8/74. Greek Cypriot resistance collapses. Civilians start fleeing *en masse* ahead of the Turkish army, but many are left behind.
14/8–16/8/74	596	Turkish troops reach their final positions and cease-fire declared on 16 August 1974
TOTAL	**1011**	

These figures must be treated with caution. They are nevertheless indicative. It could be argued that the majority of army casualties (437) occurred in the first phase of the invasion (from 20 to 30 July 1974) and that the Turkish army faced much less opposition in the second phase, in particular in the last two days when the Greek Cypriots claim that 596 persons disappeared, or more precisely were last seen alive. This could support the Greek Cypriot claim that they suffered disappearances when the Turkish army faced little resistance. Table 3.1 based upon Greek Cypriot official data correlates period of last sighting, number of groups, and number of independent cases. They also claim that 329 individuals disappeared after the cease-fire was declared on 16 August 1974. Another key issue concerns the geographical distribution of missing persons. In the first invasion, the Turkish forces carved out a corridor to Nicosia; in the second invasion they drove southeast to Famagusta initially bypassing the whole northeastern part of Cyprus that was later occupied by the army. If the map is correct, it indicates that a considerable number of individuals disappeared not just in villages, but also in these areas cut off by the Turkish army from the rest of Cyprus and which were certainly not areas of military resistance or engagements. This would include the segments 4–7 on the grid map (the north east of the island), in particular areas 6 and 7 in the Karpass area which include 42 missing persons who disappeared after the second cease-fire on 16 August 1974 (see Maps 4 and 5). The maps are consistent with events, as we know they evolved. We therefore have to take these maps as bearing a strong and verifiable plausibility.

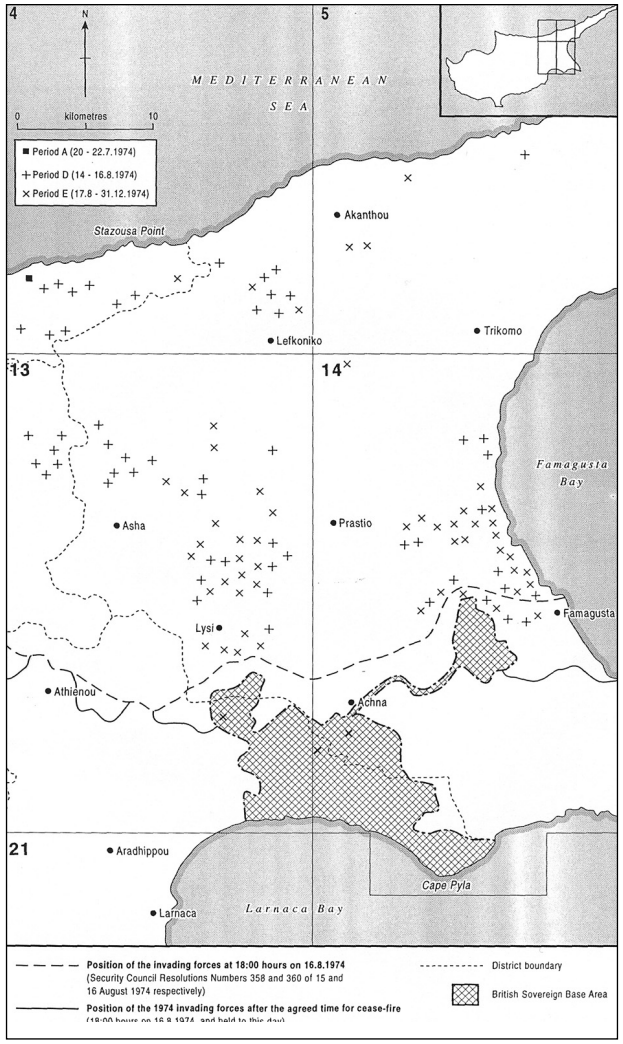
	■ **Period A 20–22/7/1974**		▲ **Period B 23–30/7/1974**		▼ **Period C 14–16/8/1974**		+ **Period D 14–16/8/1974**	
Map Box	Number of groups	Number of Independant cases	Number of groups	Number of Independant cases	Number of groups	Number of Independant cases	Number of groups	Number of Independant cases
1	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	3
2	12	28	3	4	11	75	2	2
3	48	157	25	72	17	50	8	55
4	1	1	–	–	–	–	16	55
5	–	–	–	–	–	–	5	15
6	–	–	–	–	–	–	2	3
7	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
8	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
9	1	2	–	–	–	–	–	–
10	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	1
11	–	–	–	–	–	–	9	20
12	21	79	22	94	3	6	51	341
13	–	–	–	–	–	–	25	71
14	–	–	–	–	–	–	14	31
Total	**83**	**267**	**50**	**170**	**31**	**31**	**131**	**596**

	x **Period E 17/8–31/12/1974**		⬭ **Period F 1975**		**Total**	
Map Box	Number of groups	Number of Independant cases	Number of groups	Number of Independant cases	Number of groups	Number of Independant cases
1	–	–	–	–	**1**	**3**
2	1	3	1	2	**30**	**114**
3	4	7	–	–	**102**	**341**
4	3	5	–	–	**20**	**61**
5	3	3	–	–	**8**	**18**
6	13	40	–	–	**15**	**43**
7	1	1	–	–	**1**	**1**
8	–	–	–	–	**–**	**–**
9	1	5	–	–	**2**	**7**
10	3	8	–	–	**4**	**9**
11	12	19	–	–	**21**	**39**
12	20	39	1	1	**118**	**560**
13	24	134	–	–	**49**	**204**
14	26	62	–	–	**40**	**93**
Total	**111**	**326**	**2**	**3**	**411**	**1493**

Map 6 Greek Cypriot Disappearances by period.



Map 4 Greek Cypriot Missing Persons, 1974 (Detail).



Map 5 Greek Cypriot Missing Persons, 1974 (Detail).

Greek Cypriot Missing Persons can be divided into the following eight groups. The list is based upon what is known, and what Greek Cypriots believe could have occurred:

1. Individuals who died as a result of the coup. This includes National Guardsmen, pro-Makarios paramilitaries, and civilians.

2. Individuals who died when engaged in military encounters with the invading Turkish army in the north of the island, and whose bodies were buried hurriedly there.
3. Individuals like the above whose bodies were returned to the South during the cease-fires and buried hurriedly in collective graves.
4. Elderly or incapacitated individuals including women, and children suffering from Downs Syndrome who were executed by Turkish soldiers in cold blood, to be saved from the trouble of having to take care of them.
5. Individuals who were captured alive by the invading Turkish army, some of whom were known to have been executed in cold blood, and whose bodies were returned as in 3 above.
6. Individuals who were captured alive by the Turkish army but handed over to Turkish Cypriot paramilitaries who then apparently executed them.
7. Individuals who were captured by the Turkish army and last seen alive in Turkish POW camps in mainland Turkey.
8. Civilians who disappeared in the area occupied by the Turkish army either in the first few days of the invasions or later.

The major point of disagreement concerns the last five categories, and there is uncertainty over the numbers involved. Turkey has resolutely refused to get involved in the issue even though these individuals disappeared in another sovereign state's territory which it forcibly entered. The evidence and testimonies contradict the claim by the Turkish Cypriot leadership about the Greek Cypriot missing. One could view such claims as absurd as best, or as deceiving at worst. Nevertheless there is uncertainty over the numbers involved. In 1974 many relatives of those individuals who have subsequently been classified as missing, believed they were prisoners. At the end of hostilities in August 1974, both sides (the Republic of Cyprus and the Turkish Army) gave prisoner lists to the ICRC. The Cypriots had a handful of prisoners; the Turks had thousands, including people enclaved in the north. When the Turkish lists were checked it emerged that some 2,500 had an unknown fate (*agnoumeni*). The lists were known not to be comprehensive, and were treated with deep scepticism and suspicion by both sides. If a person whose whereabouts was unknown did not appear on such lists, it was not necessarily assumed that that person was dead or missing in action. Relatives immediately started to try to trace them through photographs in the newspapers, radio announcements, and visits to arms camps to speak to their comrades. Not all the missing men were, properly speaking, soldiers. Many were reservists, called up during the mass mobilisation. A reservist might be seen as a soldier by an opposing army, but his family normally sees him as a civilian, and a father or husband, obliged to fight. It emerged later that many such men, aware of the hopelessness of the odds against them having to fight tanks and aircraft with rifles, changed out of army fatigues (also the type of clothing that they as farmers would use in their

fields) into civilian clothing. It would seem that some of these were treated with extreme suspicion by the Turkish army and shot.

For 3–4 months until October 1974 there was mass confusion, dislocation, and displacement of people. Official suppression of information and misinformation thrived together with rumour. Many Greek Cypriots were still in the Turkish-occupied north, in hiding, or displaced as refugees in the government-controlled south unable to make contact with their kin, including their sons in the National Guard. The term *agnoumenos* emerged as a colloquial term, employed as an *ad hoc* category by the local workers of the ICRC (International Community of the Red Cross) to designate those individuals whose fate had yet to be clarified.[1] The word *agnoumenos* is employed after major (natural and man-made disasters, such as in the immediate aftermath of an earthquake or a ship sinking) to denote missing, fate unknown. It contains an expectation or anticipation of future or imminent clarification, and indicates that as long as the term is used the present is abnormal. The use of the term thus signals a situation of continuing abnormality. The initial list of individuals whose fate was unknown was inevitably extensive containing some 3–4,000 Greek Cypriots (including some 2,015 prisoners in Turkey) and 106 Turkish Cypriots, and had many mistakes (e.g. individuals whose names were entered twice, because of different spellings). In 1975 the Red Cross wrote to all those relatives to confirm that their people were still missing. Some, but not all those who should have, replied and the number fell to 2,100. During that time families were still being united. Relatives were thus encouraged in their hopes that they would be reunited with their missing.[2] Indeed initially the Government authorities grouped the *agnoumeni* together with the enclaved as there were some two hundred thousand Greeks in the north under military rule, and to whom the authorities could not gain access. This suggests that the missing were perceived as a residual category of the enclaved, whose whereabouts would eventually be identified, or that they were being held by the Turkish Cypriots as hostages, but did not appear on the official Turkish prisoner lists. As Loizos pointed out 'the patchwork nature of the dispersal of the two ethnic groups throughout the island made many combatants think in terms of hostages, and counter-hostages' (1981: 95). The Turks claimed that they held no others except those on the lists they had published. In a climate of intense suspicion, hostility, anger, and confusion, with stories spreading of mass rapes by Turkish soldiers and the anticipation then that the situation might change and the refugees would return to their homes by the end of the year, these claims were not believed. It was feared that perhaps more prisoners were being held secretly as a bargaining counter, or even as a means to further torment the Greek Cypriots. Another belief was that they might have been in hiding. Clearly, experiences of 1963–64 were critical in influencing the climate of anticipation. This suspicion was reinforced when the ICRC discovered some prisoners in northern Cyprus in October 1975 not on the official Turkish list of prisoners. By the end of 1976 the ICRC considered the emergency to be over and withdrew from Cyprus.

It is thus important to appreciate how bureaucratic knowledge was produced, as this can help explain the differences between the two sides in the evolution of their perception of the problem of the missing. The process of information-gathering was assumed by outside organisations as a crisis management measure, in a situation of extreme confusion. The Red Cross lists were compiled as a humanitarian effort to help individuals discover what happened to their loved ones, ideally to facilitate family unification, and were given to both sides. This information was gathered deductively with increasing precision across time. Yet the reception and subsequent use of such lists was not so much oriented towards the gathering of information on what was known or knowable (casualties, deaths, etc.), but on what was still unknown or unknowable (as it was believed information was being withheld). The Red Cross list, from which the *agnoumeni* list was derived, was not so much a definite list of casualties, deaths, etc, but rather a list of question marks attached to names. The list of *agnoumeni* was thus a list of people whose fate was still undetermined after enquiries. Greek Cypriots assumed that this was a list of question marks to which the Turks held the answers. They feared the Turks would never answer these questions unless pressured by international opinion. Yet as we shall see, the Greek Cypriot authorities were somewhat lacking in checking their information, and in some cases they were responsible for promoting an interpretation through omission or commission, which should have been corrected. This was a grave mistake as it worked against the interests of the relatives in the long run.

Until 1980 it was claimed that the number of missing was around 2,000 (Drusiotis 2000: 13). That year however the Committee of Relatives of the Missing Persons presented a list to the UN. This had 1,510 names and it included the names, dates of birth, nationality, the place where they were last seen alive, and the conditions under which they were last seen. It seems the original 2,000 names included double entries. However the journalist Drousiotis notes that there were inconsistencies. Of these 1,510, 7 are entered twice. Another 355 do not have their Identity Card number, and details of disappearances are given for 425 only, 'and these are in many cases very vague' (ibid: 15). Around 1981 for the first time the number of 1,619 was mentioned. However from then until now other lists appeared with different numbers. Drusiotis notes that the Government Service for Missing Persons stuck to the number of 1,619 from 1981 to 1999, but the various lists had various names, even if the number remained the same. His experience, echoed by my own, was that until 1999 Government Departments refused to indicate when or how the number of 1,619 was reached. Similarly, the Committee for Relatives of Missing Persons was far from forthcoming in supplying lists locally to local journalists or myself. It is significant that up till the time of writing (June 2000) the Republic of Cyprus has never published an official list of casualties of the invasion. In March 1998 it presented a series of 'files' (or more precisely a list of names) to the UN-sponsored Committee for Missing Persons (CMP), which was not published until March 2000, in the face of much opposition by the Relatives of the Missing, which I explore elsewhere. Indeed both Government

agencies and NGOs representing the relatives of the missing have long resisted making public the names of the missing whilst asserting that the number was known to be 1,619. Whilst Cypriot society has known precisely the number of missing (until very recently), neither the public nor government officials appear to know the number of casualties. Many say 'about 5,000' or 'about 6,000'. Logically one would expect the reverse: a specific accounting of casualties and an indeterminate list of those missing. It almost appears as if the only 'factual' official list of casualties is primarily the list of the missing, whilst the factual list of casualties has never been officialised and given official veracity. This is consistent with the Greek Cypriot belief that 1974 was not just a defeat of Hellenism, but an injustice which has not yet been resolved, an 'open' history in Papadakis' terms (1994). The Missing have become the society's official collective casualties of 1974 mourned continuously, to recover a past that many would wish to recover differently.

The upshot is that apart from the State's management of the issue for nationalist purposes, the process of how people knew what they knew (their epistemology) was far from emotively neutral. The process of information production was pursued and managed in a manner that generated hope and openness, rather than finality and strict accounting of casualties. This was not a list for 'historical' or accounting purposes, but a working document consisting of a series of question marks. The Red Cross list was not so much a list of casualties, but a list of individuals whose fate, and ideally whereabouts, had to be ascertained. Yet the list of the missing, to adopt a chemical analogy – the liquid from which various precipitates (i.e. categories) have been progressively extracted through the application of various tests – has become implicitly a list of casualties of the Turkish invasion. Exposure to the process of information production especially in the early stages appears to have encouraged hope, and was reinforced by experience. Many relatives claim 'But we know who took them away, and we know their names'. There is no reason to doubt that these beliefs were genuinely held.

Testimonies of Fragmentation, Recollections of Unity

> *Paulina: All right then, I'm sick. But I can be sick and recognize a voice. Besides, when we lose one of our faculties, the others compensate. Right, Doctor Miranda?*
>
> (Ariel Dorfman: *Death and the Maiden*: 1994: 16)

I now examine the testimonies of relatives. There are a number of common themes. To begin with, individuals faced a total disruption in their world which they were not initially aware of, although many were collected enough to take precautions. The women present their narratives in terms of a collectivity. They responded to events not individually but with their loved ones, as family members. Although these interviews were conducted mainly in 1998 (i.e. 24 years after the events), they have lost none of their detail, nor their poignancy. Two types of

testimonies are presented. First, there are those women who had some evidence that their men were alive when they were captured and in good health. Then there are those women who did not see their men taken away. Indeed their accounts could very easily indicate that they recognise their men-folk lost their lives in battle. Nevertheless their testimonies are included, because from their perspective, they are wives of missing persons. They, too, attend protests, commemorations, etc, although they may do so for companionship, support, succour, etc, rather than to make an overtly political point. Some of these latter accounts indicate that relatives continued to hope that their menfolk may be alive, and how during the extreme chaos and dislocation that accompanied the invasion, many were led to believe that their menfolk might still be alive. Many rely on intuitive evidence, such as Paulina's type of evidence in *Death and the Maiden*. For example, many claim to have recognised their sons in the photographs and news clips that were taken then. Others claim certain knowledge by virtue of being mothers. This constitutes the most difficult and grey area of all the cases, and is a major bone of contention between the Greek and Turkish Cypriots with the latter insisting that they were MIAs (missing in action). This raised complex problems in the relations between the relatives and the Greek Cypriot authorities. It also raises important issues over the nature of intuitive knowledge and whether it is acceptable for legal evidence. Intuitive beliefs can only be sustained through a cultural scaffolding. The fear that such men might still be alive has deep cultural and historical resonance in Greek culture, such as fears of the old Ottoman custom of *paidomazoma*, the collection of Christian boys as Janissaries.

1. **Maria**

Both Maria's father and husband are missing. Her family lived in the village of Afaina, which is near Asha. Maria still lives in refugee housing.

> One morning we spotted Turkish tanks heading for Afaina. We were afraid so we decided to go to another village where we thought we would be safe. When we got there we found that the Turkish tanks were already there. We hid in the orchards near the town hoping that the Turkish soldiers would not find us. We were there for two days when some Turkish Cypriots learnt of our whereabouts and persuaded us to surrender. We were taken to a mixed school and were assured that we would be safe, that we had all lived together for many years and they wouldn't let anyone hurt us. We stayed in the school for five days after which we were told we could go to the free areas. Everyone got on the buses provided to take us to the free areas except eight men, as the Turkish Cypriots said they had to hold them for further questioning. My husband and father were among these eight men. At this time my husband was only 35 and I was left alone with my four young children.
>
> It was only when prisoners started to be released that I really worried about the whereabouts of my husband and my father. I didn't know what information they could have that the Turks would want. I heard from some soldiers that the Turks wanted an airport built and that my husband was among those building it. I went to the Red

Cross with my information and asked them to investigate it. The said they had heard similar reports. When the Red Cross asked the Turks where the men building the airports were, they moved them. Now we have no information and don't know what to think. The government didn't really help us at all. At first we were given a basic food allowance but when we began to receive the eight pounds per month payout they stopped the food allowances which made it virtually impossible to survive.

The children reacted very badly to losing their father. This was made worse by our financial position, loss of our home and their grandfather also. We didn't receive this house until six years after the war and were living in the houses of strangers for many years. Even I, their mother, was no use to them as my nerves couldn't cope under the pressure.

There was a scheme set up shortly after the war where people in other countries, the States and England where families could pay money to help a child with their education. This helped my daughter. A lady in the States wanted to adopt my youngest son but he did not want to go.

The children were always sad. They were all old enough to remember their father and missed him and their home. This affects even my grandchildren. My little grandchild often asks why we can't send her granddad a message.

2. Pelayia

Pelayia's husband is missing. She comes from Neo Chorio, Kythreas (new village of Kythreas) and still lives in refugee housing. This is an example of an individual who disappeared before the Red Cross was able to gain access to the Turkish-controlled north immediately after the invasion:

On the 14 August we heard planes bombing the land around our village. We ran out and hid in the orchards. At that time my four children were grown up. Three were married and the youngest one, who was single, was twenty. Luckily they had all gone to the mountains (Troodos) a few days before the invasion began. My husband, my brother-in-law, and I went in my brother-in-law's car to Asha. When we got to Asha we realised that the tanks were already there. A lady on the outskirts of the town offered us a hiding place in her house. We hid there for four days with the woman, her son and her husband. After four days the Turks came and found us. My brother in -law and the woman's son were registered by the Turks and taken to Turkey. My husband and the other woman's husband were taken, we don't know where. All we know is that their names were not registered. On the 22th August we saw our husbands pass by the house where we were being kept prisoner. They had their hands tied behind their backs. A few days after this we were set free into the free areas of Larnaca. They said they would free our husbands a few days latter but they never returned. Only my brother-in-law and the woman's son returned from Turkey.

I went to live with one of my daughters who lives in Larnaca. As there were so many refugees in the area there were over twenty-three people also staying with my daughter's family. Immediately after I was released I went to the Red Cross to demand that the whereabouts of my husband be investigated. The Red Cross say that they did not know where he has been taken, but someone must know and those persons can be traced.

3. Fostira

This harrowing example shows that men who changed into civilian clothing to escape maltreatment were paradoxically more at risk of being killed. Ironically, farmers in Cyprus wear army fatigues for work in the fields. Fostira's husband is missing. She comes from Kythrea. This example also shows the systematic use of rape as a means of 'softening up' resistance as well as clearing areas of civilians through fear. It is also claimed that the Turkish army executed the mentally retarded and invalids. Similar situations were corroborated later by a Kurdish officer.[3] In the chaos where Turkish soldiers were receiving different orders, Turkish Cypriot militia took away some Greek Cypriot men who are now untraceable. Rauf Denktash, President of the TRNC, acknowledged this general phenomenon in a recent TV interview. The account also shows that in spite of fear, women had the presence of mind to record names, which probably saved lives, and to collect photographs, which helped trace them. The Pavlides Garage referred to in the testimony was a big open space in the northern part of Nicosia where detainees were collected. It has been claimed that some men were taken from there by Turkish Cypriot militia (TMT) and disappeared, probably as revenge killings either for losses sustained in 1963–64, or more likely in response to atrocities committed by EOKA B during the first Turkish invasion.

> After the first invasion the Turks took my brother because he was caught providing food for the Greek Cypriot soldiers [these were soldiers caught behind Turkish lines during the first Turkish invasion – PSC]. Although my husband and I realised that a second phase of the invasion was likely we were desperate to find my brother. We heard the night before the second invasion that he was being held in a house nearby. On the 14th August the second invasion began. We woke up to the sound of bombing. We had no car to escape in but the neighbours did. They didn't have space for everyone but they were able to take my thirteen-year-old son. We stayed in the village but because the bombing continued my husband thought he should take the other two boys in case the Turks arrived. He had heard that the Turks had tortured and killed many boys and felt that the Turks would be less likely to kill us women.
>
> With my daughter (who was 14), my mother and my sister in-law I moved up nearer the main road in order to hear some news. By the 15th August we didn't know what was happening or where the military lines were. Later on that day we saw Greek Cypriots coming down the mountain who told us that the lines had been broken. They asked us for civilian clothes in case the Turks found them. My daughter wisely recorded all their names in case the guards later arrested them. When the prisoners were released during the exchange, after the war, she found that all of the men whose names she had recorded were free.
>
> On the 16th August the Turkish troops arrived so we waved a white cloth on a stick from the house so they would not attack us. Women and children were lined up on one side of the road and men on the other. On the 17th all the women and children were taken to a church in Neo Kythreas. That night many of the young girls were raped. The next day we were told that we were free. We didn't know where to go so we started to walk back to Kythreas. While we were walking we saw a bus. The bus stopped and one

Turkish Cypriot said that we should all be killed. Another man got off the bus and told him not to talk like that. Instead of killing us, we were told to get on the bus. We got on the bus, which took us towards Nicosia. It was getting dark and when we approached some farms we were told to stay there for the night. When we entered the farm we saw that some male prisoners were already there. My brother was among them. That night we women were given some bread but the men were given nothing.

The next day we were all put on the bus. We women had to sit at the back. The men were blindfolded and had their hands tied, and put at the front of the bus. The Turkish soldiers treated us badly. They threw stones at us throughout the journey to Pavlides Garage. A Turkish Cypriot who was handing out bread to us told us to ask the guards to be allowed into the free areas. We asked, but instead we were taken to Kythreas. It was terrible to be back there. There was no water or food and my house had been partly demolished. Luckily I was able to recover my photographs of my husband and boys.

On the 21st August the Turks (i.e. Turkish soldiers) came. They asked us to stand in a line and just walk. We were able to, but some of the sick and elderly couldn't and were asked to stay behind. As we moved of we heard the soldiers shoot them with their rifles. We were taken to a house where a high Turkish officer, members of the Red Crescent, and TV cameras were waiting. The Turkish officer told us to line up in front of the camera and tell the interviewer what a nice time we were having and that we were being treated well.

At this point she began to cry as she recollects what happened that evening. Despite an offer to stop the interview she insists on continuing.

Later that evening some Turkish soldiers came and told us to line up. As we were afraid of being raped, all the younger women, myself included, tried to make ourselves look older, rubbing our faces with charcoal, wearing headscarves and any old baggy clothes that we could find. Despite our disguises the soldiers took us into several houses and began to rape us. Everyone was screaming and crying. I will never forget the screams of the women in all the houses surrounding mine. They even raped the pregnant women and the young 13 and 14 year old girls. Just before I was to be raped, the High Official we had met that afternoon entered the house. I ran to him and begged him to help. "You promised that you would not hurt us, look what is happening, what are you doing to us. My own little girl is being raped now by one of your own men". The official sent the soldiers in our house away and went with me to the other houses where he told the guards to go back to their duties. I was so glad when I found that my daughter had not been raped. She had bitten the hand of the guard as he tried to rape her and he had beaten her instead. Although her face was bleeding badly she had not been raped.

The next day they were taken to another village. It was here that I found my ten-year-old boy hiding at the outskirts of the village. He told me that his father, my husband, was being held in the village church. My son told me that when they reached Asha they met some UN men who told them not to be afraid, or to leave, as they would return the next day and take their names. My husband trusted them to return and help them but the next day the Turks came and arrested them. My eldest son was separated

from my husband and my youngest son because he was so big and tall. Only my husband and ten-year-old son came to the village where we were also taken as prisoners.

When I saw my son I asked him if the women were allowed to go to the church to visit the men. My son asked the guard and he said that it would be possible the next day. For the first night since they had left me I felt positive. I had one son next to me and knew that I would see my husband the next day. I was the first woman at the church but when I got there was nobody. A Turkish Cypriot told me that the Turkish soldiers in the middle of the night had taken my husband and six other men, the other men he had been with had been killed.

We were enclaved in that village for three months. Each day I asked the Red Crescent to investigate the disappearance of my husband but they did nothing. The only thing that I found out was that it was Turkish Cypriot men who took away the seven men and that two known Turkish officers were also there. Surely these Turks must know the names of the men who took away my husband? …

You ask me if I found out the whereabouts of the son that had escaped with my neighbours. By this point I believed him to be dead as I had seen the car of my neighbours filled with bullet holes at the side of the road when we were being taken to Pavlides Garage. Although I had heard nothing I believed that he must have been killed. However, during the time that I was captive I heard on the radio that he had been taken prisoner and that he was well. Another day I also heard a message from my eldest son who was being held prisoner in the Technical School in Nicosia. When the Red Cross finally arrived, my son, daughter, and I were able to put our name on the Red Cross list and send a message to my sons.

At the beginning of November the Turks began to release us into the free areas, although my family and I were not altogether until mid-November. My sister found the other two boys and my father and brother were also released. With the exception of my husband we were united again. My sister accommodated us in her house in the free area but my only concern was for my husband. All I wanted was for him to return. I went every day asking about my husband but I have never had any news.

My major problem after we were released was to provide for my children. My children suffered a great deal. They had all been close to my husband and loved him dearly. I think that my youngest son in some ways suffered most, as he was the last one to have seen his father and was under pressure at the time to remember every last detail about what had happened. After we were released into the free areas he became very sick with rheumatic fever. Ever since then his fingers have been deformed and he walks very badly. I also developed rheumatoid arthritis.

Even now my children believe that he is alive somewhere and will come back to us. I remember that when my youngest boy was 14 his class was going on a week's holiday to Greece. We all wanted my son to go but he wouldn't. I said 'But why won't you go? You'll have a great time'. He said 'I can't go *mitera*, when my father comes home I want to be able to greet him. What will he think if I'm not here?' Do you see how my children have suffered?

The following interviews were with mainland Greek relatives of missing persons. Missing mainland Greeks were mainly, but not exclusively, Greek army officers. Their testimonies highlight an area of uncertainty. Some individuals who

were reported injured are believed by their relatives to be alive. Parents claimed to have recognised them in news reports. Photographs become critical means of harvesting belief through the sowing of doubt. In the testimonies of Eleni and Evridikhe (interview nos. 4 and 5 below), photographs assume a potent persuasive inducement to belief in the face of black nothingness as in Michelangelo Antonioni's film *Blow Up*. They come to indicate not just the absent object, but also traces of presence. In short, that the loved one is absent because he was present, and thus may well be present. *Pari passu* they also insert a corrosive mistrust in the webs of significance society spins around individuals. A common feature of these testimonies is that these photographs and evidence originate *outside* the national territory of certainty and attribution – foreign newspapers, documentaries, even the Turkish Cypriot radio station. There is a suggestion of betrayal by superiors in Evridikhe's testimony (interview no. 5). Many Greeks and Greek Cypriots believe that the 1967–74 Greek Junta connived with U.S. policy to induce the Turkish invasion, neutralise Makarios' non-alignment, and split the island. Finally, Dimitra's account (interview no. 6) questions the evidence because there is so little evidence. She was faced with a photograph of part of a body which it was claimed was her husband's. She never saw the body. The photographs of her husband's body were so disturbing that she was unable to satisfactorily identify him. The frame moves from grainy newsprint distant picture in a foreign newspaper of men huddled together, to a close-up Polaroid of a body part, an eyebrow. We move here from metaphor (where one person stands for someone else) to metonymy (where a part stands for a whole). In both cases doubt is sown. After this interview it emerged in 1999–2000 that these bodies were buried hurriedly without being returned to the relatives, and became the focus of DNA testing (Chapter 9).

4. Eleni

My son was a soldier fighting in Cyprus when he went missing on the 16th August during the second invasion. As he was a wireless operator I believe that the Turks kept him alive for his technical skills.

I have proof that he was alive for some years after he was arrested. I identified him from a newspaper picture of people being taken by boat to Turkey. He has also made contact twice since then through a wireless unit to let me know he is OK. The first time he made contact was straight after he was captured and then again, about eight months after that. The fact that he contacted me almost a year after the fighting ceased contradicts the Turkish claims that all prisoners of war were released safely or died during the conflict. I know, having heard my son's voice, that this isn't true. I know that they wouldn't have killed him. My husband believed that they would have kept him alive to crack the codes of the National Guard. He could also speak five languages and is a graduate of English literature.

My husband died of grief over my son. He became very ill one year after we learned that he had disappeared. He was in hospital for one year and then died. My health also deteriorated after we heard the news.

(*Crying*) Tell me, how can so many people disappear and never be heard of again. Is it right? Why can the governments not do anything? I don't care about politics. It's a humanitarian issue. I don't care about anything other than the well-being of the children that have been taken. We want nothing you know, no compensation. We would pay for the cost of the food they had during captivity if we could have them back.

5. Evridikhe

My son was 24 when he disappeared. He had been serving in Cyprus for six months when the invasion began. The last time that I talked to him was on the 13th August. He phoned me and told me that he loved me. He said that he would phone again in a few days. That was the last time that I spoke to him.

It appears that on the 15th August there was an attack on his camp. His army superiors were warned and fled the camp, but my son and many other young soldiers were killed or captured in the attack. It is unclear who were killed and who were captured, as it was the local people who buried the bodies. It was only when I saw him in a photograph of the prisoners of war, in a German newspaper, that I knew he had survived the attack.

I feel that my son's superiors knew of the attack because the soldiers' base was near the airport, which the officials knew that the Turks wanted to attack. They didn't remove the soldiers because it would look like they had tried to protect the airport if the Turks attacked. One of the soldiers who survived told me that this was the aim of the Greek army officials.

I feel that in every way the Greek government has let down our children that went to fight on behalf of their country. They have only recently officially acknowledged that there was actually a war in Cyprus and that many lives were lost.

6. Dimitra

My husband was only twenty-six when he disappeared. He had recently qualified as a doctor, after studying in Greece. He had received a job offer in the United States and we had planned to start a new life there. I was very excited because my brother and his wife had moved there some years earlier.

We were on holiday visiting our families before leaving for America when Dimitris was enlisted.

He survived the first invasion but went missing on the 16th August during the second invasion. I don't know, even now what happened to him. A few days after I was told that he was missing I spoke to one of the soldiers who had been fighting with Dimitris. He said that they had tried to leave the battlefield together but that the smoke and noise was so bad that he lost sight of him.

The UN visited me a few days later to tell me that they had identified some of Dimitris's personal items on the battlefield. They had found his watch, which they say had been forcibly removed from his wrist. I couldn't believe it when I saw that it had stopped fifty minutes before the cease-fire. They had also found his glasses. They were all misshapen, with heat bubbles inside the plastic.

The UN said that they had collected many bodies from the battlefield. They suggested that I went to the hospital nearby to see if I could identify him. I couldn't bear it, so I did not go. Eventually my brother in-law took me. We looked at many Polaroids of the dead bodies. I saw a picture of half a head, which I thought, may have been his. All I could really see was the eyebrow. I thought it looked like his. The photographs were terrible. They were taken in a dark room, without much care. I think it would be impossible to identify anyone from those pictures, but I still sometimes wonder if that picture was of Dimitris. Then sometimes I think that he was captured and taken away by the Turks. He was a captain, so maybe he was treated differently.

The Bureaucratisation of Uncertainty

Members of the International Committee of the Red Cross arrived in Cyprus on 22 July 1974. Their main priorities were to cope with the relocation of families and the disastrous situation that had emerged. Missing persons were not high on their list. It took them weeks to obtain permission to gain access to the occupied territories and they travelled under Turkish military escort. ICRC delegates also began visiting prisoners, and internees held in Turkey were granted the status of 'prisoners of war'. They also directed private talks with the prisoners or their spokesmen and with the commanders of the three prisoner of war camps in Turkey. The ICRC statement of 11 March 1976 noted that 'In the course of all these conversations, no case of escape, death or disappearance of one or more prisoners was ever brought to the attention of the ICRC delegates'. They added:

This statement, however, does not cover the cases of nine prisoners of war who have been listed on August 28, 1974 by a delegate of the ICRC and about whom nothing further has been heard. Nor does it solve the problem of prisoners of war whose families believe that they can identify them in photographs that have appeared in the press.

This is the crux of the issue. All the prisoners Turkey acknowledges capturing were returned. But many more people went missing than the ones who returned. It was claimed some were captured in small groups, and there were also sightings of apprehended individuals who disappeared. The list of prisoners Turkey acknowledges was drawn up in Turkey many days after the hostilities. In other cases as indicated above, parents or spouses claimed to have seen their loved ones in photographs or newsreels of detainees. Mr Denktash has acknowledged that some men were taken away by Turkish Cypriot militia after they had been apprehended by the Turkish army, and killed. Some of these killings appear to have been revenge killings for earlier disappearances in 1963–64. Others appear to

have been triggered by a mass killing of Turkish Cypriots in the village of Tochni in August 1974. On the pretext that they were to be taken to safety in the Turkish occupied North, EOKA B men transported the men of Tochni on two buses, and they were never seen again. One man escaped the massacre but the mass graves have never been officially identified and the bodies exhumed. In short, we have a gap here between official certainties and private doubts. More precisely, there seems to a gap between the certainties created by the military organs of the state in a situation of extreme dislocation, war, violence and fear, where the military was imposing its own order through the controlled application of violence, and ordinary individuals' experiences and perceptions of that situation. It is important to appreciate that we are dealing with differing levels of reality, not just a 'political propaganda' issue, which it also indubitably is.

There were thus powerful, subtle, and sometimes hidden pressures and incentives to encourage relatives of the missing to weave together their experiences and hopes in an epistemological framework that encouraged them to believe their relatives were alive and recoverable. The demand for information on the missing cannot thus be treated as the cynical exploitation of the emotions of the relatives by the State (the Republic of Cyprus) as a means to blame Turkey. There certainly was exploitation especially where the authorities had credible evidence that some individuals were probably dead, but this does not cover all the cases. The authorities were also reacting to grassroots pressures, and as will be shown, the political representatives of the relatives of the missing also appear to have wanted to keep the some cases alive when they should have closed them. Nor does the fact of exploitation render the issue a false one. The closing of the issue by the Turkish Cypriot leadership was, and is, likewise politically motivated. Equally, one must be suspicious of treating the issue solely as the 'natural' expression of emotion by the relatives of the missing, as their representatives and politicians maintain. That it has elements of both is to be expected. But the nature of how people came to believe what they believe, and how experiences were woven together with hopes and fears in a determinate cultural climate which set limits on what was anticipated (suspicion of the Turks, belief in the stories of their being taken away) is critical. Knowledge, anticipation, fears and hopes were embedded in a cultural framework. Between 1974–76 most Greek Cypriots do not appear to have believed that the missing were dead, nor actively entertained that possibility. They may even have feared thinking this. Loizos, who conducted fieldwork among refugees in 1975, noted that 'it was common for a family to refuse to believe that several witnesses had seen their boy killed' (1981: 116). There are other examples where witnesses feared to tell relatives that they had seen their boy killed.

One cannot thus explain the persistence of the refusal by relatives to accept the deaths of the missing merely in terms of the state's cynical political exploitation of the issue, although there certainly was this. Indeed many government officials now recognise that the Government should have acted more decisively in this matter, in not having connived in such a complicated manner in presenting the

missing as a puzzle for which it asserted only the Turks held the key. Nor is this persistence merely an 'unrealistic' refusal by relatives to 'face facts', although unofficially some officials appear to suggest this as a means to both create more space for political manoeuvring in its dealings with the UN Committee for Missing Persons, and at the same time 'explain' why the Government cannot appear to be 'more realistic', 'because this would offend the sensibilities of the relatives'. The political representatives of the relatives of missing persons also wished to prevent closure. It then emerged that these representatives may have known what happened to some missing persons but wished to keep the matter concealed and blame the Turks. Thus the matter is complex. What is certain is that the way relatives learnt gradually about their missing, in a context of the recovery of individuals, encouraged them to view their relatives as recoverable, not as a bureaucratic euphemism for the dead. Rumours abounded. In the words of the novelist Angeliki Smyrli: 'It was a overcast period in the midst of an orgy of rumours and spreading rumours, which in reality was nurtured by the suffering [*pathos* – used also to refer to the Passion of Christ – PSC] of all those who had missing relatives' (1989: 36). The radio was an important means to trace kin, and names of prisoner exchanges were read out.

In the late 1970's and early 1980's any suggestion that the missing might be dead, or that the hopes that they might still be alive conflicted with logic, or even that there few counter-examples were available from other countries, were not voiced at all. Right up to 1998 the suggestion that they might be dead was still expressed *sotto voce* as an individual belief against the officially sanctioned view, and rarely in the self-censoring Greek Cypriot press. It thus appeared to remain on the level of unofficial knowledge. Interestingly, contemporary resignation does not question the official presentation, but assumes rather that after so much time one would expect the missing not to be still alive (rather than to have been dead/killed in 1974), e.g., 'According to my opinion there is no *agnoumenos* who is alive. Perhaps the young ones … If these lived, they would have done something to make friends with someone to send a letter to an Embassy, or done something else' (Greek Cypriot refugee, 1998).

Soon after the end of hostilities a series of meetings between the two sides represented by Glavkos Clerides and Rauf Denktash began on 6 September 1974. In February 1975 they agreed to establish an interim Committee on Humanitarian Issues to deal with the issue of Missing Persons in confidential meetings. Relatives of missing persons had already been active. They had begun meeting at a primary school where the IRC had established themselves. On the 11 August 194 the relatives elected an *ad hoc* five-man committee under the chairmanship of the cleric Father Christoforos. The latter and some other individuals have remained prominent political figures. Partly out of frustration that no results were forthcoming, in June 1975 the first Cypriot Committee of Parents and relatives of Unknown Prisoners and Missing Persons was established under the continuing leadership of Father Christoforos. Membership consisted of first-degree kinsmen and spouses.

This was a non-governmental organisation although it received some financial support from the State. Soon after, relief for relatives was made available by the State. On the return of President Makarios to Cyprus, the Government set up a Service for Humanitarian Affairs with responsibility for some 200,000 refugees and for relatives of Missing Persons who had to be housed, given jobs, loans, etc. The identity of a Missing Person thus became bureaucratised and a whole new field of political representation created. The nature of evidence required to qualify for Missing status does not appear to have been very rigorous – merely, it appears, statements that someone saw their relatives taken away. The lack of precision demanded might have been due to the perception that this was an extraordinary situation and that refugees would soon be able to return to their homes. The list remained relatively static for some 15 years.

This list assumed two interrelated functions, First, it became a political weapon used by the Republic of Cyprus in its international diplomatic efforts to hold Turkey to account for its actions (a list of shame), and second it created an internal interest group: a list of individuals entitled for financial relief, housing benefits, (unskilled) government jobs, scholarships, and other important resources for relatives of the missing persons, who in some cases had lost not just loved ones but all their material possessions. Many of them came from poor backgrounds. It has been rumoured that between 15–20 July 1974 some 2,000 young men from wealthy and middle class families, were flown to London to be out of harm's way. Whereas previously (in 1960) social entitlement to government resources was through active Greek nationalism, through the sacrifice of life and limb for an ideal, in 1974 entitlement was through victimhood by Greek nationalism, through having lost life, limb, and property. It is not surprising that the society was dispirited and confused. The Missing also became a latent source of contention between relatives of the missing and the coupists, who were popularly held responsible for the 1974 catastrophe but never legally prosecuted. This raised some dilemmas when the political representatives of the relatives of missing persons were later suspected of having participated in the coup. To revert to *Antigone* as metaphor: it is as if those searching for Eteocles' missing body to give it a state funeral are believed to have been partly responsible for his death, or at least suspected of knowing where Eteocles' body is. The implications are examined in Chapter 8. In addition the list became a list of supporters of a cause, a community of suffering.

Internationalization of the Issue

The UN General Assembly passed a number of resolutions recognising the importance of Missing Persons. Resolution 3220 noted that 'the desire to know the fate of loved ones lost in armed conflicts is a basic human need which should be satisfied to the greatest extent possible' and that 'provision of information …

should not be delayed merely because other issues remain pending'. It also called for parties 'to take such action as may be within their power to help locate and mark the graves of the dead, to facilitate the disinterring and the return of remains, if requested by their families, and to provide information about those who are missing in action'. This was largely based on Resolution V adopted by the 22nd International Conference of the Red Cross. Due to Greek Cypriot pressure which fitted in with world-wide concerns about the role of the military in disappearances world-wide (such as in Argentina, Chile, etc), a number of General Assembly resolutions (including No.3450, 32/128 on 16/12/1977) were passed calling for a UN sponsored Committee on Missing Persons (CMP). Turkey resolutely refused to acknowledge any problem or to get involved, although its army invaded and still occupies a sovereign state (according to the Greek Cypriots), or intervened according to its right afforded by the 1960 constitution (according to Turkey and the TRNC). However one might term or even justify this action, it is indubitable that military intervention results in violence and loss of life. Nevertheless, Turkey still refuses to get involved. The Turkish Cypriots, in response to Greek Cypriot claims, were very specific that they too had missing persons they wanted taken into account by the CMP. Although the 105th plenary meeting of 16 December 1977 requested the Secretary General to 'support the establishment of an investigatory body … to resolve the problem without delay', the Committee was only established four years later in April 1981. It consisted of a Greek Cypriot, a Turkish Cypriot representative and a third member appointed by the Secretary-General. This was the first such body ever established under UN auspices. Disagreements over procedural rules and workable criteria further delayed its setting up, and the CMP did not begin its investigative work until May 1984, ten years after the disappearances. Its deliberations are confidential, and it must act by the unanimous agreement of the three Members; it is a purely 'humanitarian organ', and bases its work on the files and documents submitted by each side on their own missing persons, and on the 'testimony of the witnesses interviewed by the investigative teams'.

There have been, and still are, fundamental differences between the Greek and Turkish Cypriots regarding the CMP's ultimate aim. The Turkish Cypriots want it to establish whether such individuals are simply alive or dead. It is almost as if they wish to confirm that the missing are dead and end the matter. This has uncomfortable parallels with the situation in Argentina. Robben notes that in the 1970s at the height of the repression, the military rulers made two official attempts to have the disappeared pronounced dead even in the absence of a corpse (2000: 83). It certainly is not a wise position to adopt. The Greek Cypriot side, partly in response to the relatives, have adopted a slogan which is sufficiently wide to include all of the above, but can also be used to demand more detail. The standard statement is 'We demand clarification on the fate of the Missing' *(na diakrivosoume i tyche ton agnoumenon)*. This could include the situations under which the missing, if dead, lost their lives, or even were murdered either by the

Turkish army or by the TMT. A compromise was reached when it was agreed that the CMP was to specify 'as appropriate whether they are alive or dead, and in the latter case appropriate time of death'. The categories for classification were also agreed. Around this same period, the (Greek Cypriot) relatives began demanding the return of the bones for proper burial. Proper religious burial is an important aspect of Orthodoxy and Greek culture, and is justified with reference to the needs of the relatives. With the advances in genetics and forensic anthropology, exhumations can yield much information. Exhumation as conducted in Guatemala and Bosnia could provide information the Turkish Cypriots and Turkey, whose troops were imposing a 'peace operation in Cyprus', might well be reluctant to divulge. A *corpus delicti* provides literal evidence of a crime and hence opens up a whole field of criminal prosecutions and human right transgressions.

The demand for the return of the remains is more than a cynical political ploy by the Greek Cypriot authorities, as the Turkish Cypriots claim, although political considerations are certainly important. Even a political reading renders the issue complicated and far from transparent. From the Greek Cypriot perspective at least five distinct political actors are involved: the Committee of the Relatives, the Greek Cypriot CMP negotiating team, the Foreign Ministry, and political party interests. There are close links between the Greek Cypriot CMP negotiating team and the Foreign Ministry. This is not surprising given that the Greek Cypriots consider international public opinion over humanitarian issues the only weapon likely to convince the Turks and Turkish Cypriots to co-operate. Consequently, it is hard to specify whether this demand was (i) an expression of the relatives' suspicion that the state's involvement in the CMP negotiations might not fully represent their interests and investigate the conditions of death, (ii) careful orientation by nationalist political parties to prevent a sell-out of national interests by the government, (iii) Foreign Ministry interests to present the Greek Cypriot negotiating team with apparently autonomous demands from the relatives to convey to the CMP negotiations as a humanitarian issue requiring resolution, and thus present the Turks as intransigent or as having something to hide, or (iv) a 'natural', 'non-political' request by relatives as a human right. The overt high ethnic politicisation of the issue and its covert politicisation in Greek Cypriot society suggests that a combination of the above is possible. As a centrally placed observer confided, 'the relatives have been marginalised from the mainstream of society. They are exploited politically by a certain party, by the church, and by the UN'. One may add that the Government has facilitated this because it has not taken a specific and firm line. It is clear that the political alignments behind such a request are far from transparent, and there are important symbolic aspects I examine in the next chapter.

Each member of the CMP is supposed to submit names, according to mutually agreed criteria, to the other side for investigation. Each team independently presents its own cases that are then supposed to be investigated equally independently by the other side, although the third member accompanies the investigat-

ing team. Theoretically each team therefore could have access to an immense amount of highly embarrassing information, both in terms of killings committed by its own side and how bodies are disposed of on the one hand, and in terms of the corresponding information offered by the other. Such arrangements could work if trust was present, but this is largely absent. Each side invests the Other as the keeper of its dead as missing/lost, a Cerberus guarding the Mourning Fields preventing recovery of its dead. The submission of names was slow. By 22 November 1993, nineteen years after the events, 'only 210 cases of missing persons had been submitted by the Greek Cypriot side and only 318 cases on the Turkish Cypriot side'. These appear to have been those cases where the submitting side had strong suspicions about culpability. They do not appear to have been those cases where there was a greater degree of uncertainty as to the conditions of their disappearance. The delay in submissions held up the CMP's work. It was only by December 1995 (14 years after its establishment) that the CMP had before it the total files of the Missing, comprising 1493 Greeks and Greek Cypriot and 500 Turkish Cypriots. The latter had been 'revised' downwards from 803.[4] There was much resistance to the final submission of names by the Committee of Relatives of Missing Persons, who wanted more names included, and severely embarrassed the Cypriot Government by accusing it of wanting to close the issue. By 5 March 1996 the CMP had held 2364 meetings and 82 sessions, and it issued a press communiqué that stated:

> No Committee, especially a humanitarian one, can operate successfully without the full co-operation of its Members. Until now, however, the indispensable spirit of collaboration between the Parties had not been sufficient.

On 9 March 1996 the third member resigned, which led to a recess in formal meetings. It has had a formal shadowy existence since then. In his submissions to the Security Council, the Secretary-General suspended formally recommending the appointment of a third member until some progress was made. The CMP costs the international community some $200,000 annually, although the Cyprus government makes a substantial contribution to the operations of the UN in Cyprus.

Various reasons can be advanced to explain the lack of movement. First, there is the absence of trust. Negotiations are influenced by the overall climate of inter-ethnic relations. A cold or hostile phase (such as after August 1996 when two unarmed Greek Cypriot demonstrators attempting to demonstrate over the Green Line were killed by Turkish Cypriot forces), severely hinders progress. Second, if decisions can only be reached by consensus, the third member is mainly a mediator with little independent means to exert pressure. Third, whilst confidentiality formally enables the committee to operate free from overt political pressures, obtain witness statements, and exercise initiative, the overall climate is still politicised. 'Confidentiality' can also be a euphemism for secrecy. Lack of

openness has permitted political considerations to intrude into the negotiations. Fourth, although the CMP is not a court, it is difficult to exclude considerations of 'responsibility', 'culpability', even 'justice' and 'retribution' both through the way evidence is collected, and in the way it is feared it might be treated by the other side. The Committee made a public appeal to 'official bodies and to private persons to furnish [it] with any information in their possession on missing persons', which would be 'treated in the strictest confidence', and repeated that 'no prosecution of any nature will ensue as a result of statements or information given to the committee'. Yet witness statements *qua* witness statements are hard to come by, although such information is widely available. As Amnesty International's report suggests, such witnesses are open to intimidation, or even liable to 'self-censure'. Many on both sides would prefer to forget certain aspects of the 1974 events. Individuals may be willing to talk 'unofficially', 'in confidence' but still display a suspicion of writing which is associated with state power, evidence, and incrimination. A member of the Greek team investigating the Turkish Cypriot cases told me that people are prepared to talk, and he had developed a subtle and sensitive understanding of the various legitimations offered by the individuals involved in inter-communal killings. But he noted that information was only forthcoming either confidentially on the understanding that this would be denied by the interlocutor if ever socially confronted, or almost as religious confessions, a catharsis evoking complex notions of personal punishment. There was little motivation for witnessing based upon civic responsibility.[5] Furthermore the issue of prosecutability is left vague, partly because both sides' rhetoric present what happened in Cyprus as proto-Bosnian and hence use terms such as 'ethnic cleansing' and 'war crimes'.

A final reason is that the State (on both sides) is too heavily implicated in the process of witness statement collection and investigating cases submitted by the other side, given the fact that both sides implicitly licensed such violence. Much information was obtained with the participation, assistance, or in the presence of the state's personnel (Police or KYP, the Intelligence Service). Some of these individuals on both sides were heavily implicated in inter-ethnic violence and even condoned it. They are known for their nationalist sympathies. It is hardly surprising that 'condemnatory' witnesses (rather than 'confessional' witnesses) would be reluctant to come forward. Condemnatory witnessing could expose a person to a dangerous labelling and retribution.[6] On 5 March 1996 the CMP issued a press communiqué saying that up till then 'the indispensable spirit of collaboration between the Parties has not been sufficient'.

In addition each party fears making concessions to reach a breakthrough because it has an *a priori* assumption that such concessions will be exploited by the other side for propaganda purposes. This establishes a vicious circle of pessimistic deadlock and optimistic unrealism. Each side accuses the other of prolonging the issue. As I was told: 'It is seen as a useless committee crippled by inadequate terms of reference and has no success in solving any particular case'.

In 1997–98 there were three important developments. First, on 31 July 1997, Clerides and Denktash agreed (i) the problem of missing persons should be considered as a 'purely humanitarian issue the solution of which is long overdue', (ii) agreed that 'no political exploitation should be made of the problem', (iii) agreed 'as a first step … to provide each other immediately and simultaneously all information already at their disposal on the location of graves of Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot missing persons'.[7] This agreement was outside the CMP framework and indicates the point made above that politicians can sometimes side-step the stage of confrontation and concentrate on resolving 'humanitarian issues'. It was clear that Denktash did not want this agreement to fall within the remit of the CMP. This may have alarmed the Turkish Cypriot CMP negotiating team who had long insisted that many Greek Cypriot missing were victims of the coup or were missing in action. For a brief moment it appeared that the issue was on the way to resolution. However on 30 April 1998 the Turkish Cypriot representative stated that he was not prepared to discuss the necessary arrangements leading to the exhumation and return of the remains of the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot missing persons until the Greek Cypriot side, as proof of its sincerity, agree to first look into the fate of the Greek Cypriot victims of the coup d'etat against Archbishop Makarios in 1974. The Turkish Cypriot side claims that victims of the coup d'etat are among the persons listed as missing. 'This position', noted the Secretary General

> deviates from the 31 July 1997 agreement … As a result of the position taken by the Turkish Cypriot side, no progress has been made towards the implementation of the 31 July 1997 agreement. The Greek Cypriot side has since decided to begin exhumation and identification of the remains located in graves in the area under its control.[8]

Second, after intense pressure by the U.S. State Department on Turkey, which effectively controls the TRNC, a team of investigators managed to get access to the occupied North and retrieve the remains of a U.S. citizen of Greek Cypriot origin who had disappeared. The resultant report helped shed much light on the probable circumstances surrounding the fate of missing Greek Cypriots.[9] It indicated that this individual had probably been murdered. His remains were returned to the US. His friend, who disappeared with him, was not returned because he was not a US citizen, although his remains were probably retrievable. By 1999, tensions had emerged between the Government of Cyprus and the Relatives of Missing Persons, and quite independently two women tried to force the issue by staging the dramatic exhumation referred to in the beginning of the book.

Notes

1. It was suggested to me that as the Red Cross worked through local interpreters they might have been given names of those whose fates were known in order to magnify losses.
2. 'At that time [in 1975] the incidents were still fresh and it was generally believed that here might be missing persons who were alive'. Report by Mr Claude Pilloud, representative of the ICRC/UN Secretary-General on the tri-partite autonomous Committee of Missing Persons (CMP).
3. Yialsin Kutchuk, a Kurdish captain in the Turkish army in 1974, said in an interview with Greek Cypriot TV station *Antenna* in February 1998 that soldiers killed a Down's Syndrome woman in the area of Tymbou (Drusiotis, 2000: 19). After this interview the authorities made enquiries and identified Despina Kountouro who had remained enclaved in Tymbou. Then they discovered another person whose name was also not on the government list of missing persons. Thus there were some people on the list who should not have been there, and others who should have been (Drusiotis, ibid: 19–20).
4. The 500 missing Turkish Cypriots include: 1963–64: 200 civilians who were abducted and disappeared; 21 slaughtered in Ayios Vasilios (Tarkeli), Nicosia district (13 cases of which have been presented to the CMP). 1974: 14 August: Maratha (Murataga) and Sandalaris (Sandallar) where Greek Cypriot armed elements massacred 89 persons; 37 people from Aloa (Atlilar). 15 August: 85 Turkish Cypriot men from three villages (Tokhni, Zygi, Mari close to Limassol who were arrested, transported by bus towards Limassol and massacred. One witness escaped to give testimony.
5. Amnesty International has claimed that 'its entirely confidential method of work has undermined public confidence in its work and defeated its humanitarian goal of providing information to families of the fate of their relatives'. Yet the 'confidentiality' is a function of a lack of trust between the two communities as well as the desire by both sides to exclude their own citizens from participation and consultation, partly because both sides have made political capital out of the issue.
6. It could be argued that a South African-styled 'Truth Commission' based upon notions of public confessions for forgiveness could be employed, as this bypasses the opposition between 'official' (legal, written, quotable, etc) and 'unofficial' (confidential, oral) testimony but this would run into difficulties. First, it is based upon a Christian concept and may not appeal greatly to the Turkish Cypriots. Paradoxically the Church in Cyprus has been the religion of the oppressed ethnos rather than the religion of the oppressed irrespective of ethnicity. Second, there has been much resentment in S. Africa that this has been exploited by the ex-security services to bypass judicial proceedings.
7. UN Press Release, 31 July 1997.
8. Report of the Secretary General to the Security Council: S/1998/488, 10 June 1998, p.5, para. 23. I suspect that one reason for the Turkish Cypriot CMP intransigence is that it would indicate that TMT was less under the politicians' control than was believed, and that they actually have very few records.
9. R.S. Dillon, (retired ambassador), 'The President's Report to Congress on the Investigation of the US Citizens who have been missing from Cyprus since 1974'. Washington: State Department, 1998.