Di(a)glossia and Political Ideology in Grecophone Cyprus
Moribundity Resistance, Diglossic Nostalgia, and a Sociolinguistic 'Buffer Zone'

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Abstract   Cyprus holds a storied past of self-determination – a hallmark of endangerment – serving as a backdrop for the trajectory of Cypriot Greek. In Cyprus, waning minority varieties are juxtaposed with Standard Greek, as is the native majority lect, Cypriot Greek. The relationship of Cypriot to Standard is often seen as diglossic; it is attenuated, toward diaglossia, characterized by dialect moribundity; it is further complicated by socio-politically ideological factors, with Standard Greek (H) indexing Cypriot Hellenism (vs. Cypriotism, 'true' local Cypriot nationalism), resulting in a tension between dialect revitalization and diglossic maintenance.

Keywords   Diaglossia. Diglossic shift. Revitalization. Ideology. Prestige. Moribundity.

Summary   1 Introduction and Background: Cypriot Greek Diglossia. – 2 Excursus on the Pancypriot Koiné. – 2.1 Pancypriot Koiné Features. – 2.2 Hybridities. – 3 Diglossic Prestige. – 4 Ideologies & Diglossic Shift. – 5 Divided Cyprus With Views Divided: A Diglossic Nostalgia. – 6 Forward Movement: Zeitgeist, Ideologies, and Revitalization. – 7 Epilogue: What about Diglossia?

1 Introduction and Background: Cypriot Greek Diglossia

> The first [...] and truly natural boundaries of states
> are...their internal boundaries. Those who speak the
> same language [:variety] are joined [...] by [...] invis-
> ible bonds...they belong together and are [...] an in-
> separable whole.
>
> (Fichte, *Addresses to the German Nation*, 1806)

The Mediterranean island of Cyprus comprises the Republic of Cy-
prus (south) and the internationally unrecognized Turkish Republic
of Cyprus (north), divided by the UN-patrolled 'Green Line'/Buffer
Zone. The two main populations, grecophone Cypriots (south) and
turkophone Cypriots (north), speak Cypriot Greek (L) and Cypriot
Turkish (L), respectively; both maintain their respective H varie-
ties, Standard Modern Greek (SMG) and Standard Turkish (ST). This
chapter focuses on the (socio)linguistic situation in the Republic of
Cyprus, on 'di(a)glossia' between Cypriot Greek (CG) and SMG, and
on the relevance of political ideology for lectal choice and diglossia
maintenance (or breakdown) there.

Research on Cyprus linguistics is highly varied, and the diglossia
question has been disputed for some time. Having said this, the schol-
arship shows significant agreement about the details of the linguis-
tic situation itself (e.g., under what conditions speakers use dialect or
Standard), and less consensus about identification (diglossia vs. con-
tinuum, and the nature of diglossia itself; see Hudson 2002, 29 for
generalizations across diglossia scholarship). While some authors[1] de-
scribe Cyprus as diglossic, other research questions this status, based
on an ostensible standard-dialect continuum,[2] as opposed to discrete
varieties characteristic of diglossic societies (expounded upon in Kar-
yolemou (2006) and Karyolemou, Pavlou (2001, *inter alia*). Cyprus was
further described in Rowe, Grohmann (2013; 2014) as "attenuated di-
glossia", "medial diglossia", and "impending diaglossia".[3] Subsequent-
ly, Pappas (2016) reidentified the situation as a (non-diglossic) contin-
uum. Without taking on the classification battle more than necessary,
suffice it to say that no scholarship refutes an ongoing shift,[4] and this
shift will be captured here in terms of diglossia resolution.

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1 E.g., Voniati, Armostis, Tafiadis 2023; Arvaniti 2006; 2010; Pappas 2009; Tsiplakou
2003, *inter alia*.

2 However, Schiffmann (1997, 210-11) notes: "though linguistic cultures think of di-
glossia as either-or, it is often a gradient cline". See Terkourafi 2007, 89, n. 39. See al-
so Rowe, Grohmann 2013 for review.

3 'Dilalia' is synonymous: "a situation, resembling but not identical to [...] (Fergusoni-
an) diglossia [...] [where] (1) the linguistic distance between dialects [and]...standard is
large, [and] (2) both [...] are used in everyday conversation [and] overlap in certain do-
mains, but [with] clear functional differentiation" (Berruto 1989, 7).

4 Pavlou (2004) noted a change already thirty years in the making.

Accordingly, the aim of this chapter is to establish a path for diglossic resolution – toward a "standard-with-dialects/social dialectia" continuum (via diaglossia; Auer 2005; Bellman 1998) – based in part on political ideology. The CG koiné has a role to play in the question: As the intermediate acrolect, it could potentially unseat SMG as H in Cyprus, effecting total diglossic breakdown.

However, the persistence of diglossia is seen in (at least) the following: (a) Koiné innovations[5] continue, with structural differences between SMG and even the koiné remaining salient (Arvaniti 2006, Tsiplakou et al. 2019); (b) koiné robusticity increases (Tsiplakou, Armostis, Evripidou 2016); (c) like SMG and CG generally, the koiné bears co-overt prestige (Rowe, Grohmann 2013; 2014; cf. Auer 2005, 23); (d) the koiné (like SMG, mesolect, and basilect) essentially occupies its own functional niche, even as domain allocations shift; this is the essence of diglossia (Schiffman 1997, 206; Watts 1999, 91).

Socio-politically ideological factors also indicate a diglossic split: (a) Political ideological lines dividing CG and SMG persist (Ioannidou 2012), with SMG indexing Greek-Cypriot nationalism/Cypriot Hellenism (vs. Cypriotism/'true' local Cypriot nationalism) and ethnicity (in the Greek sense of *ethnos*), reflecting a certain Greek 'ethno-dialectology'; and (b) institutional linguistic traditions are officially retained and promoted (Ioannidou 2012), reflecting 'diglossic nostalgia'.

The history of the political circumstances is burned into the collective consciousness as part of Cypriot identity as nation and *ethnos* (see Papadakis 1998, 160). Combined with koiné effects and co-overt prestige, politically conservative socio-political factors have the effect – and indeed the tacit goal – of diglossic maintenance. On the other hand, leveling, attenuations, koiné hybridities and innovations, and dialect promotion within progressive socio-political ideologies (e.g., Cypriotism), could represent harbingers of dialect retreat (see Rowe 2009), constituting a counterforce. At present, anyway, diglossic maintenance persists, and sufficient defenses against full di(a)glossic breakdown remain.

2 Excursus on the Pancypriot Koiné

When an irredentism-motivated right-wing Greek nationalist coup staged in newly-independent Cyprus in 1974 overthrew Archbishop Makarios, and Turkey responded by invading, the resultant war culminated in the country's division, as grecophone Cypriots were driven south by the armies, with turkophone Cypriots forced north. This disrupted social networks and created new ones, intensifying

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5 Terkourafi 2005; Pappas 2009; 2016; Kappler, Tsiplakou 2018, *inter alia*.

contact among grecophone Cypriots from different areas of the island. The increased contact among speakers of various subdialects necessitated linguistic accommodation and abandonment of local features for mutual intelligibility (Terkourafi 2005; Tsiplakou, Armostis, Evripidou 2016; Pappas 2015). This, along with (pre-invasion) social mobility, urbanization, and literacy spread, drove extensive dialect leveling (homogenization), particularly among those born after 1974 (Karyolemou, Pavlou 2001, 111; Kolitsis 1988). Thus, the Cyprus geopolitical situation hastened a koinéization process already present (Terkourafi 2005),[6] and the CG koiné has been making strides since (Hadjioannou, Tsiplakou, Kappler 2011; Rowe, Grohmann 2013; Fotiou, Grohmann 2022).

Contact-induced leveling has largely involved 'selection' of (geographically unbounded) pancypriot features, leading to moribundity – the loss of many of the most basilectal features (Auer 2005) – and feeding the koiné's development (Terkourafi 2005; Tsiplakou et al. 2006; 2015).[7] The koiné – an intermediate, "compromise" variety (Siegel 1985) – is systematically different from SMG (Arvaniti 2006, 14): It has become a recognizable acrolectal variety, bearing almost Standard-like status.[8] Among locals, it is known as 'the mixed one', 'the mix', and 'Cypriot mix'. Thus, time has brought a high degree of metalinguistic awareness about the koiné, with speakers referring to it by name, and knowing when to use it.[9] This is more so now, as it develops its own innovations, feeding its growing stability,[10] and what appears to be incipient fossilization (or anyway, conventionalization).[11] The ultimate effect parallels "glocalization" (Robertson 1994; see Røyneland 2009, 8), whereby the regional supersedes the local, and intermediate forms represent an amalgamation of identities.

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[6] Newton (1983) identified "town speech" register, which could have been a koiné (cf. Terkourafi 2005). Anyway, diglossia is arguably inherently register-oriented (see Ure 1982, 16) and thus not geographically-aligned (Ferguson 1991, 222, in Hudson 2002, 2), so the description applies regardless of precise diglossic status. At any rate, both geographical and register variation obtain (Terkourafi 2007, 81; Fotiou, Grohmann 2022; see Trudgill 1983, 188), though register variation is more prominent than previously (Kolitsis 1988).

[7] "[Cypriot] koineization involves…*partial* convergence to the standard…[and] the maintenance and spread of specific dialect features, depending on whether these are construed as unmarked or 'pancypriot'" (Kappler, Tsiplakou 2018, 75; see Tuten 2007, 186).

[8] Terkourafi 2005; Tsiplakou, Ioannidou 2012, 183; Pappas 2015, 175; cf. Arvaniti 2006.

[9] This is an interesting development over the past few years, given Arvaniti's (2006, 16) observation of the status of the koiné (which she had the prescience to term Cypriot Standard Greek) as it stood in 2006: "[T]he most striking characteristic…[is]…that its users are largely unaware that it exists".

[10] Arvaniti 2006; 2010; Kappler, Tsiplakou 2018; Tsiplakou 2006; 2016, *inter alia*.

[11] See Rowe (2009) for the interconnectedness of resilience, salience, fossilization, and revitalization in a British dialect in the face of moribundity.

2.1 Pancypriot Koiné Features

Among koiné features, Tsiplakou and Armostis (2020) discuss socio-stylistic reallocation (CG [j:] vs. SMG [ʎ:], Pappas 2015); focus clefting; and innovative perfect tenses. Tsiplakou et al. (2016) discuss hybridities (Terkourafi 2005) which, as the researchers indicate, do not seem like classic code-mixing (of the type expected in standards-with-dialects; Rowe, Grohmann 2013). I show two of these to elucidate stability in the koiné and implications for diglossic shift.

The innovative CG koiné present perfect (Melissaropoulou et al. 2013) expresses simple past (aorist) semantics (Tsiplakou et al. 2019, 232):

(1) ˈexo   afipiretisi   ton   ˈav ɣ usto
     have.1s   retire. ppl.perf   in   August
     "I have retired (:retired) last August." (Melissaropoulou et al. 2013, 163)

The temporal adverbial renders the construction ungrammatical in SMG, but it is completely grammatical in the koiné. Extremely elucidating is the metalinguistic comment by a participant:

> I [...] use the Present Perfect, mainly when talking to Cypriots, because some Cypriot Past Tense forms are too heavy and I don't like to use them, for example, *epiamen* 'we went'. The Modern Greek Past Tense form *piɣame* is *kapos* 'pretentious' and I think it sounds too Greek to Cypriot ears. So the Present Perfect is the best compromise [...] for me. (Melissaropoulou et al. 2013, 169-70, n. 8)

This type of interdialectism is typical of koinés (Tuten 2006-07, 187). It is, uncoincidentally, characteristic of diaglossias.[12]

2.2 Hybridities

A hybridity feature affecting all grammatical levels is an integral part of the koiné (Terkourafi 2005; Tsiplakou et al. 2016; Grohmann et al. 2020). The following is from Tsiplakou et al. (2016, 11):

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[12]   Auer (2005, 27-8) writes: "The intermediate forms often...enable[e]...users to act out...an identity which could not be symbolised through... [basilects], which may have rural, backwardish or non-educated connotations) nor through...standard (which may smack of formality and unnaturalness and/or be unable to express regional affiliation)".

(2)

'ksero	to	'tuto'	'ksero	to
know.1S	it.CL.ACC	this.ACC	know.1S	it.CL.ACC
to	eʃi	maθi'tis	mu	
it.CL.ACC	have.PRES.3S	student.NOM.S	my.GEN.S	

'I know it, this one, I know it! A student of mine has it.'

The first sentence contains Cypriot clitic-second and CG lexis *tuto* (<*touto*>) 'this'; the second uses SMG clitic-first placement plus CG phonology, seen in the pronunciation *eʃi* 'have'. The authors discuss this as bricolage (Eckert 2008); Grohmann et al. (2020) regard this type as (relatively) free variation. Either way, the koiné abounds in such hybridities. The question is whether this is a pattern that is becoming fixed in the koiné (which is, after all, termed 'Cypriot *mix*' by speakers) – that is, whether it represents the paradox of stable entropy, vs. dynamic entropy, "chaos", and erosion in the system (cf. Rowe, Grohmann 2013), toward diglossic breakdown (suggested generally by Pappas 2015; similarly, Auer 2005, 22-3). At any rate, given the non-negotiability of the hybridity (Grohmann et al. 2020; Terkourafi 2005, 329-30), the strong association of certain features with the koiné, and the coherence found there (see Tsiplakou, Armostis, Evripidou 2016), the koiné grammar does on its face appear to be crystalizing, which should afford it additional resilience. Either this development can be regarded as a stabilizing force, or else as a harbinger of full-scale (basi- and mesolectal) retreat. Further, if the koiné emerged from a political situation (Terkourafi 2005), its persistence and growth, too, depend on political context. It is a valid question since, as Terkourafi (2005, 335) noted, "[this] wealth of new productive mechanisms and novel constructions is not what one expects of a retreating variety".[13] Political ideology (including, in the case of Cyprus, ideology of dialect) may be the final arbiter, as will be discussed.

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[13] See discussion in Pappas (2009; 2015); see Kappler, Tsiplakou 2018 on TC koiné productivity.

3   Diglossic Prestige

Linguistic prestige – an important part of the classification question in the Cyprus situation, and in diglossia generally – is in need of scrutiny.[14] It is a sticky wicket that Rowe and Grohmann (2013; 2014) attempted to address with its relevance to diglossic shift in Cyprus, because the (1959) Fergusonian 'prestige' setting apart the H[igh] from the L[ow] variety was not designed to address the affective social value the dialect in diglossia has with respect to Standard. However, probably due to the canonical terminology, most research referring to prestige in diglossia focuses more on the way people comment on L, and less on how it functions in society. Either way, the prestigious/non-prestigious monikers themselves are less problematic than resultant claims that Cypriot is generally stigmatized.[15] Prestige, as discussed in Auer (2005) and argued by Rowe and Grohmann (2013, 126-7), is a relative notion:

> In attenuated forms of diglossia, both varieties...are structurally and attitudinally (ethno-dialectologically) kept apart, and can usually be identified by speakers and linguists; *they have their own prestige, one attached to formal, official language* [...] *the other to regional identity*. (Auer 2005, 23; emphasis added)

Studler (2017, 51 ff.) likewise distinguishes between the "cold prestige" of H (Standard German) in Switzerland versus the (presumably 'warm') prestige automatically assigned to the Swiss German dialect as reflective of regional identity and of the (putative) diglossia there. Importantly, one of her informants points out, as do scholars of Swiss diglossia (see Hudson 2002, 3), that the dialect crosses class lines: "Dialekt ist Alltags- und Umgangssprache aller Schichten"(Dialect is the everyday and colloquial language for all social classes) (Studler 2017, 53).

Due to the terminological lacuna, Rowe and Grohmann (2013; see also 2014) introduced the term "co-overt prestige" ('equally overt prestige') to apply to both H and L. This unifying notion captures the equal prestige status that Auer (2005) references, particularly as applied to the prestige relations of dialect and Standard in (putatively)

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14   See Kyriakou 2016. Among other hypotheses, she suggests that "rural" connotations of /ʃ/ and /dʒ/ occur because these sounds are absent in SMG. Far from begging the question, she implies an important distinction: Greece is considered more metropolitan (Athens, population 3.1 million) than Cyprus (Nicosia, 200,000; World Population Review https://worldpopulationreview.com/). Moreover, by population, Greece is 20% rural vs. Cyprus, 33% rural (The World Bank, https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.RUR.TOTL.ZS).

15   Kyriakou (2016, 57 ff) rightly cautions that attitude studies have many factors to consider when interpreting participants' stigma-reflecting responses.

diglossic situations, such as Cyprus.[16] Accordingly, it could also be termed "diglossic prestige" (cf. Grohmann et al. 2017, 646).[17] Further, co-overt prestige is useful in discussing the koiné and its place in diglossic shift. Simultaneously, it helps address issues of protection of Cypriot Greek in general from endangerment, toward possible near-moribundity reversal.[18]

Dialect in Cyprus is not stigmatized in the usual sense of the word (Rowe, Grohmann 2013; also Karyolemou 2000). In fact, it is "highly appreciated" – as in Switzerland and Norway (Auer 2005, 15) – when non-natives acquire and use it. While L is not formally taught in endoglossic societies, Pavlou and Christodolou report that:

> Cypriots…mostly advis[e] foreign learners to use [Cypriot Dialect]. If the interlocutors believe…communication is more effective when using [dialect] rather than SMG, then [dialect] is preferred… though SMG is more prestigious – after all, communication is the ultimate goal of learning a foreign language. (2001, 85)

Certainly, the intermediate form – the koiné – is far from stigmatized (see Pavlou, Christodolou 2001, 76; cf. Auer 2005 on prestige types).[19] In an examination of language use in media – a typical H domain – Pavlou (2004; see also Arvaniti 2006, 15) identified acrolectal Cypriot (koiné) in the popular press in situations when SMG would seem too formal and unfriendly. Even by casual observation, CG has been gaining much ground on SMG in oral media (Rowe, Grohmann 2013, 130; Pavlou 2004), usually in the form of the koiné, as its ready occurrence in somewhat lighter fare (yet not limited to dialect humor) shows. Indeed, Arvaniti (2002, in Terkourafi 2007, 81) locates acrolect in both formal and semi-formal oral domains such as court and public speeches, and Ayiomamitou, Yiakoumetti (2017, 2-3) note its appearance in university lectures. Pavlou (2004) identifies dialect use in newspaper quotations, and the author of this chapter observes (non-basilectal) written Cypriot Greek in museum labels quoting local

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16   Kyriakou (2016, 61) does the same work, arguing for CG's overt prestige for lack of comparison to a [significant] community of SMG speakers (cf. Terkourafi 2007, 80-1). See Rowe, Grohmann 2013, 132.

17   Rowe, Grohmann 2014 used prestige as one of several tests for diglossia.

18   Rowe and Grohmann (2013, 137) argue that co-overt prestige itself may help protect against 'full' dedialectization, in the event that that process, via continued advergence to SMG by the koiné (Tsiplakou, Armostis, Evripidou 2016, 12), would otherwise be imminent.

19   A contrasting view is found in Pavlou (2004), who shows how ambivalent the stigma discussion is for Cyprus.

narratives.[20] Moreover, CG koiné hybridity has a particular sociolinguistic value that is well captured by the concept of co-overt prestige. This factor also partly explains why certain variants are adopted into the koiné and others not.[21]

4 Ideologies and Diglossic Shift

About twenty years ago, Pavlou (2004, 116) observed that "the Greek Cypriot community […] for various reasons, *including ideological ones*, [does] not adopt more acrolectal levels of speech" (emphasis added). Now, ideology has shifted toward acceptance of the acrolectal koiné as a third variety.[22] Later, Pappas (2009, 313) noted that "[the koiné] is maturing into a robust vernacular", projecting that it "may yet become a standard, given the right *political* circumstances" (emphasis added). Although Pappas does not elaborate on what those political circumstances might be, it is proposed here that the "predominant drift of social forces" (Fishman 1967, 36) – in this case, an increase in Cypriotism (against Greek-Cypriot/Cypriot Hellenism) – would represent the necessary force for the koiné to step into the space occupied by Standard Greek.[23] As indicated, the intermediate variety has begun to encroach on some canonical H domains, bearing a wealth of Cypriot features, including koiné innovations, constituting evidence of diglossic shift.[24]

But whence the instability in the Cyprus diglossic setting, given that diglossias endure for centuries? The answer, again, may lie – at least partly – in political ideology: If it is true that diglossias are more stable "[where] linguistic differences are not aggravated by political or religious differences" (Coulmas 1987, 118; in Hudson 2002, 28), then it is certainly expected that Cyprus, with its past

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20 Observed in *Hambis – from Painting to Printmaking, 1970-82*; exhibition at the Hambis Municipal Museum of Printmaking, Nicosia, Cyprus 2021-6-3/2023-5-1.

21 For discussion of the 'selection' of variants for the koiné, including ideological bases, see Terkourafi (2005) and Tsiplakou and Armostis (2020). On the ideology of dialect relating to variant selection, see Pappas 2015 and Tsiplakou and Armostis 2020; also Trudgill (1986). In short, these variants are usually "sufficiently Cypriot" to contrast with SMG (Pappas 2015), but also sufficiently regional (vs. local), toward pan-Cypriot identity (Tsiplakou, Armostis 2020).

22 Leivada and Grohmann (2017) observe a functionally discrete tripartite split in SMG, CG, and CSG (koiné) use within the classroom.

23 Terkourafi (2007) notes that without codification, full CG standardization is unlikely. Codification depends on an official action developing a written form, which probably requires an extremely progressive liberal government intervention.

24 Fishman (1967, 36) notes: "Without separate though complementary norms and values to establish and maintain functional separatism […], that language or variety […] associated with the predominant drift of social forces tends to displace the other(s)".

and ongoing differences of these types, would host an unstable diglossia. These differences are reflected, among other ways, in the concept of 'othering'.[25]

'Othering' is "the perception [...] of a [...] group [...] as fundamentally alien from another, frequently more powerful, group".[26] It is not surprising to find othering in diglossic scenarios, since these involve a dichotomy that usually references a large, external political force – e.g., with L vis à vis H in these putatively diglossic settings:

- Swiss Schwyzertüütsch (L) vs. exogenous H (*Schriftdeutsch* 'writing German', standard German from Germany)
- Norwegian dialects (L) and *nynorsk* (especially in northern, western, and central Norway) vs. exogenous H (Dano-Norwegian *dansk-norsk* /*bokmål*/ dano-norwegian/'book language' based on Danish from Denmark)
- Cypriot Greek (L) in Cyprus vs. exogenous H (*kalamaristika* 'pen-pusherese', SMG/*demotiki* from Greece)

These societies' rather oppositional stance toward the historical dominance of their former rulers (Germany, Denmark, and Greece) enhances the subjective value of the dialect (also seen in the Romantic period in Switzerland and Norway; Watts 1999, 75; Røyneland 2009, 13-14, respectively), with dialect serving as a "badge" of ethnic identity (Watts 1999, 75). Accordingly, there are "mythical claims" (Watts 1999) by (bilectal) speakers of being unable to pronounce or understand Standard (for Cyprus, Tsiplakou, Armostis 2020; for Switzerland, Watts 1999), or at least, overt objections to using H in oral domains (in Norway). Unsurprisingly, all three societies have experienced diglossic shift over the past several years, toward the acrolect assuming many H domains, partly for attitudinal reasons.

5 Divided Cyprus With Views Divided: A Diglossic Nostalgia

There are additional complications in Cyprus, where Greece is regarded as far more than a 'former ruler'. These ultimately affect the nature of diglossic shift.

Typically, left-wing affiliates and entities in Cyprus see 'us' as including Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots (Papadakis 1998), i.e., as 'one Cyprus'. As proponents of Cypriotism ('true' Cyprus nationalism, since 1974; Terkourafi 2007), they usually view Cyprus as a

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25 See Ioannidou (2004) for an othering study involving 10- and 11-year-olds in Cyprus.

26 "Othering, n.". OED Online. March 2023. Oxford University Press.

community where being Cypriot, and of a cross-border pan-Cyprian unification, is foregrounded, with the link to Greece seen as an element of the past. Further, many (usually left-wing) Cypriots blame Greece – the 'other' in this scenario – for the coup which ultimately led to war and to the current "Cyprus Problem" (Papadakis 1998).

Commonly, right-wing affiliates and entities, on the other hand, understand 'us' as 'we Greeks' – Greek Cypriots and Hellenic Greeks, in a panhellenic unity – juxtaposed with Turkish Cypriots, Turkish settlers in Cyprus, and Turks in Turkey (Papadakis 1998).[27] As proponents of Greek-Cypriot nationalism/Cypriot Hellenism – despite having relinquished hope of a literal *enosis* with Greece – they generally maintain an ideological union with the 'motherland',[28] heightened as a product of British colonialism (see Mavratsas 1999, *inter alia*), and further intensified by the war and the ethnic, political, and religious division on the island.[29] Accordingly, the nostalgic connection to the 'motherland' Greece held by many right-leaning individuals and organizations – especially by (conservative) institutions (church, government, education) – provides a close, powerful ethno-ideological link to the H of the H-loaning state. By contrast, Switzerland and Norway have no similar attachment. 'Othering' is played out particularly strongly in the Cyprus right-wing arena, increasing the value of H as more than a useful and practical written and formal oral language: Instead, it reflects a 'diglossic nostalgia', with H representing the 'Greekness' of (Orthodox) Cypriots in the south, versus the 'Turkishness' of (Muslim) Turkish Cypriots (and Turkish settlers) in the occupied north. Thus, it is no surprise that traditionally more conservative institutions embrace this 'diglossic nostalgia', where a strict split between H and L domains is highly valued and faithfully

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[27]   The ideological dimension in the division is overtly reflected on the government's Higher Education: Cyprus Ministry of Education, Sport & Youth page: under "Studies in Cyprus", a selection under "Illegal Turkish Cypriot – 'Universities'", contains a 115-word paragraph in which the following terms are placed in 'scare quotes': 'universities', 'institutions', 'qualifications', and 'Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus' ('TRNC'), with lengthy commentary on the Cyprus Problem. https://www.highereducation.ac.cy/index.php/en/spoudes-cyprus/paranoma-tk-uni.

[28]   Meier (2001, 474) notes that: "[t]he Cypriot communities look to Greece and Turkey for ethnic identification, belonging, and protection," a continuation of the "loyalties to the perceived motherland...at the root of the enosis and partition movements" (474).

[29]   "[The] antagonistic loyalties to Greece and Turkey transplanted the...Greek-Turkish battles to...Cyprus" – an antagonism stoked by Britain to prevent unified anti-colonial action (Meier 2001, 458). This is a primary source of the strong right-wing affiliation with all things Greece (see Hadjioannou, Tsiplakou, Kappler 2011). Meier notes elsewhere that "cross-boundary ethnic ties, preserved through common language, religion, and education [...] created [this] ethnic-based animosity, dividing the communities...and preventing peace" (2001, 476).

observed and promoted.[30] The active, official institutional promotion of H in formal domains is a direct and continuing result of the Cyprus political context (Ioannidou 2012), with strength added to the ideology by the fact that "the Cypriot state is built on the foundation of the ethnarchic church" (Alecou 2014).[31]

Ultimately, hopes of the official promotion of the local variety (which would afford it higher status) were dashed when church and government strongly resisted the strategic contrastive use of Cypriot Greek recommended by proponents of education reform in 2010 (Ioannidou 2012). At that point, it became clear that a powerful ideological force for diglossic maintenance dominated, and in the official government and official church domains, diglossia remains largely unchallengeable by progressive or innovative influences.[32] The ideological link between Cyprus and Greece is thus tightly bound with ethnic, cultural, and religious (Christian/Muslim) opposition. As such, it provides a 'sociolinguistic buffer' against total diglossic resolution, as long as palpable vestiges of the ethno-cultural and historical bond with the perceived 'motherland' persist.

6 Forward Movement: Zeitgeist, Ideologies, and Revitalization

Language and variety choice symbolize the Cyprus conflict as well as – and probably better than – any other cultural artifact does.[33] Having said this, there is a Zeitgeist, in which the time is 'ripe' for certain movements and ideologies to emerge (Watts 1999, 73). Cypriotism – particularly in its current form (see Mavratsas 1999, *inter alia*, for history) –, is one such movement (Meier 2001, 476). Cross-border antagonisms have waned and from a previous tendency toward Greek-Cypriot nationalism/Cypriot Hellenism in a conservative

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30 In addition to the Orthodox/Muslim juxtaposition, the Church has a strong history as a stabilizing force of diglossia, seen in the residual diglossia of Greece (with *katherevousa* as H in the Church) and elsewhere.

31 As far back as the late sixteenth century, the Orthodox Church in Cyprus was the "unchallenged spokesman" for not only religious, but also social, political, and educational matters concerning Greek Cypriots (Coufoudakis 1976, 31).

32 Technically, contrastive education (Siegel 1999) results in codes' strict separation in learners' mental representations, so the reformers' position should, in fact, have been embraced by the institutional powers if diglossia maintenance was the desired outcome. On the political-ideological front, however, the elevation of L could take another direction, toward an additional 'domain gain' for L, a fear obviously in the forefront of that discussion.

33 See, e.g., Karyolemou 2000.

political climate, the tide is slowly turning (Meier 2001, 476).[34] Since 2003, border crossing between the two polities has been possible at checkpoints and, despite the failure of the Annan reunification plan (2004) to be accepted, populist activities promoting unification and cross-border collaboration have sprung up and taken shape, particularly in the divided capital Nicosia.[35] These include the Occupy the Buffer Zone movement (2011), advancing the cause of unification; globally and locally supported activities such as the Peace Players youth league (est. 2006; housed in the Buffer Zone); and ongoing professional bicommunal activities of the intelligentsia, particularly in venues such as the (municipal) Peace Hall (near the Ledras Street Buffer Zone) and the Home for Cooperation (est. 2011 in the Ledra Palace Buffer Zone). These are also reflected in cultural phenomena, such as the Buffer Fringe Festival, and in the music of the bicommunal collaborative band The Island Seeds.[36] These are all emblematic of the Cypriotism Zeitgeist that continues to gain strength.[37] By way of visual example, as late as 2009, Greek flags were ubiquitous in Cyprus, flown at government buildings and other establishments, and at private homes of many Cypriots (Rowe, Grohmann 2013).[38] But even by 2012, the decreased display of the Greek flag alongside the increased display of the flag of Cyprus had become palpable to the keen observer.[39]

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34 "[The] psychological distanc[ing] from Greece and Turkey [...] led to the rise of Cypriotism [...] foreground[ing] [Cypriot] citizenship [...] over the ethnic demands of the [...] motherland[s]" (Meier 2001, 476).

35 See Themistocleous 2021 for an ethnographic monitoring study detailing the ideology of buffer space activity.

36 A subcultural reflex of this Zeitgeist is likely found in the anti-establishment-oriented reggae and (CG) dialect hip-hop scenes in Cyprus, which indirectly reference the Cyprus Problem. Other subcultural reflexes include outward reverence for exterritorial counterculture rebellions and anti-oppression revolutionary icons.

37 As Meier (2001, 469-70) noted, "a new generation of Greek and Turkish Cypriots now control their respective communities...The wrongs of past generations can be forgiven, placing...people...in a position to embrace peace". He predicts that "without the nationalist attitudes of their motherlands, the...communities may see each other, not as enemies, but as fellow citizens" (476). Although Meier wrote these words as an optimistic projection of political unification, it certainly captures the popular Zeitgeist, even if the political reality of the two polities remains unchanged.

38 This trend is surely in part a response to the former British colonial-era prohibition of flying Greek flags or openly celebrating Greek national holidays in Cyprus. (An additional motivation may be that the northern polity's flag – a mirror image design of Turkey's flag, and sometimes flown alongside it – is visible at border checkpoints; the painted 'Flag Mountain' is visible even further, throughout a large part of Nicosia and surrounding countryside, serving for many Greek Cypriots as a constant reminder of the conflict).

39 Papadakis (1998) discusses the display of national symbols (especially flags) of both Greece and Cyprus on the island, commenting on the pre- and post-1974 reality: "[Right-wing] supporters exclusively use the Greek flag, while [left-wing] supporters

Further connected with nationalist Zeitgeist are often ideologies of dialect – "a community's shared beliefs about…its language varieties" – whereby the "symbolic value" of dialect is greater than […] the Standard and overtly promoted (Watts 1999, 68-9). Populist movements are often bound up with language (particularly with ideology of dialect/vernacular; see Hudson 2002). It was in this atmosphere that Norwegian *Nynorsk* – a Standard based on a dialect amalgamation – was created (Røyneland 2009, 14).[40] In Norway and Switzerland (and elsewhere in Germanic-speaking Europe), these Romantic-era nationalism-oriented movements were revived in the "ideologically fostered" (Bellmann 1998, 33) dialect renaissance of the 'radical' 1960s-1970s (Vikør 2001; Røyneland 2009 for Norway). There, the dialect, among other folk culture elements, was valued and foregrounded, and the Standard and its prescriptivism were associated with exterritorial nationalism (Watts 2009) and the dominant political culture. Such movements often emerge in post-war scenarios, when dialects become "infused with resistance value" against political invaders (Watts 1999) and so, come to symbolize retention of cultural heritage.[41]

The fact that largely grecophone Cyprus became the battlefield for an endoglossic (Greece) and exoglossic (Turkey) country simultaneously surely infuse the dialect with additional resistance value against two different Standards and the war they continue to symbolize. Like Nynorsk for Norwegians, the Cypriot koiné provides a self-deterministic edge for Cypriots to establish their own – at least, *de facto* – Standard, independent of exterritorial political linkages.[42] This resistance is further expressed by other linguistic means. Floros (2014), for one, uncovers neologistic translations in some formal domains, whereby a unique Cypriot identity is constructed. Floros suggests that this translation practice may reflect an "effort to create a sense of belonging to a cultural formation…distinct from Greece, thus aiming at state identity (covert tendency), despite the (overt) statutory affirmation of Hellenocentrism…aimed at ethnic identity" (423).

In the context of self-deterministic tendencies, hyperdialectism[43] – if it does not become a casualty of age-grading – could

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[…] use the Cypriot flag…provid[ing] opposed symbolic statements of adherence to political parties, historical narratives, and collective identities" (Papadakis 1998, 155).

40 'Speak dialect – Write Nynorsk' was a slogan created to support a full dialectal spectrum in the diglossic society, without Dano-Norwegian H (see Røyneland 2009).

41 Norwegian nationalism since the Romantic period has been expressed especially in pro-local contexts (e.g., promotion of local agriculture, workers/farmers' rights, 'no' to joining EU (*nei til EF*) movement, etc.).

42 Dano-Norwegian koiné was spoken by elite Norwegians in the 1800s. The establishment of Nynorsk as a (competing) 'dialectal standard', a developed, codified pan-Norwegian dialectal amalgamation mostly for writing, was the response.

43 Rowe 2009; Tsiplakou 2011; Ayiomamitou, Yiakoumetti 2017; Grohmann et al. 2020.

provide a boost to the dialect. According to Armostis and Tsiplakou (2020, 8), "practically obsolete [Cypriot] dialect forms or forms constructed on the basis of dialectal morphological and phonological templates...[reflect]...non-conformity to...prescriptivism". Since hyperdialectism users are often young Cypriotists, who are ardent promoters of Cypriot 'language' [lect] and its use in especially educational settings,[44] the active engagement of obsolete or near-obsolete basilectal lexis (and other elements) may be more than a passing fad. Beyond youth identity indexation, the motivation behind hyperdialectism is probably two-fold: (1) It reflects a uniquely Cypriot identity. After all, the degree of overlap between CG basilect and SMG (in its purest form) is limited; and (2) it forwards Cypriotism in a linguistic (in addition to a political) way, via preservation and revitalization – given that the moribundity issue is high in the consciousness of Cypriotism proponents. The youthful 'angle', then, expressing youth identity itself, would be hyperdialectal neologisms proper within the expanded speech repertoire (in addition to expanded youth dialectal domains, e.g., CG hip-hop; Terkourafi 2007, 80). As Grohmann et al. (2020) note, some hyperdialectisms are active ten years on, and their use apparently productive. This could pave a more likely path for dialect revitalization – at least, more so than the overtly planned revitalization efforts normally required to rescue (genetically unrelated) moribund and/or endangered heritage languages against a dominant exoglossic H.[45] As Houghton (1968, 1178) notes:

> Any use of any word or expression may...[establish it] more firmly in the language. In language..., familiarity breeds not contempt but acceptance, and new words or expressions thrive on publicity, even bad publicity.

In this regard, acceptance through use could be more likely to occur than not. The forms are familiar to speakers of all ages, enhancing their chances of acceptability and community spread – particularly if they come to appear in the koiné.

In summary, given that the 'Cyprus Problem' is central to the ethno-cultural Cypriot psyche, it is pervasively embedded in the social – including sociolinguistic – culture. It appears that as long as the reality of a divided Cyprus persists, Cypriotism – and the reasonable prospect of dialect revitalization – will be alive and well. All in all,

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44 Under one philosophy (e.g., in the Progressive Movement of Students, PKF), the use of textbooks published in Greece is an affront to Cypriot student rights to Cypriot views of their own history and culture. See Tsiplakou, Ioannidou, Hadjioannou (2018), *inter alia*, for educational practices that consistently follow Greece's model.

45 In Norway, these movements gained traction, unlike their more ephemeral counterparts in the Netherlands, and especially in Germany (Hinskens, Auer, Kerswill 2005, 36).

the co-overt prestige of the koiné could help the dialect recover some lost ground. However, restoration of the basilects themselves – so, total moribundity reversal – would need to be in the form of revitalization (likely via admixture of basilectal forms into the koiné or mesolect via, e.g., hyperdialectism). This strategy would simultaneously reflect and heighten speakers' metalinguistic awareness of lectal endangerment. Deliberate planning efforts that have had success in some language (but not usually dialect) scenarios are Western Armenian in Cyprus (Goutsos, Karyolemou 2004, 11), Welsh and Irish Gaelic in the British Isles (Baldauf 2006, *inter alia*), and the reinvigoration of Hebrew in Israel (Spolsky 1991, *inter alia*). If basilectal elements are added to the koiné by speakers (via, e.g., hyperdialectism), this would preserve (or restore) some of what would be lost through diglossic attrition. Much depends not only on (co-overt) prestige, but as said, also on community spread and political ideology. To what extent these events would further destabilize the (already attenuated) diglossic status of Cyprus – particularly in the face of the 'sociolinguistic buffer' posed by institutional H-promotion – is another question that remains to be answered.

7   Epilogue: What about Diglossia?

In the absence of significant political upheavals, diglossia should remain stable (Sotiropoulos 1982, 19). There is, on the other hand, a long history (Hudson 2002) of diglossias breaking down as a result of popular movements, "nativist rebellions" (Kahane 1986, 498; in Hudson 2002, 34), and ideological pressure.[46] In such scenarios, a "new social order" disrupts the stability otherwise afforded the diglossic state, and "old administrative codes [are] replaced by...vernacular[s]". In the process, lects become more homogeneous (Hudson 2002, 33) and new standards emerge, toward "ethnic identity and independence" (Hudson 2002, 30), as seen in the acceleration of the CG koiné.

   Now, on its face, the active promotion of dialect and dialect revitalization, as part of Cypriotism, suggests an impending full diglossic resolution following a state of *dia*glossia (Rowe, Grohmann 2014; cf. Rowe 2009; see Auer 2005, 37). On such *post-dia*glossic transitions, then, Auer notes:

   In the final stage [from diaglossia to standard-with-dialects] before [dialect] loss, the attitudes towards the now almost extinct [basilect]

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46   One noteworthy example is that of Demotic ousting Katherevousa in Greece (Frangoudaki 1992, 368), effectively ending diglossia, except for residual diglossia of the Church.

are usually positive again, and folkloristic attempts at rescuing the dialect may set in – usually without success. (Auer 2005, 37)

Based on Auer's observation, Cyprus would already be in a *post-dia*glossic state, toward extreme dialect loss, when young people who self-identify as Cypriotist lament the decline in basilectal forms, and revive some of these to reflect Cypriot identity, often through hyperdialectism.

At the same time, the partial advergence of the koiné to the Standard seems to indicate an ongoing move in Cypriot society 'in the direction of' Type C *dia*glossia and a single continuum (Auer 2005, 21; Auer, Baumann, Schwarz 2011; Rowe, Grohmann 2014; cf. Pappas 2015),[47] with significant dialect loss. The CG koiné, in that case, is (following Auer 2005, 22) characterizable as a *pre-dia*glossic phenomenon.

Finally, in yet other respects, Cyprus shows itself to be in a state of diaglossia/dilalia (mainly, by virtue of both widespread koiné use, domain encroachment, and basilect attrition), and in still others, an attenuated or relative diglossia – or in some step in between. The situation is clearly complicated.

Ultimately, whatever the current sociolinguistic status of Cyprus, it cannot be concluded that diglossia is completely dissolved – nor that it will be – not only because other tests must be considered (e.g., the native speaker test, Rowe, Grohmann 2014; also Hudson 2002), but also particularly because the 'drift of social forces' is still in full swing. Moreover, without a dominant local prestige group in critical mass (Rowe, Grohmann 2014) who speaks H as its vernacular (Hudson 2002, 7-8) and teaches it to their children as the home language (Ferguson 1959, 331), and as long as there are powerful institutions that "merge" ideologically (Hudson 2002, 38, citing Ferguson 1959, 339) with the H-loaning community, diglossia, in some form, will surely remain – even if the loss of (much) basilect, with its resulting homogenization, serves as a sacrifice to the 'greater good' of an ever-strengthening koiné.

On a final note: Often the question raised about whether Cypriot will decline in favor of SMG (cf. Hadjioannou et al. 2016, *inter alia*). It should be noted, in response, that in diglossic situations involving two varieties of the same language, the resolution of diglossia anyway – despite L attrition – usually favors the rise of L to take over H

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[47] Pappas (2015; but cf. Pappas 2009) sees the development of the koiné as already indicative of a full basilect-to-standard continuum (social dialectia); indeed, koineization often represents "the beginning of the end" for diglossia (see Hudson 2002, 32, citing Ferguson 1959, 338). Although this need not be the case yet, it surely signals some degree of diglossic resolution in Cyprus, even if diglossia does not fully break down eventually (Switzerland and Norway each having an emergent koiné within the relatively stable diglossic state; Auer 2005, 10-15).

domains, and only rarely the reverse (Holm 1986; Hudson 2002, 8, 30; Auer 2005; Rowe, Grohmann 2013; 2014). The opposite is true for H/L societal bilingualism – notably here, in the relationship between heritage varieties in Cyprus involving separate languages (Maronite or Armenian vs. majority Greek), where H so readily encroaches on L, requiring active revitalization efforts to reverse language shift.[48]

It seems the ideological drift in Cyprus toward an increase in Cypriotism, plus the robustness of the koiné and continued compartmentalization – alongside co-overt prestige – adds weight to Cypriot 'in general', rendering it potentially stronger against extensive encroachment (better: 'dilution') by SMG.[49] Indeed, Kyriakou (2015, 60) considers the vitality of Cypriot (it being the everyday language of all native Cypriots) as likely alone sufficient to prevent its demise. Further, public use of Cypriot by some (especially left-wing) politicians (cf. Terkourafi 2005, 80) as well as (particularly left leaning) teachers, is a sure sign of increased dialect acceptability, even if dialect levels become more acrolectal in the process. So, the question might be phrased not so much as 'Will Cypriot decline?', as it is 'How far will the Cypriot koiné diverge from SMG, by virtue of acquisition issues and ideological trajectories?'.[50] This will be left to further speculation.

It is true, however, that even in situations where the likelihood is greater for L to displace H, H has good traction against an uncodified L – particularly if speakers find it useful, as in Norway, and as Schiffman (2017, n. 13) points out for Switzerland:

> [The takeover of some H domains by L] does not mean that diglossia in Alemannic Switzerland is on its way out; many Swiss, while welcoming the expansion of L-variety domains, see a need to retain domains for Hochdeutsch.

If popular desire for Cyprus' own indigenous Standard for reasons of its autonomy, its sovereignty (Hudson 2002, 32, citing Ferguson 1959, 338), and self-determinism is sufficiently fervent, then Pappas' (2015) projection may bear fruit, with the koiné positioned to displace SMG as the sole H variety (but see caveat, n. 20). If not, it may displace oral H – or at least, fully encroach on all but the most conservative of official domains (as in Norway). There is good reason to believe

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48 Although CG is L with respect to SMG, it is (alongside SMG) in the H role with respect to minority heritage languages on the island.

49 See Røyneland (2009, 8) on the role of Nynorsk, the constructed dialectal standard, in increasing the subjective value of the dialects.

50 See Auer (2005, 41) on the development of 'new' Greek dialects in Greece based on a regiolectal koiné which rose to Standard status under Alexander the Great.

(cf. De Francis 1950/1972, 11) that either activism (Bourcier 2015) or a left-wing government espousing the cause of (populist Cypriot) nationalism, could issue a clarion call for linguistic reform, and authorize a koiné writing system to be designed and put into practice in official contexts. If that occurs, the handwriting could be on the wall, so to speak, for SMG in Cyprus.

But whatever the current and projected sociolinguistic statuses of Cyprus – diaglossia, post-diaglossia, pre-diaglossia, attenuated or even 'relative' diglossia (as in Norway and Switzerland) – the situation could at any point stabilize completely, instead of proceeding to end-stage diglossic breakdown. For now, given the entrenchment of Standard Modern Greek in the establishments with the most sociopolitical control, the Cyprus sociolinguistic situation maintains its own defenses – a 'sociolinguistic buffer', it could be said – against full diglossic breakdown.

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