The Politics of Forced Migration

in the Drvar (Bosnia) and Maronite (Cyprus) Communities

With few exceptions, the politics of internal forced migration remain under-theorized when it comes to the study of the interplay between political institutions, diaspora communities, and forced displacement. In this chapter, we compare the experiences of two communities ethnically displaced from their ancestral homeland; the Serbs in the Drvar region and the Cypriot Maronites. Drawing on interviews and survey data from Cyprus and Bosnia, we examine the impact of forced migration for displaced persons themselves and also the strategies employed leading to the partial reversal of ethnic cleansing. The article further highlights the different manifestations of community engagement at the local, national and global levels. We demonstrate the critical role of political institutions in facilitating voluntary peaceful return despite major differences in the opportunity structures facing Cypriot Maronites and Bosnia Serbs and identify the pathways through which community effort resolves coordination and commitment problems even under conditions of inter-communal mistrust and fear.

Keywords: forced displacement, diaspora social capital, Bosnia Herzegovina, Cyprus.
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Introduction

This paper examines two theoretically informative cases of diasporas attempting to reverse forced migration: Serbs in post-Dayton Drvar, Bosnia, and Maronites in post-1974 Cyprus.¹ Studies of social organization and social capital among diasporas/displaced groups are rare (Celik 2005; Nikolko & Carment 2010; Koinova 2014). Yet as these cases illustrate, diasporas can develop an effective network of cooperation involving international agencies and local partners across ethnic or religious divides. Such networks, we argue, improve human rights capacity in post-conflict societies and facilitate the return process following a protracted displacement. Moreover, the two case studies offer a wide range of within-country episodes to refine current theoretical perspectives on diasporas with broader implications for the literature.

The Diaspora Context: Bosnia and Cyprus Compared

Victims of ‘ethnic cleansing’ have returned home in significant numbers all over Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) but no municipality has been as successful in peacefully reversing ethnic cleansing as the Drvar region in the western part of the country. In 1991, 97% of Drvar’s 17,000 inhabitants were Serbs. After the September 1995 offensive by Croat forces, the only original inhabitants who remained were 83 older people in isolated villages. However, by 2000, Serb returnees represented 70% of the local population, making Drvar the first municipality in which the pre-war majority was restored via peaceful returns.² This was achieved despite bitter resistance from ultra-nationalist across the ethnic divide.

Decades before the Yugoslav wars, Cyprus had similarly experienced ethnic cleansing in various waves, leading to the island’s de facto partition in 1974
Unsurprisingly, analyses of the Cyprus problem have focused on Greek and Turkish Cypriots, ignoring other indigenous groups in the island, such as the Cypriot Maronites. There are around 6,000 Cypriot Maronites today, descendants of emigrants from Syria and Lebanon who arrived in the 8th century (Hourani 1998; Varnavas 2002). It is estimated that in 1224, there was a sizable Maronite community of approximately 60-72 settlements; this declined to only four villages in 1878, after persecution by Ottoman rulers and assimilation pressure from the Greek Cypriot majority (Hourani 1998; Dib 1971; Hill 1972; Varnavas 2002). All four ancestral Maronite villages, Agia Marina, Asomatos, Karpashia, and Kormakitis, are located in the northern part of the island, with their native populations largely displaced because of the 1974 Turkish invasion and partition of the island. Until recently, the villages were practically unpopulated, with Asomatos and Agia Marina serving as military stations for Turkish occupation forces. With the partial exception of Agia Marina, Maronites remained neutral during the 1963-1974 bicommmunal clashes and had close connections with foreign governments and the Vatican, which pledged to protect them. Nevertheless, they did not escape the fate of Greek Cypriots in the areas currently under Turkish military control and ethnic cleansing. Until 2006, only 130 elderly Maronites had managed to stay, primarily in Kormakitis, today the centre of Maronite life and the only place where Cypriot Maronite Arabic is still spoken (Varnavas 2002; Theodoulou 2004; Athanasiadis 2004). This chapter examines the process of diaspora agency and mobilization in negotiating return aiming to draw broader theoretical conclusions from the experiences of Cypriot Maronites and Bosnian Serbs in the Drvar region.
Reversing Forced Displacements: Serbs in Drvar

While the victims of ethnic cleansing have returned home all over Bosnia, the Drvar region is the most successful in peacefully reversing ethnic cleansing. The pre-war majority has been restored through peaceful returns (ICG 2000:4-5), despite the bitter resistance of both Croat and Serb ultra-nationalist parties and in spite of lukewarm international support (ICG 1998a: iv). In fact, the early phases of the war provide a rather typical picture of ethnic cleansing and actions by nationalist to prevent its reversal. While the Bosniac nationalist party argued (at least in principle) in favour of the right of return, the main Serbian and Croat ultra-nationalist parties were openly opposed. The Croat ultra-nationalist HDZ fought the returns every step of the way, making hostile relocations of Croat DPs from central Bosnia into Drvar, issuing ‘looting permits’ for the homes of Serbs who declared their wish to return (ibid:5), and withdrawing monthly subsidies from municipalities where the returnees’ parties won local elections (ibid:13). Ultra-nationalist Croat politicians even incited ethnic riots against returnees and international organisations in October 1997 and April 1998. This resistance was to no avail (ibid: 5-6). Not only did refugees from Drvar region start returning in large numbers well before the country-wide turn of the tide in 1999-2000, but they won municipal elections (ibid:1-2,13), gained significant representation in the police force and local administration, and recovered their demographic majority status.

While experts are still struggling to explain the successes of the citizens of Drvar in reversing ethnic cleansing, evidence suggests the resilience, social capital, and organisation of the returning community were key factors. The Drvar DP association (Coalition for Drvar) was formed when it became clear the nationalist governments ruling different parts of Bosnia were not truly interested in
implementing the right of return. One of the first successes of the leaders of the organisation was to convince followers to vote in their pre-war hometowns against the wishes of Serb nationalists who counted on those votes to consolidate control in ethnically-cleansed parts of Bosnia. In 1997, Mile Marceta was elected mayor of Drvar because of election rules permitting refugees to cast absentee ballots in their pre-war place of residence. Described by international media as a ‘symbol of hope in a land of hate’, the soon-to-be mayor convinced around 1600-2000 displaced persons to accompany him back to the municipality (Wilkinson 1998; McDougall 1998). Despite Croat resistance and an assassination attempt against Marceta himself, refugees managed to re-establish themselves in their ancestral land. The organisation not only helped to reverse ethnic cleansing, but also played a leading role in mobilising support from the international community and locally from the multi-ethnic country-wide Coalition for the Return of the Expelled.\footnote{Why aren’t such examples more prevalent in post-conflict societies? Specific political mechanisms in the Dayton Peace Agreement facilitated the process of return in the case of Drvar. Annex 3, art. IV of the Agreement stipulates that ‘a citizen who no longer lives in the municipality in which he or she resided in 1991 shall, as a general rule, be expected to vote, in person or by absentee ballot, in that municipality.’\footnote{In Drvar, many IDPs continued to have a vote in their pre-conflict municipalities, even while in exile. As per article 20.8 of the Bosnian Election Law, distant voting for displaced persons will remain in place until decided otherwise by the UN High Representative or the Parliamentary Assembly of the BiH.\footnote{In fact, voting rights were a key element of the Dayton architecture in Bosnia, in contrast to other UN-led peace mediations, such as the 2004 Annan Plan for Cyprus. The Plan, which failed to be approved by the Greek Cypriot community in a referendum,}}
stipulated significant restrictions on the political rights of displaced persons (unlike post-2015 mediations in the island). In contrast, Dayton’s institutional mechanisms allowed refugees and IDPs to maintain financial, institutional and political ties with their home region.

The Bosnian return experience was not an unalloyed success, however. While the property restitution policy in Bosnia was a major success – with about 90% successful resolution of the repossession cases – the return of property generally did not lead to the return of people, as many victims of forced displacement exchanged or sold their property. Even in the townships where community effort led to mass return, the return was not followed by well-designed and funded local economic development programs. Consequently, many returnees left again, now for economic reasons – to find jobs. Furthermore, even under the best of conditions, some groups of forced migrants may not be interested in return. Surveys among the Bosnian displaced show elderly men are the most likely to return, and young women are the least likely (Stefanovic and Loizides 2015). This difference might be related to greater opportunities for women in urban Bosnia (or Western countries of exile) compared to small towns or rural Bosnia. While Bosnia’s urban areas were once famous as centres of multi-ethnic life, post-war urban minority returns are few and remain restricted to places such as Drvar. Bosnia’s cities are now overwhelmingly mono-ethnic.

**Displaced Maronites in Cyprus and Return**

Since 2003, an opening in the Green Line dividing Cyprus has allowed Greek Cypriots and Maronites to visit their villages. In 2003, Serdar Denktash then serving as the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the unrecognized TRNC (Turkish
Republic of Northern Cyprus) hinted Maronites would be also permitted to resettle in their pre-1974 homes, a decision ratified in 2006 (Leonidou 2006). Nevertheless, displaced Maronites faced multiple problems, including delays in the implementation of the resettlement laws, destroyed properties, military restrictions in entering two of their villages, and new occupants living on some of their properties. Although not as aggressively opposed as Bosnian Serb leadership, the official Cyprus government maintained an ambiguous position as to whether Maronites should return, warning them to be careful in their dealings with Turkish Cypriot authorities and be sceptical of their promises. According to the official government view, Turkish Cypriots aimed at token concessions to impress the international community (Christou 2003). Nevertheless, within five years of the decision to allow resettlement, the overwhelming majority of Cypriot Maronites had rebuilt their houses in Kormakitis for permanent or temporary accommodation.11

The success of Maronite mobilisation may be attributed to the strength of their community organisations while in exile. Cypriot Maronites retained their own ecclesiastical institutions, schools, sports teams, and close networks of business groups. They avoided assimilation within the Greek Cypriot community although they actively participated in politics, directing their influence primarily towards the moderate wing of the centre-right Democratic Rally (DISY) and nominally-communist AKEL. The strength of the community is demonstrated by the election of several Maronites to Parliament during this period, including Klavdios Mavrohannas, an AKEL representative from Kerynia, Marios Mavrides, an Economics Professor elected for Democratic Rally, also in Kerynia, and Antonis Hadjirussos, the minority representative of Maronites in Parliament (voted by all Cypriot Maronites in a separate electoral roll). In addition, former Vice-President of DISY and current
Minister of Interior Socrates Hasikos has been traditionally supported by Maronites in his Kerynia district.\(^{12}\)

In the past, during the Clerides administration, members of the Maronite community were elected in or appointed to key positions, including Parliament, the Supreme Court and various ministerial positions (Varnavas 2002). Their parliamentary representation demonstrates a continuation of tradition to accommodate Maronite representatives in key posts.

The community held together in other ways as well. After the events of 1974, a large proportion of the community collectively settled in Anthoupoli, Kotsiatis\(^ {13}\) and Marki, in refugee housing estates and Turkish-Cypriot houses. According to Cypriot Maronite scholar Maro Emmanuel, with the building of Saint Maron public primary school, several Maronite churches, and coffee shops, the areas grew to accommodate the needs of the community. These spaces allowed Maronite identity to intensify rather than diminish. Finally, the Vatican maintained a clear link with the Maronite community through such institutions as Saint George Church in Kormakitis and Terra Santa Collage where Italian Catholic nuns were appointed to teach the Catholic minorities – both Maronites and a smaller Latin community.\(^ {14}\)

Politically, the leadership of the Maronite community supports the reunification of the island, openly declaring its ‘responsibility to raise awareness of the positive aspects of a federation and the possibilities that will arise after the solution’ (Hadjirussos 2015). In negotiating return to Kormakitis, Maronite civic organisations have been important for multiple reasons. First, they have lobbied the Vatican and Catholic governments to pressure Turkey and Turkish Cypriot authorities to allow, even facilitate, return. Second, their organisations have minimized Greek Cypriot reactions to perceived preferential treatment of Maronites and maintained
rights for the internally displaced in the south while experimenting with return to the north. Third, through their associations, Maronites have built ties with Turkish Cypriot politicians across the political spectrum, both the pro-settlement left and conservative right, and created the necessary personal and business networks with nearby Turkish Cypriot and post-1974 settler villages.  

Last but by no means least, the associations have put positive pressure on individuals to join the return process by sharing information and logistical support. The Maronite website (http://www.kormakitis.net/) for instance, gives information on return and prompts members to return and restore their houses before Turkish Cypriot authorities demolish them for ‘safety’ reasons. In general, Maronites are very active in the information sector, particularly since the 1974 Turkish invasion. The community produces the following printed and electronic media: _Kinotiko Vima_ (Community Tribune) monthly newspaper (2000); _O Typos ton Maroniton_ (The Press of the Maronites) monthly newspaper (2001); and _I Foni ton Maroniton_ (The Voice of the Maronites) radio program (1999), broadcast by CyBC’s First Programme every Friday between 17:00 and 18:00. There is also an official community web page (www.maronitesofcyprus.com), an official Archbishopric web page (www.maronitearcheparchy.org.cy), and web pages dedicated to three of the Maronite villages (www.asomatos.com, www.ayiamarina.com and www.karpasha.com).

**Diaspora Dilemmas: Return and Cooperate or Stay Away?**

The research on ethnic violence/forced migration has emphasized the importance of security concerns and credible safeguards in conflict situations (Lake & Rothchild 1996; Walter 1999; Fearon 1998). At the individual level, more vulnerable Bosnians
and Cypriots (the elderly, women whose male family members were killed, families with small children) are more likely to be afraid to return to a potentially dangerous environment. At the same time, the elderly, women, and families are more likely to be tolerated in ‘rival’ communities, as they pose less of a threat. For instance, the first version of the Annan Plan proposed that among Greek Cypriots, priority of return should be given to those over the age of 65.

On the one hand, a sense of vulnerability is likely to be enhanced by personal traumatic experiences during the war, such as assault, torture, loss of a close friend or family member (UNHCR 2005: 3), or repeated and severe ethnic harassment after the war, such as stoning buses carrying returnees, rioting, looting, and burning residential property (Hall et al. 2015). The sense of vulnerability to attack may be increased by a village’s geographic position (villages surrounded by ethnic others are more vulnerable to attack than those surrounded by co-ethnics), the residence of ethnic others in the village, and in the case of Cyprus, the presence of foreign troops. There is some Bosnian evidence that the presence of alleged war criminals, especially in the municipal government and police, and control of the municipal government by ultra-nationalist parties, tends to heighten victims’ sense of security risk (Nalepa 2007). Intensity of inter-communal fighting and a local cycle of revenge during the war also increase fears of renewed ethnic violence.

On the other hand, in the case of Bosnian returnees several contextual factors such as arrests of alleged war criminals, the active presence of international troops, and the multi-ethnic composition of the local police force, appear to reduce the fear of physical attack (ICG 2002:26; Belloni 2008:179,182; Nalepa 2007; Dahlman and Toal 2005:651). In the case of Maronites in Cyprus, international guarantees, particularly pledges of support by the Vatican and the changing environment after the
accession of Cyprus to the EU, improvement of relations between Greek and Turkish Cypriots, and Turkey’s candidacy status, appear to foster a sense of security among returnees.19

It is important to note that in the absence of such security mechanisms, refugee community organisations may provide substitute mechanisms. For one thing, community organisations could secure a critical mass of returnees, making individual vulnerability less of an issue. For another, refugee organisations could negotiate and help enforce agreements, working with local authorities and associations from other communities in an attempt to control violence. In particular, when these community organisations develop links with civil society groups across ethnic lines, it becomes much easier to manage and resolve tensions (Varshney 2001:363). Community organisations can help monitor and ‘police’ in-group members (Fearon & Laitin 1996, 715-35), while local cooperation and information-sharing within institutionalised intercommunal networks can reduce conflict and make in-group policing more credible (Varshney 2001:395).

That said, we should not assume diaspora cooperation is an easy task, even in small communities. Evaluating the role of the current Maronite parliamentary leader Mr. Hadjirussos in establishing bi-communal contacts, one of our respondents said the following:

“I feel he has done a wonderful job throughout the past few years, specifically putting a great deal of energy into safeguarding and supporting the maintenance of the Maronite villages. He has financed many projects; more recently he brought together a group of constitutional experts in order to support Maronite rights with regards to their language, religion and territoriality. Some people feel he has done more work with the village of
Kormakitis, however any progress for Kormakitis is a possible progress for all villages. He works with both the Turkish-Cypriot and Greek-Cypriots very efficiently, however, he has seen great opposition due to the work he has done with the Turkish-Cypriots, many are going as far as calling him a ‘traitor’.”

As in Drvar, diaspora members promoting cooperation have faced opposition from hardliners, even when sterile nationalist opposition to diaspora cooperation harms their own community’s vital interests.

**Incentives for Return and Economic Cooperation**

Several studies demonstrate incentives are powerful instruments in turning conflict into cooperation, an insight relevant in the study of return (Dorussen 2001). From the conventional rational choice theory perspective, calculations of potential benefits and costs of return should heavily influence the decision-making process of ordinary Bosnians and Cypriots. Factors in the perceived economic benefits of return include the value of the property, perception of economic opportunities, and concerns about the loss of refugee benefits, pensions, and health coverage due to existing regulations in the place of return (Opacic 2005:68; Nalepa 2007:23; ICG 2002:11, 31). It appears displaced persons with more resources are more likely to return (Holtzamn and Nezam 2004; Zetter 1994), even though the perceived costs of return are higher for potential returnees who have jobs and permanent accommodation in the new place of residence.

In Cyprus, diaspora leaders have found external aid to support the process of revitalising Kormakitis. According to their leader:
“We were able to gain a great amount of funding through the EU as well as the UNDP which has contributed to not only the maintenance of our villages but also in recognising our language and revitalising it. Undergoing basic renovations such as the electricity and water facilities of our village were key to beginning to create a liveable and safe space without placing any weight on either the Greek or Turkish-Cypriot communities.”

Bosnia has benefited from similar programs, arguably on a much larger scale. In addition, Bosnian returnees did not have to change jobs. Instead, they kept their employment and commuted daily across the internal federation boundaries (Belloni 2008), something common among the Maronites and quite likely to occur in the rest of Cyprus, given the island’s size. Paradoxically, in such cases, economic differentials among federal regions could encourage social integration, as people will aim simultaneously for opportunities across the federal border, such as better paid jobs and cheaper living.

We may assume the perception of the comparative economic opportunities in the place of origin and the current place of residence is another factor. Belloni, for instance, argues Bosniac DPs from rural eastern Bosnia came to appreciate the advantages of urban life in Sarajevo and since their displacement they have been less interested in return (2008:171-2). Similarly, one of our interviewees, a Cypriot Maronite living in England, argued that those members of the community living abroad, including herself, will not return to live permanently in their villages; instead, they may simply renovate a family house they have inherited. Overall it is anticipated that most Maronites will contribute to the renovation of their villages and their inherited houses, but will not move back.
Nationalist Ideology and Contact

Diaspora members who have been victims of ethnic cleansing and do not want to live with other ethnic groups are less likely to return than those able to accept multi-ethnicity. International Crisis Group studies claim that the belief that ‘we cannot live together after all that has happened’ is strongly related to rejection of return (for example ICG 2002; see also Petersen 2002). Presumably, displaced persons with very negative visions of others or the tendency to blame others for injustices are less likely to return. Alternatively, strongly nationalist individuals might be more likely to return if such return is perceived as a way to regain lost territory for their particular ethnic group. Social psychologists have also identified processes of reducing resentment and prejudice between territorially intermingled majority and minority groups, including supportive social norms, education, and common goals (Allport 1954; Brown and Hewstone 2005).

Perceptions of the ethnic ‘other’ heavily influence how victims of ethnic cleansing see their return. For instance, in an interview with the first author, former Cypriot President George Vasiliou argued the opening of the checkpoints in 2003 contributed to the failure of the peace process in the following year, as Greek Cypriots visiting the north lost their hitherto idealistic view of northern Cyprus. During these visits, potential returnees realised the differences separating them from Turkish Cypriots and resented the socio-economically marginalised Turkish settlers. To address this issue in the context of victims of ethnic cleansing, community diaspora organisations could facilitate the adaptation of a refugee community to a ‘new’ environment experienced among Maronites but to a lesser degree among the
Greek Cypriot displaced. Community representatives might negotiate reserved lands, including family houses, village squares, churches, and schools, as well as surrounding land designed to attract returnees and destined for their use. Kymlicka suggests an effective way to protect communities (particularly previously victimised communities) is to establish reserve territories where land cannot be alienated without the consent of the community as a whole (Kymlicka 1995:43).  

Interestingly, Maronite leaders have conceptualised return along these lines, arguing the creation of autonomous Maronite cantons will open the way for similar arrangements elsewhere, particularly in the Karpas Peninsula with its small population of enclaved Greek-Cypriots. In this way, a future settlement will create ‘pockets’ of cooperation as opposed to a clear-cut physical division between two ethnically homogenous sides.  

**Conclusion: Diasporas as Peace Agents?**  
This chapter has focused on the interplay between diaspora mobilisation and return in the aftermath of forced displacement. Both the counter-intuitive case studies of Maronites in Cyprus and Serbs in Dvar region focus on the conditions under which diaspora mobilisation in exile could contribute to cooperation. Firstly, the aim of these diasporas has been to support the right and peaceful attempt of their members to return home. Secondly, local authorities had, at the minimum, strong reservations and insisted on restricting these rights to consolidate their demographic dominance. The (partial) forced displacement reversal stories of Cypriot Maronites and Bosnian Serbs can be traced to the development of local and global networks of cooperation generated by diasporas in exile to advocate, support, and sustain return home even under prohibitive conditions.
Could such cases of successful diaspora engagement be replicated in other post-conflict societies? While some conditions appear unique and therefore hard to replicate – such as the massive presence of international agencies in a de facto protectorate (Bosnia) or the international involvement of Catholic countries to protect the fairly small Maronite community (Cyprus) – others might work elsewhere. Similar attempts at voluntary ‘difficult’ return have taken place among Maronite refugees in the village of Biram in Israel and among Assyrian and Kurdish displaced persons in Turkey. In the case of Biram, refugee associations appealed to the Israeli Supreme Court for the return of their village and lobbied the Pope to use his diplomatic weight on Israeli officials to implement the decision. Unlike their Cypriot counterparts, they have not yet managed to get Israeli government approval for their return (Hadid 2009) but won a legal battle in 2015 to connect their church to Israel’s electricity grid hoping that returnees might also benefit in re-establishing their residencies. In the case of Turkey, grassroots displaced persons’ associations from Bulgaria and Kurdish-populated regions have played a crucial role in assisting refugees and displaced persons respectively. Particularly in the case of Kurds, such associations have helped members find lawyers and take their cases to the European Court of Human Rights, making the court part of the vocabulary of displaced persons (Celik 2005: 986).

In this chapter, we have posited an additional and important mechanism to support diasporas as agents for positive change. If a post-conflict settlement enables diasporas to vote in local elections in the place of displacement (for instance by a remote voting mechanism), displaced persons might be able to peacefully regain a stake in local political institutions and, thus, be encouraged to return. Support for informal associations of neighbours could also be a cost-effective way to facilitate
community return, enhancing the sense of safety in numbers and helping to recreate the pre-displacement communal environment. Refugee and displaced persons’ associations in Bosnia and Cyprus have been extremely important in the coordination of mass returns, in the mobilisation of refugee block voting to influence local and international politics, and in the reduction of security threats by forging ties with moderates on the other side. Intercommunal trust and social capital could be crucial themes in discussions of return in displacement and diaspora studies more generally, making this chapter’s theoretical conclusions relevant beyond Bosnia and Cyprus.

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The Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus was self-proclaimed in 1983; it is recognised only by Turkey, in violation of Security Council Resolution 541, November 18, 1983. For alternative legal interpretations to the status of TRNC see Necatigil (1983); Loucaides (1995); Chrysostomides (2000); Yesilada & Sozen (2002).


3 In addition to Maronites, there are two other constitutionally recognised minorities, Armenians and Latins (non-Maronite Catholics are primarily descendants of Venetians). There are also Roma, particularly among Turkish Cypriots, as well as a growing number of immigrant groups in the south and post-1974 Turkish settlers in the north. Following 1974, the Turkish government encouraged tens of thousands of mainland Turks to settle in Cyprus. For precise figures, see Loizides & Antoniades (2009).

4 The SDS, the main Bosnia Serb ultra-nationalist party, strongly resisted the Serbian refugees’ desire to return to Drvar, as it hoped to use these people to settle the parts of Republika Srpska from which non-Serbs were cleansed (ICG 1998a:iii)

5 More specifically, SDS (Serbian nationalists) and HDZ (Croat nationalists) focused on consolidation of control over the territories their armies had captured and ethnically cleansed, trying to ‘right people’ the territories under their control by permanently settling ‘their own’ displaced people and preventing the ethnic others from returning. The Bosnian Muslim counterpart, SDA was formally committed to the returns, but in practice, it promoted Bosniac returns to the territories ‘lost’ during the war, while discouraging the return of Croats and Serbs into Bosniac-controlled areas (ICG 1999:16)

6 A particularly nice touch was making sure that the roads to villages with Serb returnees were not cleared of snow in the winter (ICG 1999:14).

7 DP associations played a key role in the return process elsewhere in the country. For example, the Bosniac DP association facilitated return to Zvornik (Dahlman and Toal 2005:350) and Prijedor (Belloni 2001, 2006, 2008:163,181).

8 For the original text of the Dayton Accords see http://peacemaker.un.org/sites(peacemaker.un.org/files/BA_951121_DaytonAgreement.pdf


10 Also son of veteran Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denktash.

11 Observed by first author during visits to Kormakitis in December 2004 and July 2007; see also Zaman (2005).

12 First author’s field-research notes.
Most Maronite residence of Kotsiatis come from Ayia Marina; the second largest Maronite village, now a military camp. Although Asomatos and Karpasha all also military camps, due to the fact that Ayia Marina is heavily armed, and as noted in the text refugees cannot visit or even enter the village for any purpose making it inaccessible.

For a discussion of the history and politics of settler presence in Cyprus in a comparative perspective see Haklai and Loizides (2015).

Studies (such as Belloni 2008: 170) of Srebernica women show that the mass murder of male community members exacerbates a feeling of vulnerability among surviving female family members.

Returns in Bosnia indicate that the easiest returns are to ethnically homogenous villages into which no settlers were brought after the cleansing of original inhabitants (ICG 1999: 8).

'There seems to be a general rule that, if nobody in the family or neighborhood died of violence during the war, then returnees are accepted back more easily than if a direct loss was suffered’ (ICG 1999:7-8).

According to ICG, this is how the conservative Bosniac SDA party perceives Bosniac returns to Serb-dominated Republika Srpska (ICG 1999:16).

Yet reserves according to critics often fail to resolve major problems or satisfy the needs of Aboriginal communities in North America. Social psychologists are divided on this issue, with those favouring inter-group contact pointing to the benefits of some form of integration at the business, social, or residential level (Wagner et al. 2006).