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Adding fuel to the conflict: How gas reserves complicate the Cyprus question

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Analysis of the discourses

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The constellation of the identifying statements scoring high in each factor-centroid helped me uncover the discursive factors upon which the disputants build their competing energy strategies. Following the results of the factor-centroid analysis and based on how participants of the P-Set interpreted, analysed and justified their ranking and statements, I present five discourses here: (a) ‘Gas boosting our geopolitical standing’, (b) ‘Pipe-dreams and imported nationalisms’, (c) ‘Resentment matters’ from the Greek-Cypriot side, (d) ‘Gas stimulating political equality’ and (e) Micropolitics from the Turkish-Cypriot side.

This section sheds light on these discourses by first pinpointing the identifying statements scoring high in each of them and then the arguments that the respective participants used in order to rank the statements the way they ranked them. I start with the discourses of the Greek-Cypriot P-Set and then move onto the ones of the Turkish-Cypriot set.

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6.2 GREEK-CYPRIOT DISCOURSES

6.2.1 ‘Gas boosting our geopolitical standing’

6.2.2.1 *Identifying statements*

As shown in Appendix 10a, this discourse includes 8 participants out of the 23 and captures 16% of the common variance. The most striking characteristic in this discourse is the inclusion of all the policymakers that we included in our Greek-Cypriot P-set (PM1-PM5). As reiterated in the previous chapter, these policymakers represent different political parties (from communist to right-wing parties) and have served in the past (before and at the time of their recruitment) at crucial positions in the executive (Foreign Ministry, Ministry of Energy, Commerce, Industry and Tourism) and legislative (Committee of Energy Affairs in the House of Representatives) branches of the Cypriot state apparatus. The same factor includes the two civil servants (CS1 and CS2) of the study and one journalist. Although the people selected did not demographically represent the policymakers and the executive branch of the Republic of Cyprus but only their own views, the consensus among them was noticeable. Age was not a determinant demographic criterion in the sense that people born before and after the 1964 and 1974 events were included in this group.

Individuals praised the importance of the Greek-Cypriot partnership with Israel and Egypt in implementing their energy programme (by assigning a high positive value to statement 36). Furthermore, they ruled out every possibility to negotiate the future monetization of the gas reserves in the reunification talks with Turkish-Cypriots because they feared that the latter ‘will be potentially manipulated as the Trojan horse of Turkey’ (a +3 to statement 23). They also assigned a high positive value, +3 to statement 32: ‘There may be companies (ENI and TOTAL)

which would not hesitate to confront Turkey. If they want to make the decision to go, they will go because they think that Cyprus's entitlement in this region is very strong'. Finally, they highlighted that the most important aspect of the energy debate is to safeguard the sovereignty of the Republic of Cyprus; in this light, it should be solely the Greek-Cypriots making decisions on such matters (+2 to statement 39), while Turkish-Cypriots should be involved only after a settlement in Cyprus is reached. Table 6.1 displays the statements highlighting Greek-Cypriot discourse 1.

Table 6.1. Greek-Cypriot Discourse 1

Greek-Cypriot Discourse 1				
Gas boosting our geopolitical standing				
No.	Statement	Q-Sort Value	Z-score	
36	The trilateral agreements between Cyprus-Egypt-Greece and Cyprus-Israel-Greece are oriented towards the right direction.	3	1,54*	
24	Gas is an important issue but not the main factor that prompts the negotiations. Negotiations are driven by geopolitics.	3	1,48	
23	Greek-Cypriots fear that Turkish-Cypriots will be potentially manipulated as the 'Trojan horse' of Turkey.	3	1,48	
32	There may be companies (ENI and TOTAL) which would not hesitate to confront Turkey. If they want to make the decision to go, they will go because they think that Cyprus's entitlement in this region is very strong.	3	1,46*	
39	The most important stake in the energy debate is the guarantee of the sovereignty of the Republic of Cyprus and its rights. Therefore, the Greek-Cypriots should be the ones making the decisions.	2	1,40*	
1	The maritime disputes around Cyprus are linked to the Aegean Sea.	2	1,22*	
19	There is a succession principle in the delimitation agreement signed between Turkish-Cypriots and Turkey. All agreements of the predecessor states remain in place.	-3	-1,78*	
40	Greek-Cypriots can keep on the drilling activities, but under the supervision of an international authority, within which a Turkish-Cypriot representative could also participate. This proposal includes a disclaimer: whatever is agreed upon is not a precedent for other issues.	-4	-2,01*	

6.2.2.2 Interpretation

The constellation of the identifying statements above signals the triumph of 'geopolitics'. The portrayal of natural resources as a bargaining tool vis-à-vis Turkey and the need to protect them through its alliances with Greece, Israel and Egypt dominate the discourse and do justice to the assumption that 'geopolitics are not dead, but still extremely relevant'. Under the current circumstances, the participation of Turkish-Cypriots in any schema involving the natural resources should not be entertained because their management is solely a 'sovereignty issue'. Furthermore, Greek-Cypriot participants fear that Turkish-Cypriots would become greedy if they participated in the co-management of the hydrocarbons without a settlement; they would have no incentive to display a constructive stance during the negotiations. Finally, even if Greek-Cypriots were open to this scenario, they doubted that Turkish-Cypriots would promote their own agenda. This was framed as 'Turkey's Trojan horse': they would rather promote Turkey's interests than their own.

6.2.2.3 The triumph of geopolitics in the 'strategic rationality' of Greek-Cypriots

The respondents envision the gas reserves as a strategic good which could enhance the negotiation capacity of Cyprus vis-à-vis Turkey. They believe that energy could be key to 'boosting their geopolitical standing'. A respondent argued that although

'the legal nexus via UNLOS advances the position of the Republic of Cyprus in the exploitation of its gas reserves, Cypriots' military equipment is inadequate to enforce the implementation of this very legal nexus. This fully reflects the vision of an anarchic environment characterized by the absence of a strong international authority, like a Leviathan, that would enforce the application of international law. Therefore, the possession of military capabilities, as the natural resources are framed, constitutes a necessary ingredient for Cypriots' survival in their antagonistic relations against Turkey.'

Such a vision has serious implications for how someone formulates his strategy.

'In our energy design we prioritized security considerations. We planned to parcel out at least one block out of the 13 to every permanent member of the Security Council, despite the fact that this effort failed with Russians and Chinese.' To this effect, 'we authorized companies coming from countries with military strength to invest in our region. If we square our own interests in the region with the ones of the companies – and eventually their origin countries of origin – then the latter will have an extra motive in contributing to a peaceful settlement of the Cyprus conflict.'

The respondents assumed that the companies originating from countries with military strength would not have any problem to go through with their energy plans because they know that Turkey could not actually challenge their authority:

'The companies do not have to mess with Turkey. They know that they would execute their energy plans along the lines of international law, which eventually supports the official

Cypriot position.’ Close to the military aspects, the respondents heralded a diplomatic one with respect to the invitation of the companies: ‘If the offer comes from a company of a Muslim country origin, we evaluate its relations with Turkey. This factor is crucial to our final decision.’

Such calculations come at a price:

‘Embarking upon cooperation with such tycoons is a double-edged sword. On the one hand, the companies ensure the installation of the drilling platform and alleviate security concerns. Turkey will not dare to attack the French or the Americans. On the other hand, you, as a Greek-Cypriot, cannot by any means impose your interests on them.’ The big powers ‘see the forest for the trees; they design a regional strategy. It is more than naïve to believe that the big powers fashion their strategy by fixating their concerns on the unilateral interests of Cyprus, Lebanon or any other country. Israel is an exceptional case.’

In commenting on how the superpowers, especially the ones in the Security Council, dictate the bi-communal negotiations in order to promote their own energy plans, the respondents provided a different view:

‘It is not the big powers that dictate the negotiations but Turkey. The key player in enabling the negotiations to move along is Turkey, who, due to its geopolitical relations with the big powers, drags them into the negotiations. The main actor is Turkey. This by no means implies that the big powers have no interest in the region, especially after the recent discoveries.’

Most participants indicated the importance of the trilateral agreements with Egypt, Israel and Greece (statement 36):

‘carving out strategic collaborations with neighbouring countries in the Eastern Mediterranean, while excluding Turkey from them at this stage – due to its illegal occupation of 37% of the Cypriot territory and the intransigent stance towards the Cyprus conflict – might work as the ‘carrot’ for Turkey to re-formulate its strategic calculations. The agreements and the prospect to participate in these partnerships might lure Turkey in the future into contributing to a peaceful settlement and render it one of the key players in this cooperation.’

The respondents deemed such initiatives necessary because the maritime disputes extend beyond the Cypriot Exclusive Economic Zone and include the dispute between Greece and Turkey in the Aegean Sea as well (statement 1). In their view,

‘Turkey considers the area surrounding both the Eastern Mediterranean and the Aegean as a space vital to her interests. Therefore, Turkey’s vision validates windows of opportunities to muscle her military strength throughout the entire region by provoking occasional crises.’

One respondent underscored the stakes that Greek officials attach to the developments around Cyprus:

‘It is not a question of brotherhood and solidarity bonding Cyprus and Greece. The Greek officials have come to realize that if the Cypriot front crumbles, the Aegean is coming next’. This line of argument clearly integrates Greece in the regional security complex discussed in the theoretical chapter. The partnerships with Greece, Israel and Egypt are deemed essential if Cyprus wants to keep Turkey’s revisionist objectives in check.

In the eyes of the participants, the gas reserves symbolize the sovereignty of the Greek-Cypriots and this explains why, under the current circumstances, they should be the only ones making decisions on such matters (statement 39):

‘This is an issue of national sovereignty and concerns solely the sovereign state’. Forging linkages between the hydrocarbons’ issue and the settlement of the Cyprus conflict would hold the republic hostage to the Cyprus question and hamper the extraction of the hydrocarbons’.

That explains also why the respondents rejected the possibility of constructing a pipeline to Turkey:

‘it is a risky business because we talk about a country that is unstable and continuously resorts to geopolitical games. If we had to cope with a country wherein the law of geopolitical inertia has prevailed, like Luxembourg, things would have been easier for us’. Pursuant to this logic, another respondent claimed: ‘Turkey has not convinced us of being a reliable state. Turkey may lock the pipes anytime and exploit them as a diplomatic tool at the expense of our interests. Therefore, ‘I do not accept the transportation of gas reserves through a pipeline to Europe crossing Turkish territory. We will not depend on Turkey but Turkey will depend on us’.

One respondent made an export option to Turkey a condition of the resolution of the Cyprus conflict:

‘If Turkey recognizes the Republic of Cyprus, I really do not mind. For the time being, the fact is that no cooperation can be established with Turkey because she does not recognize the republic. In the future, and in the event of a settlement, Turkey would be treated as an economic option like all the other available ones. What matters is to conclude a settlement first’.

6.2.2.5 *Turkish-Cypriots as ‘Turkey’s Trojan’s horse’*

The ‘illegal entity’ of the breakaway regime in the north was portrayed as the central reason why Turkish-Cypriots should not participate in the decision-making:

‘the secessionist entity in the occupied part of Cyprus has been declared legally invalid by the UN Security Council in resolutions 541 (1983) and 550 (1984). In which official

capacity should the Turkish-Cypriots participate in the decision-making since they do not participate in the governance of the Republic of Cyprus at all? Their participation in the ‘management of the resources before a settlement is inconceivable’.

Besides the official and legal utterances supporting this position, there is an additional stimulant prompting Greek-Cypriots’ rejection of Turkish-Cypriot involvement in hydrocarbons’ management:

‘If they benefit from the monetization of the gas reserves without being committed to their obligations in the reunification talks, why should they actually live up to their obligations?’ ‘Many years have gone since Turkish-Cypriots waived their claims to participate in any sort of discussion about this issue. Since then, things have moved on and the energy developments have surpassed them. Explorations are already taking place, licences are granted... There is nothing to discuss. After the settlement of the Cyprus conflict, Turkish-Cypriots will be encouraged to participate in the discussion about the future monetization of the gas reserves. Before the settlement, there is nothing to discuss. If Turkish-Cypriots want to have a say in the energy debate, they have to profess their sincere commitment to the resolution of the Cyprus conflict. Turkish-Cypriots have to realize one thing: they cannot question the sovereignty of the Republic of Cyprus if they keep acting as a distinct illegal entity while simultaneously requesting rights on how the republic should run its (domestic) affairs. If they want to be granted rights, they have to abolish the illegal state and take their responsibilities upon themselves, as stipulated in the constitution of the Republic of Cyprus. There are no rights without responsibilities.’

Many of the respondents harbour reservations about Turkish-Cypriots’ ability to voice their own autonomous position on questions about energy security. They believe that Turkish-Cypriots may act as Turkey’s ‘Trojan horse’ (statement 23). Multiple reasons explain this conviction.

‘This unilateral dependence of Turkish-Cypriots on Turkey has reached such levels, where the Turkish-Cypriots feel that regardless of whether they work or not, Turkey will be always paying the bill for them. Furthermore, ‘the presence of more than 40.000 Turkish troops in the occupied part of Cyprus, the numerous settlers who by far outnumber the Turkish-Cypriots, and the economic control of the occupied area explain how Turkey manipulates to a great extent the Turkish-Cypriot community for its own interests. Turkey has deployed the Turkish-Cypriot community as a strategic accessory, which Turkey wants to control on all possible levels: after the invasion, on a military level, then on a state-level and soon on an energy level.’

When asked about the potential to cut the Gordian knot between Turkey and the Turkish-Cypriots, the respondents were negative.

‘If one day Akinci – like every other Turkish-Cypriot leader – decides to oppose the irrationality of Erdogan, then you would expect a news article the next day in Turkey linking Mustafa Akinci to the Gulenists in Cyprus. In that speculation, the Turkish authorities might arrest Akinci as a member of an alleged terrorist organization. We have

no clue about the *modus operandi* of Turkey's executive state power. Starting with Kemal Atatürk and continuing with successive governments, regardless of whether they were Muslim-friendly or not, the logic has been identical.'

One of the participants found refuge in historical analogies to pinpoint:

'How did the Turkish governments dismantle the Turkish Communist Party? They took all 50 members of its central committee to a lake and plunged them into the water.' These practices do not solely characterize Turkey: 'Turkey is not the only one resorting to such actions. The big powers pointing fingers at Turkey for such practices do not differ that much. Will the US allow the rise of a party that plans to overthrow the current establishment? They might class the people who embark upon such an effort as deranged and probably arrest them. Will Putin allow anyone to challenge his authority? All big powers throughout world history have had state terrorism in their back pockets.'

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The conclusion was:

'The people in Cyprus and Greece try to judge the policies of the big powers in the light of our policies. You cannot draw any comparison. We have to pursue policies from the standpoint of the weak while the others operate from the standpoint of the powerful.'

6.2.2 'Pipe-dreams and imported nationalisms'

6.2.2.1 *Identifying statements of 'Pipe-dreams and imported nationalisms'*

The second discourse, named as 'Pipe-dreams and imported nationalisms', involves 5 participants out of the 23 and captures 9% of the common variance (see Appendix 10a). Four of them work as journalists and one as NGO representative. All of them were born before and/or after 1964 and 1974 rendering age a useless criterion in the formation of the discourse. The respondents here assigned a +4 to statement 13: 'The Turkish-Cypriots believe that the way Greek-Cypriots envisage to shape the new state entails for them the risk of becoming second-class citizens.' They assigned a +3 to statement 12: Through the potential utilization of natural gas, Greek-Cypriots thought they had gained a negotiation tool in the confrontation vis-à-vis Turkey. They claim that these utterances have outweighed the essential technical and economic considerations the gas industry dictates (assigning a +3 to statement 9). They strongly supported that 'If a solution is to be found, the options for the utilization of the reserves will be expanded'. (+3 to statement 46). Table 6.2 presents the identifying statements of the Greek-Cypriot discourse.

6.2.2.2 *Interpretation of 'Pipe-dreams and imported nationalisms'*

Greek-Cypriots here echo the fears and concerns of the Turkish-Cypriots. They also accuse Greek-Cypriot policy entrepreneurs of 'opportunism' because of the narrowly defined geopolitical thinking they have bequeathed and communicated as regards the role of the natural resources. They believe that the 'geopolitical language' sounds attractive to the Greek-

Table 6.2. Greek-Cypriot Discourse 2

Greek-Cypriot Discourse 2			
Pipe-dreams and imported nationalisms			
No.	Statement	Q-Sort Value	Z-score
13	The Turkish-Cypriots believe that the way Greek-Cypriots envisage to shape the new state entails for them the risk of vigorously becoming second-class citizens.	4	1,60*
18	Under the current prices Greek-Cypriots cannot take any advantage of the gas reserves especially because they lie offshore, in 'ultra-deep' waters.	3	1,55*
25	The construction of a pipeline to Greece is not feasible due to the depth of the waters and the lack of Israel's interest in investing in such a pipeline.	3	1,50*
12	Through the potential utilization of natural gas, Greek-Cypriots thought they had gained a negotiation tool in the confrontation vis-à-vis Turkey.	3	1,46*
46	If a solution is to be found, the options for the utilization of the reserves will be expanded.	3	1,45*
9	All countries in the region, Cyprus, Israel and Egypt, approached the whole debate purely from a political point of view having priority over the business logic.	3	1,39*
6	I do not believe in the philosophy of the constituent state and I do not think that it can practically work, as long as the Turkish-Cypriot constituent state will be under the control of Turkey.	-3	-1,45*
2	Energy in our case is deeply securitized in a political level: screw the economics.	-3	-1,76*
48	Greek-Cypriots do not want an agreement abolishing the Republic of Cyprus and paving the way for the federalization of a constituent state with the 'territorial extension' of Turkey	-3	-1,71*
38	If I cannot safeguard something that betters the <i>status quo</i> , then I handle things as they are, 'the theory of the second best'.	-4	-2,02*

Cypriots who, harbouring strong anti-Turkish sentiments due to the rage and embarrassment they experienced in 1974, need some kind of 'revenge'. This revenge is allegedly offered by the discovery of the gas reserves, which are used as a 'confrontation tool' against Turkey. Greek-Cypriots scoring here posit that many policy entrepreneurs invoke the grievances of the Greek-Cypriot constituents in order to gain popularity through anti-Turkish rhetoric.

6.2.2.3 The imported national myths

The participants underscored the 'us versus them' psychological mentality on the island.

‘Unfortunately, the reason why the Cyprus question remains alive is the very division between ‘them and us’. Generally speaking, the average Greek-Cypriot would have been much happier if he had had not to deal at all with the Turkish-Cypriots. This assumption gains ground especially if we consider the prospect of co-managing the hydrocarbons.’ Another participant added: ‘After the discovery of the gas reserves in the seabed of the Republic of Cyprus, Greek-Cypriots were, indeed, convicted that they could use natural gas leverage in their negotiations vis-à-vis the Turkish-Cypriots and, by extension, with Turkey.’

How can someone explain the roots of this ‘us versus them’ predicament? One respondent explained:

‘the nationalisms governing the interaction between the grassroots are not a genuine product of their own constituents: it is the product of the conflict between two ‘imported’ nationalisms on the island. On the one side, we observe the development of the Greek nationalism, a typical, radical and romantic type of nationalism that spread across Eastern Europe throughout the 19th century. On the other side, we view the evolution of the Turkish nationalism, represented by Kemalist nationalism, as being moulded throughout the early years after the establishment of the modern Turkish state.’

Historical grievances clearly matter.

‘The conflicts between two sides reached an ethnic level, especially in the 1950s. Back then, the perception of the Turkish-Cypriot as the mouthpiece and police officer of the British state was well consolidated among the Greek-Cypriots. The average Turkish-Cypriot resembled the traitor, the Muslim, the unfaithful, whatever... At the same time, among them you can find theorists of the Turkish nationalism that were building on the idea of dividing the island; they threw out the idea of unifying their own constituent part with Turkey while letting the Greek-Cypriots move on with their *enosis*’ ambitions.’

6.2.2.4 ‘Geopolitical’ opportunism’ and ‘Israel’s problematic strategy’

Most participants here disapproved of the geopolitical viewpoints governing the energy security debate. For instance, one of the participants noted:

‘The policy entrepreneurs in Cyprus have downplayed the technical and economic aspects associated with the energy debate. On the other hand, they have incorrectly emphasized the geopolitical dimension that prioritizes options like LNG or EastMed.’

The participants argued that the geological, economic and technical parameters, drawn from international experience, do not match such ‘pipe-dreams’. Most of them ruled out the feasibility of installing a pipeline from the Eastern Mediterranean to Europe for two reasons:

‘The first one is the depth of the waters. Eastern Mediterranean has a greater depth than the Western Mediterranean basin and that is why it is possible to transport gas from Algeria and Morocco through pipelines to Europe. This possibility cannot be entertained

in our region. The second reason lies in other geological particularities of the area. Eastern Mediterranean is an earthquake region, a feature that increases the risks of such an enterprise. The tectonic plates underneath the seabed of Crete are moving all the time; how can you construct a pipeline transiting through such a geologically dangerous area?’

One of the participants expressed a personal experience:

‘I attended an EU energy-related seminar in Crete a couple of years ago. I met a representative of the respective ministry. East Med was on the spotlight back then. I asked him about the technical feasibility of such a project. I asked him whether technological advances allowed the construction of a subsea natural gas pipeline transiting through an earthquake area and operating at such a depth. After hearing this question, the representative, who had initially shown his enthusiasm about this project, started mincing his words. You can realize how sincere the whole project is.’

Another participant in this discourse argued that geology is not the only hardship in EastMed, but the ‘questionable Israeli energy strategy in pushing such a project through’:

‘The energy strategy of Israel is that it has no energy strategy. Israel has cultivated particular good or bad ties with some member states of the EU because of some thorny issues that emerged after the collapse of the Palestinian peace process in 2014. Israel strives for the approval of the East Med by Berlin and Paris. This project links the gas reserves of the Eastern Mediterranean – lying in the Exclusive Economic Zone of Israel and the Republic of Cyprus – to Greece and Italy. Nevertheless, this project, as noticed in the framework of the last trilateral meeting, is portrayed more as a political initiative rather than a viable economic project, tailor-made to exploit and trade the relevant hydrocarbons.’

So which parameters influence Israel’s strategic thinking vis-à-vis the EastMed?

‘The dominant criterion of Israel’s choices after the discovery of a huge amount of gas reserves in the Levant basin is energy security; these concerns gain ground if we consider that similar energy initiatives, like in Ashkelon have been either targeted by terrorists or failed due to economic irregularities and fraud. After the discovery of Leviathan, the Israelis thought: let’s keep Tamar for domestic needs, mainly electricity, and we will figure out what we will do with Leviathan. When Cyprus became a key player with the discovery of reserves in an area touching the Israeli Economic Zone, the Israelis re-designed their strategic calculations: Along with Cyprus, we will build up a huge reserve deposit and transform Cyprus into a super-hub. That explains why Israeli officials exerted enormous pressure to install an LNG in Cyprus at the dawn of this decade, even before the launch of the research drilling in Aphrodite. This drilling was essential because it would map out the amount of gas reserves in the region.’

The respondent explained:

‘the huge cost attributed to geological and technical considerations, could not support the establishment of an LNG. In order to justify the creation of an LNG, you need an

amount of more than 8 tcf. When we found less than 5 tcf in Aphrodite, an amount that could by no means justify the construction of LNG, Israelis got so disappointed that they examined other export options. That moment was also a critical juncture for us to go our own way, without Israel, and trace the opportunity to export our gas reserves to Egypt. Finally, 'we should not forget that Israel delayed our energy plans because of the regulations that antitrust authorities issued on how the detected gas reserves would be monetized'.

So, why insist on the East-Med project if the realities on ground obscure its realization? Political opportunism plays a significant role, according to the respondents:

'The prospects of East-Med would render Cyprus a 'transit hub' between the Eastern Mediterranean and Western Europe. The prospect of becoming 'a transit hub' sounds attractive to the public. Moreover, natural resources are framed as a diplomatic and military tool that allegedly enhances Cyprus's geopolitical standing vis-à-vis Turkey. Such language, as the participants posit, captures the public's wishful thinking and does not mirror the realities on the ground. The people who experienced rage and embarrassment in 1974 feel that Greek-Cypriots somehow feel the imperative need to curb Turkey's influence in the region. By attributing military and geopolitical properties to the gas reserves, people allegedly think that the Republic of Cyprus, through the interest of companies from militarily strong countries and through the 'alliances' with Greece, Egypt and Israel, is altering the balance of power in the Eastern Mediterranean for its benefit.'

Greek-Cypriot policy entrepreneurs, as my respondents argue, purposefully over-emphasize the supposed geopolitical benefits of Cyprus:

'they use such language in order to gain popularity among the public and in the media. The over-emphasis on Cyprus's geostrategic position and its ability to counter-balance Turkey's influence sounds attractive to the public, and some policy entrepreneurs use these narratives in order to remain topical, as the respondents argue.'

The respondents call for a more 'pragmatic' approach by focusing more on the technical and economic aspects of the monetization of the gas reserves, and less on geopolitical calculations. They also stress the great potential that gas reserves could have for an institutional cooperation between the two sides and mutually beneficial solutions. Some of the participants articulate their conviction that the maintenance of Greek-Cypriot drilling, but under the aegis of a UN committee wherein a Turkish-Cypriot could participate, would open windows of opportunities to establish and consolidate greater security conditions for the continuation of the programme. In such a scenario, Turkey would have fewer incentives to remain aggressive about the Greek-Cypriots' energy programme.

6.2.3 'Resentment matters'

6.2.3.1 Identifying statements

Five participants out of 23 are loading on this factor, which captures 10% of the common variance (see Appendix 10a). All of them work in NGOs. They asserted that in the eyes of both Cypriots and the international community, the conflict has been established as a rather 'dormant, comfortable crisis', which does not provide any actual incentives for its resolution (statement 3). The lack of incentives should be attributed to the absence of casualties, especially after 1974; in their view, a scenario involving casualties would prompt domestic and international actors to rapidly push for a settlement (statement 3). The participants here claim that the continuous political deadlock on the island is unfolding because a feeling of 'resentment' clouds the relationships at the grassroots level (statement 14); both sides feel underprivileged and deeply traumatized due to the events of the past. Table 6.3 presents the identifying statements for discourse 3.

6.2.3.2 Interpretation

The participants' loading here shed light on the significance of historical and psychological factors, which account for the current deadlock on the island. It is only in this perspective that someone should understand the negative trajectory of the conflict after the gas discoveries. While some disapproved of the continuation of the current status quo, others could not see a better way out than perpetuation of the division.

Table 6.3. Greek-Cypriot Discourse 3

Greek-Cypriot Discourse 3			
Resentment matters			
No.	Statement	Q-Sort Value	Z-score
3	Cyprus conflict is a dormant, 'comfortable crisis'. If we had to face the reality of people's losing their lives day by day, then we would have extra incentives to immediately resolve the conflict	4	2,32*
23	Greek-Cypriots fear that Turkish-Cypriots will be potentially manipulated as the 'Trojan horse' of Turkey.	3	2,14
14	Wherever grievances exist, the past never becomes a past.	3	1,94
46	If a solution is to be found, the options for the utilization of the reserves will be expanded.	-3	-1,15*
27	If this negotiation process fails, we head for a potential division, permanent and legitimate.	-3	-1,18*

6.2.3.3 *The power of resentment: the absence of casualties as a blessing & as a curse*

‘Personally, I cannot place my trust into the Turkish-Cypriots after the 1974 events.’ One of the respondents claimed that although this fear is existential, it is also reproduced by the Cypriot media: ‘The reproduction of the 1974 events has led to a brainwashing of the citizens.’

Some respondents underscore the imperative need to alter the heart-breaking plight within which the island finds itself today:

‘Which reasonable person can be satisfied with the current situation? Why shall I show my passport to the police-officers at the border line in order to cross the territory? I have to go through a passport control within my own land.’ These were the rhetorical questions that one of the participants set forth in our discussion. Another respondent articulated discontent with the continuation of the *de facto* division of the island: ‘Things have to change. We have to solve this problem immediately. I cannot stand living on a divided island.’

It is not all participants that share the need for the ‘wind of change’. One of the respondents had a different interpretation from the previous participants:

‘After 40 years of occupation, the Republic of Cyprus, administered *de facto* by Greek-Cypriots, is doing fine without the Turkish-Cypriots; that is why the Greek-Cypriots do not have to win something more out of the negotiations.’

Therefore, the participant does not foresee any imperative need to reach a settlement that would alter the status quo.

There is an additional parameter that factors into the consolidation of this impasse. ‘If the big players in the Security Council wanted to solve the problem, they would not have let things evolve the way they evolved. On the contrary, the interests of the US and Russia go handy with the current situation. They feel comfortable with the situation.’ Along these lines, one of the respondents claimed:

‘If the Cyprus question were still alive, probably the incentives to settle it would have been more intensive. Nevertheless, since some years have gone by, young people are not that keen on settling the dispute. If we had to deal with a growing number of fatalities today, the pressure to reach a sustainable settlement would have been higher.’

The participants remarked: ‘there is a significant proportion in the Cypriot population who prefer the solution to the Cyprus question than to compromise with a non-solution’.

6.3 THE TURKISH-CYPRIOT DISCOURSES

6.3.1 ‘Gas stimulating political equality’

6.3.1.1 *Identifying the statements*

As stipulated in Appendix 10b, 13 out of 21 participants are loading in this factor, which captures 23% of the common variance. Their professions vary, in the sense that policy-makers, energy affiliates, researchers and journalists are part of this discourse. People here clarified Turkish-Cypriot expectations of the gas reserves: ‘to have a say in the decision-making and do the explorations jointly’ (assigning a +4 to statement 37). They also assigned a +3 to statement 26, which pinpoints the ‘absence of federal culture’ and explains the Greek-Cypriots’ behaviour. Respondents assigned a +3 to statement 45: ‘Greek-Cypriots should not implicate the energy debate into the existential question of the Republic of Cyprus’. Table 6.4 presents the identifying statements.

6.3.1.2 *Interpretation*

Here I observe that the main expectation that Turkish-Cypriots have from the gas reserves is their participation in decision-making on such issues, regardless of whether a settlement is reached or not. The Turkish-Cypriot participants here lay out their main grievances deriving from Greek-Cypriot framing of the natural resources ‘as a matter of sovereignty’: they feel (once again) excluded from the debate and assert that Greek-Cypriots act as ‘being the sole owner of the Island’.

6.3.1.3 *We need to have a say: grievances against Greek-Cypriots*

Some of the Greek-Cypriots have clearly expressed their will to share the revenues stemming from the exploitation of the gas reserves, conditioning it on a potential settlement. However, such a deliberation does not satisfy Turkish-Cypriot demands:

‘the discussion should not be restricted to how the profits out of the exploitation should be shared. The participants provided examples from different parts of the world: ‘There are four federal states that drill the sea for oil in the world. These are the USA, Mexico, Venezuela and Brazil. All of these states are federations. None of them suggested giving one out of five of the revenues to their black or natives or Spanish origin citizens. On the contrary, on the Greek side, both Anastasiades¹ and Christodoulides² suggested giving us one out of five. This is racism’.

According to the participants, Turkish-Cypriots should have a say in the decision-making about the monetization of the gas reserves. ‘Based on the 1960 constitution of the Republic of Cyprus,

¹ The incumbent President of the Republic of Cyprus.

² At that time (January 2018) Foreign Minister of the Republic of Cyprus.

Table 6.4. Turkish-Cypriot Discourse 1

Turkish-Cypriot Discourse 1			
Gas stimulating political equality			
No.	Statement	Q-Sort Value	Z-Score
37	Turkish-Cypriots are after decision-making. What they actually want is to have a say in the decision-making: 'let's do the explorations jointly.'	4	1,96*
26	The presumption that Turkish-Cypriots will prevent decisions from being taken if they participate in a decision making body on energy issues underlines another missing element in the Cyprus conflict: the federal culture.	3	1,49*
45	The Greek-Cypriots should not make the energy issue into the existential question for the Republic of Cyprus, as if its existence depends on talking about hydrocarbons with Turkish-Cypriots or not.	3	1,23*
42	Even if the Turkish-Cypriots had natural gas reserves, they would have to bring international development in, mainly companies to take it out. Then, they would have to engage with capitalism; unfortunately, that is life.	2	1,03
4	I can understand why Greek-Cypriots do not make use of the Turkish export option. Despite the economic benefits, you cannot assign a price to the political risk.	-3	-1,17*
7	Christofias' government initiated the whole energy endeavour in order to restore his shaken image after the Mari events in 2011 and distract attention from the economic reforms needed.	-3	-1,44*
27	Another deadlock will not take anything out of the tensions and I am afraid that Cyprus will surely go through another war.	-4	-2,00*

Turkish-Cypriots have some rights in the state apparatus. Therefore, it is not only the Greek-Cypriots who have rights on the energy issue but also the Turkish-Cypriots'. Along these lines, a respondent argued: 'This island belongs to all of us. Therefore, if you give the exploration rights to drilling companies, you have to do it as a federal government.' Pursuant to this logic, a participant stated:

'Natural resources in Cyprus should be under the authority of the federal government. There is a consensus between Turkey and Turkish-Cypriots about this topic. It does not differ from the UBP (National Unity Party) to the CTP (Republican Turkish Party). Everyone holds the same position.'

In addition, they argued that the Greek-Cypriots do not have the luxury of keeping the Turkish-Cypriots out of the discussion: ‘The UN Secretary General, Antonio Gutierrez, recently said that all these resources belong to the Cypriots’. According to the Turkish-Cypriot participants, the regional context should force both sides to put their act together:

‘We need to see the big picture here. There is an ongoing war in Syria while other problems exist in Palestine as well as between Israel and Lebanon. All these countries must live in peace and perform a clear demarcation of their sovereignty zones. They have to work together and export the gas together. Right now, the prices are not ripe for the Greek-Cypriots to initiate exports. Hence, this money can be spent for the sake of the island’s development; social policies and infrastructure. That’s why it is urgent for the Turkish-Cypriots to participate in the decision-making’.

The exclusion of the Turkish-Cypriots from the decision-making made many respondents point fingers at the Greek-Cypriots and blame them indirectly for an ‘identity crisis’:

‘Turkish-Cypriots are excluded because they are considered as foreigners. Not because they are Turkish-Cypriots, (but) because they are seen as foreigners. Greek-Cypriots think Cyprus belongs to them and they don’t want to share it with anyone.’ Such exclusion contradicts Cypriots’ obligations deriving from their EU membership I think the Greek-Cypriots need to work on this with the education system, through the media, through the youth. Because this is a fundamental problem within society and they cannot solve it by concentrating on the Turkish-Cypriots-Greek-Cypriots relationship. They need to go back and work on the way for Cypriots to construct their own national identity.’

6.3.1.4 EU’s role could have been more constructive

The participants accused the Europeans of inaction by allowing Greek-Cypriots to maintain the implementation of their energy programme. ‘I think the Europeans are doing nothing not because they have any specific interest; they genuinely believe that the Greek-Cypriots are the main owners of this Island and able to take decisions on their own.’ The respondent concluded:

‘I think the European officials are missing the point, they are looking at the small picture here; they are looking at the relationship between Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots. They need to look broader. What is the relationship of Greek-Cypriots with non-Greek-Cypriots, including Armenians and Maronites. Greek-Cypriots perceive their EU membership as a blessing from God. You can always play that card; you can always get funds from there. If the worst comes to the worst, they think that they can bring the European Commission in.’

6.3.1.5 Absence of a concrete agenda and ‘obsession with political equality’

I put forward a scenario where Turkish-Cypriots would participate in a committee to discuss the gas reserves. I asked them what kind of priorities they would set in a hypothetical discussion with the Greek-Cypriots about this issue. What kind of agenda would they promote? Their answers raised eyebrows:

‘The Turkish-Cypriots do not have an agenda. Actually, this is the main problem. Since it is a very new topic, it requires also time, I guess at some point, to bring people with some scientific knowledge in order to formulate the Turkish-Cypriot positions.’

Another participant informed us: ‘the economic advisor of Akinci made a call to Turkish-Cypriots all around the world who possess scientific knowledge about this topic in order to formulate the relevant Turkish-Cypriot positions’. The results of this call were not positive:

‘They couldn’t find them; I mean we have none actually around. If we build up a technical commission, it would be a really tiny one, consisting of one to three real experts. So, that is a huge concern. You cannot all of a sudden expect to find 60-year-old Turkish-Cypriot experts out of nowhere; so you have to basically wait. You have to wait for the younger generation, young academics, young professionals to deal with this issue in the coming years or you have to get some assistance from abroad.’

6

Could the Turkish-Cypriots formulate their own agenda in the future? A respondent was negative:

‘Turkish-Cypriots do not have a right to declare their own views under the hidden ruling of Turkey. They are not the real decision-makers in their own country.’

In the absence of a concrete agenda, why do Turkish-Cypriots care that much about participating in the discussion?

‘Turkish-Cypriots are obsessed with political equality’. We want to have a say in the procedure, in the decision-making. Through our participation in the decision-making, we seek to upload ourselves as a state entity. We are afraid that things basically will not work out well for us when the companies start drilling and especially when Turkey intervenes to interrupt the drilling. So, at that point, I think Turkish-Cypriots will be marginalized a lot. Therefore, it won’t be our issue at all. That is why Turkish-Cypriots are in fear of Turkey’s incursions in the Eastern Mediterranean.’

Without autonomous economic governance, Turkish-Cypriot hands would be tied in voicing and promoting their own agenda, confirming Greek-Cypriots’ accusation of acting as Turkey’s ‘Trojan Horse’. A Turkish-Cypriot respondent leading in this P-Set asserted:

‘In reality as long as Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots do not negotiate with Turkey, they do not have any power to make decisions on their own. Even if Greek-Cypriots were dealing with Turkish-Cypriots on this matter, the latter would go and ask Turkey what they should do.’

Despite this, Turkish-Cypriots consider a pipeline to Turkey the best option:

‘Let me clear something up. The Greek side continuously alters its policy. Initially, they were talking about a pipeline that goes through Crete and Italy. But the cost of such

a pipeline was very high and the amount of gas or oil was not enough to cover it. That was a fantasy. Afterwards, they discussed the feasibility of transferring Israeli and Cypriot oil together over Turkey. Now there is news about Egypt discovering a major gas reservoir in Zohr Basin. Experts such as financial analysts, risk analysts and those who prepare feasibility reports argue that Egyptian gas, Cypriot gas and Israeli gas must be transferred through Cyprus to Ceyhan, and must be carried via TANAP. TANAP is the pipeline from Azerbaijan to Europe. This is the correct option. This is the rentable option. This is the cheaper option. And this is the closest option.'

In such a scenario, would Turkey dictate the prices, as many Greek-Cypriots fear?

'I disagree. Turkey cannot determine prices on its own. Prices are determined in the world. There is a price per barrel of oil. There is the price of gas. Turkey cannot determine the prices on its own.'

According to the Turkish-Cypriot respondent, a joint solution could be found to partially address this issue:

'Under the separation of authority, Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots could finally discuss who would sign and what kind of international agreement. So, the Greek side would put the Israeli-Greek side agreement or Cyprus-Lebanon agreement on the table. Oil agreements with Exxon and Shell would be also put on the table. The Turkish side, as well, would put its own agreements on the table.'

Furthermore, some of the Turkish-Cypriot participants expressed their belief that Greek-Cypriots

'will eventually discuss the energy issue ... because it is one integral part of the dynamic security architecture for the transitional period and for post-conflict settlement'. One way or another, during negotiations, after negotiations, during the transitional period, this topic will be part of the broader discussion about security, the broader security architecture in order to tackle the conflict'. This question affects 'development, resources and is part of the broader security architecture of Cyprus'.

What is the main message that Turkish-Cypriots signal to the Greek-Cypriots?

'It is quite important to humanize your 'enemy' in order to reach the potential for integration. You need to start talking. That is the first step, which is often neglected. Otherwise, this enemy becomes an even bigger and more dangerous enemy. Therefore, you need to lead off with this acknowledgment. The Greek-Cypriots need to recognize the Turkish-Cypriots as an entity, not even in legal terms. They need to recognize them as a human entity and ask them what they actually want, how they feel.'

6.3.2 'Micro-politics'

6.3.2.1 Identifying statements

This discourse involves 2 participants out of the 21 and captures 13% of the common variance (see Appendix 10b). One of them is a policy-maker and the other a NGO representative. No conclusions on the demographic synthesis can be drawn here, the other discourses alike. Participants assigned +4 to statement 5 (Özersay played an important role in the crisis with the seismic survey in 2011). In addition, they assigned +3 to statement 7 (Christofias' government initiated the whole energy endeavour in order to restore his shaken image after the Mari events in 2011 and distract attention from the economic reforms needed). Table 6.5 presents the identifying statements.

6.3.2.2 Interpretation

The participants here stress the role of political expediencies in pushing the energy security agenda through. By political expediency, we mean here either pre-electoral motives, personal calculations to rise in power and mobilization of 'grievances' to divert attention from domestic turmoil or economic crisis at the grassroots level. Respondents describe the Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot deliberation on the future monetization of the gas reserves as the product of politicking and the decentralized coordination of the various pressures emanating from the Cypriot public opinion on both sides. On the one hand, the Greek-Cypriot leader, Dimitris Christofias, had to manage the implications of the Mari crisis in July 2011. The latter might have found refuge in various tactics. The participants implied that both Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot leaders embarked on an adventurous foreign policy in 2011 in order to divert attention from the unrest in the domestic arena to the international arena. In their

Table 6.5. Turkish-Cypriot Discourse 2

Turkish-Cypriot Discourse 2			
Micro-Politics			
No.	Statement	Q-Sort Value	Z-score
5	Özersay played an important role in the crisis with the seismic survey in 2011.	4	2,59*
7	Christofias' government initiated the whole energy endeavour in order to restore his shaken image after the Mari events in 2011 and distract attention from the economic reforms needed.	3	1,54*
44	In case Turkey and Israel normalize their bilateral relations, Greek-Cypriots have to decide what kind of policy they should follow.	-3	-1,49*
48	Turkish Cypriots also had this ambivalent attitude towards Turkey, in a sense that Turkish Cypriots trust Turkey to be there always for them	-4	-1,54*

view, crises about natural gas could help leaders score extra points among constituents of a nationalist temperament.

6.3.2.3 *Pre-electoral calculations behind the 2011 crisis*

The respondents here ascribe the escalation of the 2011 crisis to the personal motives of Turkish-Cypriot policymakers.

The signing of the delimitation agreement with Turkey, the authorization of TPAO to initiate drilling in areas encroaching on the Exclusive Economic Zone of Cyprus and the explorations of the Turkish seismic vessel, Piri Reis, were all initiatives which deepened the crisis in 2011. These initiatives were undertaken by the former Turkish-Cypriot chief negotiator and current politician, Kudret Özersay. He wanted to drag Turkey into the energy security debate in order to 'upgrade' himself as a valuable asset to Turkey's energy visions in the region and score extra points among the Turkish-Cypriot constituents, who would foresee in his figure a determined policy-maker who would include Turkish-Cypriots in the hydrocarbons' management. He gambled on the 2011 crisis in order to lay the ground for a career in politics through Turkey's support.

6.3.2.4 *Diversions tactics: the Mari events and the economic crisis*

The participants also blamed the former president of the Republic of Cyprus, Dimitris Christofias, for the 2011 crises across the Mediterranean. They made an inference to the domestic pressure that his government had been facing since July 2011. On July 11, 2011, a tragic incident occurred at the Mari navy base in Limassol. A fire broke out at the munitions base next to the Vasilikos Power Station, the largest in Cyprus, which provides 53% of the country's electricity. Two out of 98 containers of gunpowder, rockets, explosives and guns exploded.³ The explosion not only wiped out the power station, causing major blackouts across the entire island but also killed 13 people from the ranks of the armed forces and the Cyprus Fire Service. AKEL's government, under President Christofias, was held accountable by the entire political world of Cyprus:

'In the light of repeated warnings from the United Nations Sanctions Committees about the exposure of the containers to extreme weather conditions over extended periods of time, his government was accused of 'unforgivable negligence' for allowing the munitions to be stored out in the open and not undertaking any measures to avert the risks. Tens of thousands of Cypriot citizens demonstrated against the government, seeking its resignation. At an extraordinary meeting of the Council of Ministers, Christofias demanded his entire cabinet resign to pave the way for a full reshuffle.'

According to the participants, this was not the only occasion in which Christofias' government found itself under intense pressure. Two weeks after the incident, the credit rating agency

³ These containers had been seized from a Cypriot-flagged ship, the Monchegorsk, which was intercepted in January 2009 while travelling from Iran in January. According to the allegations of the Cypriot officials at that time, the shipment violated UN sanctions against Iran

Moody's cut its growth outlook for Cyprus to zero. Other agencies, such as Fitch and Standard and Poor's, had already downgraded the economic outlook of the country. The reason of the downgrading should not be solely attributed to the vulnerable Cypriot banking sector, which was holding a significant amount of non-sustainable-Greek debt – and necessitated financial support from the Greek-Cypriot government.

From the beginning of July 2011, the country embarked upon a fiscal plan to cut spending in the civil service and scrap a number of state-owned organizations. The expected austerity measures to effectively address the crisis, encountered significant political hurdles, because opposition accused Christofias' government of backtracking on reforms because it feared an angry backlash from Cyprus's powerful labour unions.

While coping with domestic pressures, he embarked on adventurous, diversionary policies, according to the Turkish-Cypriot participants:

He made a big deal out of the Cypriot energy plans in 2011, when Noble Energy announced the discovery of gas reserves in the Aphrodite field. Amid the tensions between Israel and Turkey at that time, an announcement to move forward with the energy plans would deliberately provoke Turkey's incursions. Such announcement would divert attention away from the domestic situation in Cyprus to the regional arena of the Eastern Mediterranean. If the crisis overshadowed the domestic problems the Christofias government was facing at that time, then the latter would deflect the blame from the crisis and would not be held accountable for the economic crisis. Given the unpopularity the government was facing, a crisis with Turkey would allegedly draw the attention from the domestic problems (the explosion and the economic hardships) to the traditional 'arch-enemy', Turkey; on such occasions, the Greek-Cypriot constituents would not blame the Cypriot president for fiscal mismanagement or the blast but would treat him as the embodiment of national unity against Turkey.

6.4 CONCLUSIONS

In this chapter, I found five discourses that illustrate the incompatible objectives of Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots concerning the exploitation of gas reserves: (a) 'gas boosting our geopolitical standing', (b) 'pipe-dreams and imported nationalisms', (c) 'resentment still matters' from the Greek-Cypriot side, (d) 'gas stimulating political equality' and (e) micro-politics from the Turkish-Cypriot side. The first discourse, along the lines of the geopolitical perspectives, frames the energy landscape in the Eastern Mediterranean as an 'anarchic environment', wherein the Greek-Cypriots correctly carved out strategic collaborations with Greece, Egypt and Israel in order to safeguard the smooth implementation of their energy programme. Gas reserves are treated here as an 'energy-diplomatic weapon' which would incentivize Turkey to change its allegedly intransigent stance vis-à-vis a potential settlement. The second discourse expresses fierce opposition to the geopolitical rationale that inspires the first discourse. The respondents echo Turkish-Cypriot grievances about the future architecture of the island ration and illuminate the role of opportunism (greed) behind the articulation of the 'geopolitical overtones'

associated with the gas reserves. In the third discourse, ‘resentment matters’, the participants shed light on the intangible factors sustaining the Cyprus conflict. The fourth discourse, ‘Gas stimulating political equality’, emphasizes the grievances of the Turkish-Cypriots as regards their exclusion from the energy security debate and underline their need to achieve ‘political equality’ through the gas developments, regardless of whether they have an autonomous agenda to promote. The fifth discourse, ‘micro-politics’, showcases how the greed hypothesis, in the form of diversionary tactics, operates in real-world cases. Table 6.6 summarizes the key elements in every discourse.

A question that arises from the analysis of these discourses is whether the timing of the Q-sorting and the analysis of the findings are factored into the discourse analysis. I will explain the extent to which such a point would be justifiable and then establish why I do not believe this to be the case.

As explicitly mentioned in the methodological chapter, I interviewed my Greek-Cypriot participants in July 2017 and the Turkish-Cypriot ones in January 2018. The interviews and the analysis of my discourses took place after the collapse of the Crans Montana. Moreover, in both cases, my interviews took place in a pre-electoral period for each side. The Republic of Cyprus was expecting presidential elections in January 2018, while in the same month Turkish-Cypriots were running their own parliamentary elections. It seemed to me that the settlement of the Cyprus conflict was not a priority for any of the contending parties. Nonetheless, the failure of the reunification talks had become embroiled in the pre-electoral battles. Political opportunism easily flourished during that period. Greek-Cypriot policymakers were attributing this standoff to Turkey’s intransigent stance. On the other hand, Turkish-Cypriot policymakers were casting blame on the President of the Republic of Cyprus. They asserted that Greek-Cypriots wanted to maintain the negotiations not because they expected they would achieve a settlement but for their ‘image’ as a compromising side; such an ‘image’ receives the ‘blessings’ of the international community and they can continue undisturbed with their ‘unilateral’ drilling. Turkish-Cypriot opinion-leaders believe that Greek-Cypriots are the uncompromising side and the ones reluctant to reach a settlement. In light of this timing, the only discourse that could have been a ‘by-product’ of that timing is the Turkish-Cypriot discourse, ‘Micropolitics’. Turkish-Cypriots clearly articulated that the escalation of the conflict was the outcome of the political expediencies of political leaders in a ‘troubled situation’. The timing of the situation could have accounted for the formulation of such a discourse, without being certain about this claim.

On the other hand, from a methodological point of view, I do not believe that the post-Crans-Montana ‘timing’ factored in any way into the formulation and analysis of the other discourses. Indicatively, the Greek-Cypriot discourse, ‘Gas boosting our geopolitical standing’, involved all policymakers; people who took a positive stance towards a ‘bicomunal and bizonal’ federation and accused the Greek-Cypriot leader of not taking a more firm position on this direction and

Table 6.6. Key points of the discourses

Key points	Greek-Cypriot Discourses		Turkish-Cypriot Discourses		
	Gas boosting our geopolitical standing	Pipe dreams and imported nationalisms	Resentment matters	Gas stimulating political equality	Micro-politics
	Anarchic environment in the Eastern Mediterranean- diplomatic tool vis-a-vis Turkey	Slow down the geopolitical overtones	Focus on psychological aspect of conflict	Demand for active involvement in the hydrocarbons' management	Opportunism manifested through gas
	Gas as sovereign aspect- no involvement of Turkish-Cypriots without settlement	Need to understand Turkish-Cypriot fears	Need for more active involvement of UN	Gas as the pillar for future architecture on the Island	No technical considerations

people who took a negative stance on this prospect and accused the Greek-Cypriot leader of having a 'submissive' stance on the Turkish-Cypriots and Turkey. If the timing had been important, these people might have made different statements. But this was not the case. On the contrary, the participation of policymakers across different political spheres has led me to believe that 'geopolitical' and 'sovereignty' attributes share a wide consensus in the Republic of Cyprus and are not susceptible to any pre- electoral momentum. The Turkish-Cypriot discourse pinpointed the will of the Turkish-Cypriots to participate in the hydrocarbons' management. Such a discourse, based on the energy context of Chapter 4, has been clearly articulated since 2011 when the first estimation of the amount of natural resources was announced. This manifests its 'diachronic' relevance. The same applies to the other grievance-related discourses, 'Resentment matters' and 'Pipedreams and imported nationalisms', which are clearly articulated in the historical context that I presented in Chapter 3.

These five discourses highlight the incompatible objectives that both sides pursue with respect to the future management of the gas reserves. Taking these aspects into consideration, the pending issue is to bring them together and address the research question: what is the impact of the natural resources on the complication of the conflict? In Chapter 7, I reflect on my findings by bringing the selected theoretical preconceptions back in.

