



SOCIAL SCIENCES UNIVERSITY OF ANKARA

INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

MUHSİN DÖLKELEŞ

**THE NATURAL GAS AND THE PROTRACTED CONFLICT IN
CYPRUS**

MASTER THESIS

2021

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185411008

THESIS SUPERVISOR: ASSOC. PROF. DR. ERSUN NECATİ KURTULUŞ

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ABSTRACT

THE NATURAL GAS AND THE PROTRACTED CONFLICT IN CYPRUS

Using strategic action fields (SAFs) concept from Fligstein and McAdam's a theory of field, the thesis examined the Turkish and Greek communities' natural gas struggle in the same field and how they shaped the protracted Cyprus conflict. The struggles and interactions in the context of natural gas and the protracted Cyprus conflict, two embeddedness strategic action fields (SAFs) in Cyprus, are comparatively analysed in this thesis. The results show that the processes and results in natural gas SAF are based on the limited successes and failures of the protracted Cyprus conflict SAF that is its antecedent. On one hand Natural gas in Cyprus waters not only encouraged resumption of the Cyprus talks to solve the protracted Cyprus conflict but also sparked a debate on rights, equality and ownership based on the protracted Cyprus conflict. On the other hand, natural gas in Cyprus waters is used by parties as a game changer for a more favourable peace settlement to the protracted Cyprus conflict. Additionally, intervention of the international actors and governments from outside created a temporary stability that included consent of the two sides.

Keywords: The protracted conflict, Natural gas, Strategic Action Fields, Theory of field

ÖZ

KIBRIS'TA DOĞALGAZ VE SÜRÜNCEMELİ ÇATIŞMA

Bu tezde, Kıbrıslı Türk ve Rum toplumlarının aynı alanda nasıl doğalgaz mücadelesi verdiklerini ve Kıbrıs'ta devam eden sürüncemeli çatışmaları nasıl şekillendirdikleri Fligstein ve McAdam'ın alan teorisine ait stratejik eylem alanları konsepti kullanılarak incelenmiştir. Kıbrıs'ta yerleşik iki stratejik eylem alanı olan doğal gaz ve sürüncemeli çatışma bağlamındaki mücadeleler ve etkileşimler karşılaştırmalı olarak analiz edilmiştir. Bulgular, doğal gaz alanındaki süreçlerin ve sonuçlarının büyük ölçüde kendisinden önce gelen sürüncemeli çatışma alanındaki sınırlı başarı ve başarısızlıkların sonuçları üzerine inşa edildiğini göstermektedir. Bir yandan, Kıbrıs sularındaki doğalgaz, sürüncemeli Kıbrıs çatışmasını çözmek için yeniden barış görüşmelerinin kurulmasını teşvik etmekle kalmadı, aynı zamanda sürüncemeli Kıbrıs çatışmasına dayalı haklar ve mülkiyet tartışmalarını da ateşledi. Öte yandan, Kıbrıs sularındaki doğal gaz, sürüncemeli Kıbrıs çatışmasına daha elverişli bir barış çözümü için taraflarca oyun değiştirici olarak kullanıldığı tespit edildi. Dahası uluslararası aktörlerin ve dış hükümetlerin müdahalesi iki aktörün rızasını da içeren geçici bir istikrar yarattı.

Anahtar Kelimeler:Sürüncemeli çatışma,Doğalgaz,Stratejik eylem alanları,AlanTeorisi

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CBM	Confidence Building Measures
EU	European Union
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
ENOSIS	The Union of Greece and Cyprus
IOCs	International Oil Companies
RoC	Republic of Cyprus
SAF	Strategic Action Field
TRNC	Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus
TPAO	The Turkish National Oil Company
UN	United Nations
US	United States
UNFICYP	United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus
UNSG	United Nations Secretary General
UNCLOS	Convention on the Law of the Sea
UNBZ	United Nations buffer zone
Qcf	Quadrillion cubic feet
Tcf	Trillion cubic feet

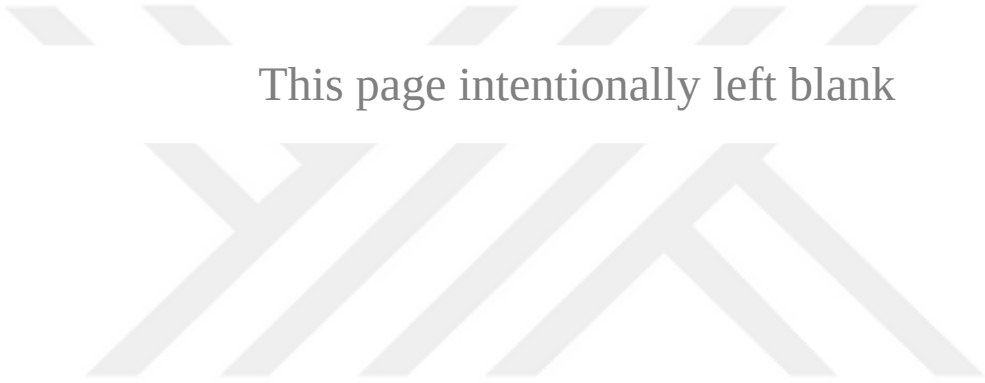
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Figure 1. The UN buffer zone or "Green line" delineation

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CHAPTER I

1. INTRODUCTION

Firstly, this master thesis aims to explain interactions between the natural gas in Cyprus waters and the protracted Cyprus conflict and how the process takes shape between the Turkish and Greek Cypriots. This research views the natural gas in the Cyprus waters and the protracted Cyprus conflict as relevant political interests with which the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC)* and Republic of Cyprus (RoC)** governments are strategically engaged. This research focuses on TRNC and RoC governments that are the parties to the protracted Cyprus conflict and the external dynamics. In particular, 2011 was the period when tensions between the two communities peaked with the discovery of the first gas field by Noble company off the Cyprus coast with the support of the Greek Cypriots.

When we look in the context whether natural gas discoveries will create conflict or cooperation between the TRNC and the RoC, it reveals that the positions of the above-mentioned actors on the issue are shaped by their interests. Cyprus has been showing that the conflict is difficult to resolve for a quite some time. Throughout its long history, the protracted Cyprus conflict has managed to attract considerable attention due to its complicated nature in international politics. Considering the historical evolution of the protracted conflict, it is seen that there have been extremely important turning points in it. For example, the collapse of the Annan Plan supported by the UN, and the divided entry of the Island into the EU in 2004 (Eminel 2016).

*TRNC, Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus is only recognized by the Turkish Republic.

**RoC, Republic of Cyprus is not recognized by the Turkish Republic.

Additionally, natural gas discovered off the Cyprus coast is the new turning point in the futurity of the protracted Cyprus conflict. In this regard, it is possible to mention some opportunities in the light of new developments, as well as new conflicts and tensions between two communities living in the TRNC and the RoC. With the discovery of the natural gas off the coast of Cyprus in 2011, the protracted conflict has taken a new turn. The bases of the conflict are sovereign rights, equality, power-sharing and territorial integrity. In this context, there is no doubt that the natural gas discoveries have the potential to deepen the protracted Cyprus conflict between the parties in Cyprus.

Another aspect of the issue is financial because it has been thought that 2% of the world gas reserves are found in the Cyprus waters. Cyprus is credited to have 0.5% of the world gas reserves. This figure indicates 31 trillion cubic feet (Tcf) of natural gas off the coast of Cyprus, worth approximately \$150 billion. According to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) Cyprus will have a net worth of 210 billion dollars, about 15 times the value of the Cypriot economy (Eminel 2016: Rolandis 2014).

According to the Republic of Cyprus government, on one hand, any restriction encountered in the discovery of natural gas off the Cyprus coast would be interpreted as a violation of their sovereign rights because they consider it as their sovereign right. On the other hand, the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus government is an important part of all these discussions. According to the Turkish Cypriots, it is wrong for the Greek Cypriots to act as the only rulers of the island and make alliances with the regional and international actors on platforms that do not watch rights of the Turkish Cypriots. Because, the future of the Turkish Cypriots is also determined within the framework of these agreements. In this sense, the importance of addressing natural gas exploration debates as regards to the protracted Cyprus conflict is obvious. Moreover, this thesis also provides an opportunity to understand importance of natural gas, which will financially affect the future of Cyprus.

In light of the above, this study which focuses on the relationship between interconnected natural gas and the protracted Cyprus conflict found a strong indication that the unresolved chapters in the peace talks led to a serious concentration of natural gas-related disputes. On the same axis, it found strong indications that initiatives related to natural gas brought peace talks to a halt. Therefore, the Turkish and the Greek Cypriots have found themselves in conflict within this new natural gas reality. In this context, considering the relationship between natural gas and the protracted Cyprus conflict, the importance of knowing that the two fields are related and to be able to characterize the nature and proximity of this relationship has emerged.

Considering the above, the economic and strategic importance of natural gas is of great importance for peace negotiations. In the context of this importance, it can be seen as the main motivation of the peace negotiations and comprehensive solution between the Turkish and the Greek Cypriots. In particular, it was concluded that the economic prospects of the gas reserves were convincing enough to suggest that they could provide a motivation for a solution to the protracted Cyprus conflict.

1.1. Problem Statement

This study reflects the position of the Turkish Cypriots, the Greek Cypriots, international actors and the debate over sovereignty, power-sharing rights, equality, interests related to resource in particular natural gas exploration off the coast of Cyprus and the protracted Cyprus conflict.

1.2. Research Questions

I will seek answers to the research questions mentioned below. The research questions are “What are the interactions of the natural gas discoveries in Cyprus waters and the protracted Cyprus conflict?” and “What is the role of the current natural gas discoveries in Cyprus waters on the protracted Cyprus conflict?”. These questions are relevant for many reasons. First, they help to explain growing complexity of the protracted Cyprus conflict. This situation is critical not only for the political, economic and social situation of the country, but also for the negotiations that affect stability and political structuring of the Cyprus governments. If political decisions on gas have affected the protracted Cyprus conflict, it is essential to understand how did it happen.

1.3. Aim of the Research

The aim of this research is to understand how the decisions to be made on the natural gas off the coast of Cyprus would ensure peace or escalate the conflict.

1.4. The significance and Purpose of the Research

The exploration of the natural gas off the coast of Cyprus has aroused interest in the examination of its role whether it will bring peace among the Cypriot communities or will it further deepen the protracted Cyprus conflict. What is certain is the axis where the protracted Cyprus conflict and natural gas intersect while the interactions of these two issues have gained a dimension worth examining. Within the framework of this understanding, this thesis examines the interaction between the Cyprus natural gas issue and the protracted Cyprus conflict in depth. In this sense, it is extremely important to make inferences on how the dynamics of the protracted Cyprus conflict have been moulded in the light of natural gas discoveries in Cyprus waters. In this context, it would be useful to look at the attitudes of the parties to the conflict and international actors in this process in order to reveal interaction between the protracted Cyprus conflict and the Cyprus natural gas.

1.5. Conceptual Framework

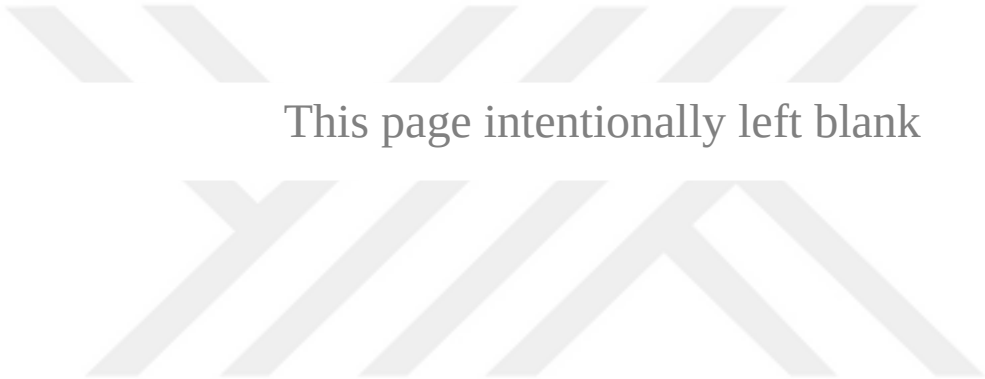
The protracted Cyprus conflict and natural gas in Cyprus waters are conceptualized as embedded strategic action fields (SAFs) where strategic actions take place. These concepts are taken from McAdam and Fligstein's a theory of field, which will be discussed in detail in the theoretical framework chapter. In each of these fields of the protracted Cyprus conflict and natural gas in Cyprus waters, the actors -TRNC and RoC- compete for a position of power and control over certain material and status rewards and in a way that can affect those in the other fields (McAdam and Fligstein 2012, p.3).

1.6. Research Methodology and Limitations

In this research, qualitative methodology is preferred among the two main research methodologies. The reason for adopting the qualitative method is its link to the main focus of the study. Disagreements between Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots have brought bilateral relations of both sides to the level of an ending. In order to better understand these developments, an empirical comprehensive analysis and explanation has played an important role. As a result, qualitative comments and analysis are made in this study. Furthermore, it should be noted that some available quantitative data such as statistics on economic and commercial relations of natural resources were used in some parts of the research. These are used for both evaluation and support purposes and arguments. In the data collection process of the thesis, secondary datas were used like web, library resources, books, articles from academic journals, academic studies, newspapers and political statements. The selected term is between 2011 and 2019. 2011 was the period when tensions between the two communities peaked.

1.7. Structure of the Thesis

The main lines of this thesis are as follows; In what follows the second chapter introduces the theoretical framework that provides a better understanding of the data collection techniques and theoretical concepts used to conduct this research. The third chapter provides contextual information on the protracted Cyprus conflict as a strategic action field. The fourth chapter provides contextual information on the natural gas as a strategic action field discovered in the Cypriot waters. Economically, natural gas will also be evaluated as an important asset for both sides in the fourth chapter. The fifth chapter provides contextual information on the interactions between natural gas discovered in the Cypriot waters and the protracted Cyprus conflict. To sum up, a particular emphasis has been made in this thesis on the attitude of the actors in the natural gas and the protracted Cyprus conflict fields.



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CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND OF THE THESIS

The theories of conflict resolution involve elite cooperation or elite peace rather than individual, to reach an agreement (Ramsbotham et al. 2012, p.13). Elite cooperation/peace to regulate a conflict without addressing its structural origins (Ramsbotham et al. 2012, p.12). In the context of the link between natural resources and peace, it is seen that high-value natural resources offer a significant advantage for countries emerging from armed conflicts. However, serious challenges accompany the opportunities regarding high-value resources. In fact, resource-rich countries tend to be worse than others when it comes to maintaining peace and long-term development. It is also emphasized that peace process makes little distinction between various peace efforts, such as peace making and peacekeeping at local, national and international levels (Rustad et al. 2012, 613). Thus, it is understood that there is no significant emphasis on the connections between natural resources and peace which constitute a category of peace effort that can be understood in its own right (Oosterholt 2019). By filling this gap in academic debate this thesis provides another important contribution.

However, in line with the Fligstein and McAdam's field theory, theoretical framework of this thesis shifts the focus of attention to basic ideas in the field/s about how organizations control their environment, how rules of the game are made in social life, and how talented actors shape and organize social circles. This chapter will make sense of important parts of this theory. First of all, the reflections of different theoretical approaches will be discussed in this chapter.

According to conflict resolution theories, as mentioned above, the approaches are based on institutional design for sharing power among elites rather than seeking ways to establish positive peace (Cohen and Arato, 1994). Another one is the consociational theory based solely on elite cooperation and communal divisions with predetermined rules. This version was implemented in Cyprus with the 1960 Constitution and failed within three years. As in Cyprus, the elites are mostly in favour of the continuation of the conflict, as they feed their politics on ethno-nationalism (Yakinthou 2009, p. 22). There are also various conflict resolution techniques. One of these is collaborative style. It can tend to be used sufficiently if there is also the skill level required to apply it effectively in this approach. Secondly, avoiding style creates a lose-lose situation because the conflict is not resolved. One downside of this style is that if the problem is not fixed, it can actually get worse. Thirdly, accommodating creates a win-lose situation. One party passively surrenders to the other, trying to resolve the conflict. Competition creates a win-lose situation. The party tries to resolve the conflict with aggressive behaviour. A win some-lose some situation is seen in the Compromising. One tries to solve the conflict by using give and take. In this context, Compromising can lead to inefficient consequences (Law 2018).

Some conflict resolution concepts and approaches of the links between natural resources and peace have been discussed above. Clearly, conflict is inevitable in the field in which sides have incompatible goals. It is seen that elite actors are involved in the resolution of the conflict. This situation can do more harm than good in resolving the conflict. Moreover, in cases where more than one issue is embedded – for example; the protracted Cyprus conflict and Cyprus gas - economic, political, strategic, ethnicity etc. ignoring the structures from individual to collective actions and focusing only on the conflict or conflict resolution as mentioned above can escalate the conflict rather than the solution in the field/s.

However, instead of focusing solely on the conflict and ability of elite actors to control their environment or conflict resolution (i.e. mediation), Fligstein and McAdam look at the functions of social structures from individual to collective. Fligstein and McAdam's theory tries to rethink the issues of the link between agency and structure, and the interactions between macro (collective) and micro social processes.

Structuration Theory by Giddens has limitation in comparison to Fligstein and McAdam's theory. They do this by not only emphasizing the nature of collective action, but also providing greater specificity as to why and how actors act and how they change the social structures in which they are found. They also consider the work of Giddens, who presents a theory of social change and stability (Oosterholt 2019: Fligstein and McAdam, 2012, p. 24). The theory of Fligstein and McAdam explains the interaction between these fields and their true potential to influence change among each other. In this context, the theory of Fligstein and McAdam ensures an option to understand whether a meso-level social structure is emerging, stable or not. Without such a theory, it is difficult to understand what actors do, both macro and micro as communities (Fligstein and McAdam, 2012).

Moreover, there is institutional theory precisely at a meso-level in organizational studies by DiMaggio and Powell. According to this; different power types direct actors to reduce uncertainty. Those seen as successful organizations can be followed by the players. This can be followed by the expressions of professionals or experts. Finally, other organizations or governments may force actors to comply with expectations. Two problems arise in this regard. First, institutional theory is truly a theory that adheres to the type of realization in the fields (Oosterholt 2019). In this context, this theory is not based on the emergence and transformation of Fields. The theory, by its very nature, seeks to explicitly eliminate the concept of an active agent. Actors obey the rules both by agreement and by force. Its main argument is that institutional theory is less than power and conflict theory (Fligstein and McAdam, 2012, p. 28).

Each of the approaches discussed above partially fulfil the needs of the thesis topic addressed. The authors' finding common ground implies that they are looking at their theoretical approaches in a similar way. However, the theory of Fligstein and McAdam provides our understanding of how meso social orders are generated, maintained, and dissolved.

Strategic action field conceptualized by Fligstein and Mc Adam have a view based on social, economic and political situations that are at the heart of life. These three phenomena are the intersection points of meso-level orders. It is also that Fligstein and McAdam discuss “field” expression from different perspectives. Firstly, a strategic action field is defined as the meso-level social order that occurs where the something is at stake that actors try to control. It concerns all players who are in a field (Fligstein and McAdam, 2012, p. 168). Theoretically, a field is defined by the relationships between all players who see themselves as members of the field. It is also a field defined area of activity, interacting each other. So, it has no border. In approaches to analyzing field dynamics, the answer to the question of “who aims what and why” is investigated (Fligstein and McAdam, 2012, p. 188). They provide many examples about usability of strategic action field such as policy fields, economical fields and so on. The state or states can also be seen as a series of interdependent strategic action fields. In essence, the strategic field of action can be understood as consisting of groups, actors or parties that routinely take into account each other in their actions (Fligstein and McAdam, 2012, p. 167).

Fligstein and McAdam point out that any strategic action field is embedded in numerous other strategic action fields like Russian dolls. Moreover, the opportunities and crises encountered in any strategic action field are directly affected by other strategic action fields in the wider environment. The source of crises in new or existing strategic action fields arises from the effect of surrounding sources and external interventions around the country in the process.

Moreover, Fligstein and Mc Adam emphasize that the actors involved in any strategic action field interpret and organize the field for their own benefit. Crises and opportunities in these strategic action fields give clues about how the process will take shape (Fligstein and McAdam 2012, p. 3). In this context, taking the concept of strategic action field will be useful to explain how the protracted conflict and natural gas interact, which is the focus of my thesis, and how its actors TRNC and RoC interpret this process to their advantage and shape these fields.

According to Fligstein and McAdam, actions take place from individual to collective in any strategic action field. In the strategic action field, actors interact from who is strong to how the actions take shape in the field. They state that strategic action fields can be characterized by considering conflict, opportunity and order dynamics. They emphasize that strategic action fields are comprised of incumbent and challenger actors as well as management units (Fligstein and McAdam 2012, p. 14).

Incumbents who take part in any strategic action field tend to dominate the field in terms of interpretations, views and interests. Thus, the incumbents try to shape the field actions by keeping their goals and interests ahead, that is, to get the lion's share. Moreover, the dynamics in any strategic action field tend to support incumbents in terms of privilege and legitimacy. On the other hand, those challengers have relatively less privilege than the incumbents in the strategic action field. Dynamics do not tend to support the challengers. Challengers are opposed to inequalities in the field. Challengers are also reluctantly accept the prevailing order in the field actions. However, challengers wait for an opportunity to challenge the dominant order and structure that privileges incumbents (Fligstein and McAdam 2012, p.14).

In addition to all of the above, two ways are proposed for the stability of any strategic action field. The first is that the dominant actor creates a stable order by imposing power. The second is a stable order by establishing a cooperative political coalition. In this context, it is revealed that the strategic action field will take shape on the basis of coercion, competition and cooperation. In the field of strategic action, coercion refers to the retention of resources using physical force and threats. Competition is defined as gaining advantage without using force and threat. What is important here is that the advantage will increase through internal and external allies. As a result, the winning actor will get to manage the resources. The losing actor will benefit from as much resources as the winning actor offers (Fligstein and McAdam 2012, p.15).

In this context, it can be explained that the Republic of Cyprus is in an incumbent position in the SAF, as unilateral control of the Greek Cypriot side gives it a better negotiating position. It can be explained that incumbents prioritize interests in the prevailing organization of the strategic action field. In this context, the aims in the strategic action fields are designed in such a way that incumbents get the lion's share. (Fligstein and McAdam 2012, p.14).

On the contrary, it can be said that the TRNC has taken a position of challenger to the SAF, as the ground rules shaped by the same rules of international law are predominantly not in its favour. It can be explained that challengers are revolting against the inequalities of the field. Moreover, challengers are expected to adapt to the current order. The dynamics here are not to the advantage of the challengers. The challengers reluctantly adapt to the current order. But when a new opportunity arises, they attempt to gain advantage. (Fligstein and McAdam 2012, p.14).

Moreover, Fligstein and McAdam state that any strategic action field affects the next strategic action field. In this context, the dynamics in the previous strategic action field affect the next strategic action field. What is important here is the interaction of the dynamics of the previous strategic action field with the next strategic action field. Considering the above, the protracted Cyprus conflict and natural gas are proximate and the dynamics of the two different fields interact with each other. It is noteworthy that natural gas is considered as a new strategic action field, where the rules have not yet been clarified but the actors economically and strategically dependent in the two fields where the dynamics interact. (Fligstein and McAdam 2012, p.11).

On the other hand, the protracted Cyprus conflict and natural gas fields have a proximate relationship in terms of affecting each other. The striking point here is that there are mutual dependencies. These interdependencies are evaluated in vertical and horizontal frameworks as will be explained in the next chapters. In this context, there are complex relationships between actors and external dynamics such as spider webs (Fligstein and McAdam 2012, p.18).

In this context, every step taken on one field (e.g. natural gas) has affected the other field (e.g. the protracted Cyprus conflict) like a stone thrown. Fligstein and McAdam pointed that a significant change in any field of strategic action is like a stone thrown into a stagnant pond sending ripples outward to all nearby fields. This does not mean that all or even most of the waves will destabilize other fields. Like stones, changes come in all sizes. Only the most dramatic tend to send ripples in density enough to pose a real threat to the stability of the nearby fields (Fligstein and McAdam 2012, p.19).

Moreover, there are contradictory logical approaches in the course of the process in two intertwined fields where interaction takes place. In addition, interests, identities, and strategies are important in logical approaches at the intersection of these two fields. The actions of the TRNC- as a challenger- are represented by forms of defiance aimed at directly and / or indirectly affecting the incumbents, the RoC.

On the other hand, as incumbents, the RoC tries to influence the challengers (TRNC) through the actions of other actors and dynamics. In this context, besides the TRNC and RoC actors, there are also administrations that are effective in shaping the fields. These are Greece, UN, EU, USA and the most important states such as Turkey. Because of some the aspects including directly the protracted Cyprus conflict and Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) Turkey is important actor in the fields. According to Fligstein and McAdam, approaches between key actors are crucial in strategic action field/s. (Fligstein and McAdam 2012).

I employ this framework to examine the dynamics and outcomes within each SAFs which are the protracted Cyprus conflict as an SAF and Cyprus gas as an SAF. Further, I study the interactions between the two fields, focusing primarily on the extent to which actors in each field are actually connected to each other. I also discuss the interaction of the two SAFs to find out role of the Cyprus gas in the protracted Cyprus conflict.



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3.1. The Perspectives of Sides to the Conflict and the Possible Solution

Cyprus is still divided today along its infamous green line. However, it witnessed numerous attempts by both national and international actors to prevent violence on the islands and reunite the two communities. Although interrupted periodically, starting in 1974 and continuing to the present-day numerous mediation efforts, confidence building measures (CBMs), and peace talks led to limited success or completely failed. For years, Greek Cypriots pursue a bi-communal federation with central powers that include natural resources. On the contrary, the Turkish Cypriots pursued a bi-zonal federation in which natural resources and management would be shared equally. (Hocknell2001, p6). This disparity between the underlying attitudes and aspirations of the two core parties often stood in the way of successful peace negotiations. Interviews have been a zero-sum game, often characterized by mutual distrust, hostility, and refusal to accept (Fisher 2001, p.322). In addition, Turkish politicians have made a tremendous effort for the international recognition of the TRNC. However, Greek Cypriot politicians have always denied and prevented it. Contrasting interpretations of fundamental problems also prevented progress over the years.

In the peace negotiations, the protracted Cyprus conflict itself has always been differently defined by both sides. This is a situation that hinders mutual understanding and often damages trust and the will of negotiation on both sides. After 1974, the Greek Cypriot side defined the protracted Cyprus conflict as an illegal occupation and foreign occupation, while the Turkish Cypriot side defined the protracted Cyprus conflict as minority oppression, trivialization and Greek Cypriot nationalism (Trigeorgis1993, p.346). More importantly, it can be said that both parties or field actors within the SAF have their own interpretative frameworks that enables them to understand the other party's position and actions on the field. Fligstein and McAdam explain that in most fields, for example, while adopting a frame of reference that summarizes the self-serving views of incumbent actors, the challenger actors will adopt opposition perspective (Fligstein and McAdam 2012, p.11).

Greek Cypriot politicians have always been able to try and negotiate their preferred solution. And they knew that if the negotiations failed they would retain control of the official government of Cyprus. Moreover, the frame of reference is also shaped by the rules of international law that legitimize the aforementioned sense of victimization and their belief that they rightly rule the TRNC without the Turkish Republic. For Greek Cypriot politicians, the rules of the field tend to support them. It can be explained that the Greek Cypriot community is in an incumbent position in the SAF mentioned above, as unilateral control of the Greek Cypriot side gives it a better negotiating position (Fligstein and McAdam 2012, p.5).

At the same time, it is seen that the Turkish Cypriot community reached an opposing position as a challenger to the SAF. TRNC is only recognized by Turkey and as the ground rules shaped by the same rules of international law are mainly not in their favour. Thus, it is seen that the Turkish Cypriot community has fewer negotiating positions from its position in the SAF and benefited most from a change in the status quo on the ground. Turkish Cypriot politicians perceived the logic of the SAF from their own victimization point of view and reluctantly followed the order of the field, waiting for new opportunities to challenge the structure and logic of the system (Fligstein and McAdam 2012, p.13).

The role of state actors in restoring order in the field has already been mentioned, but other external parties may be involved (Fligstein and McAdam 2012, p.23). In this context Greece, Turkey and the United Kingdom governments are to have a sustained impact on the peace process that complicates the peace negotiations, this is a situation that applies in particular to the Turkish government. After 1974, the British government understood that its guarantor status was mostly a relic from history and Greek politicians assumed a more limited role in Cyprus although the Turkish government remained a highly relevant and dominant actor.

The deployment of more than 30,000 Turkish soldiers on the island gave the island a considerable influence. Moreover, TRNC has a heavy economic and political dependence on Turkey. It is also important that the Turkish government has been the only government to recognize TRNC as a legitimate state (Campbell et al. 2014, p.71). In this case, cooperation includes forming a coalition to hold together the strategic action fields. The purpose of a particular cooperative project is to provide both material and existential resources (Fligstein and McAdam 2012, p.15).

In many fields, including the Cyprus talks, this dependency means that TRNC leaders make little important decisions without the Turkish leaders' approval. They often formed a united front. This is especially true since 1998, when their governments joined a partnership agreement that allowed for further integration of their economies and armies (Fisher 2001, p.311). More importantly, its coalition has given the Turkish government an important say on Cyprus issues and peace negotiation processes. It allowed Turkish politicians to protect not only the interests of Turkish Cypriots but also their own. This cooperation can be seen as a specific form of strategic action. McAdam and Fligstein said that a coalition provides an alliance between two or more groups in relation to other groups. According to Fligstein and McAdam, ideal typical political coalition view is that they are collaborative. This collaboration often stems from a combination of common interests and a common collective identity (Fligstein and McAdam 2012, p.15).

3.2. Efforts and Obstacles for Peace

Despite the difficulties that characterize the peace process, some concessions and small steps towards reunification have been made. Moreover, the two sides have made progress at the societal level with CBMs as a micro level organization, which hardly led to ground breaking political solutions but helped improve relationships (Fligstein and McAdam, 2012, p. 9). The most important of these was the permanent opening of the Green Line in 2003, which allowed Cypriots from both communities to travel to the other side for the first time.

Since then, thousands of Cypriots have passed every day to work or visit friends, and some Turkish Cypriots have benefited from their continued rights (for example, use health benefits and collect child allowances) as Turkish Cypriots. Also, water management and electricity supply to the island were developments that demonstrated some degree of interdependence. And there has been cooperation between the two Cypriot governments in strategic action fields that show partly how life is progressing despite the protracted Cyprus conflict. More importantly, it has not only been about hostility and division in the past decade (Paul 2014, p.137).

When considered in the theoretical context, it is clear that the two actors in the field are almost equal in social issues. But even when changes in the field remain substantially the same, initiatives on social issues make no noticeable difference. Moreover, actors continually make social efforts to gain advantage in an existing field. (Fligstein and McAdam 2012, p.54).

Peace talks are not just about contradictory positions and a lack of consensus. There have been periods of exceptional progress, often sustained by favourable political configurations or specific historical circumstances, without always having a solution in the end. Such a historic window of opportunity emerged from 2002 to 2004, when Secretary General Kofi Annan continued his plan to use EU membership as an incentive for reunification in Cyprus (Lindenstrauss 2008, p.95). According to Fligstein and McAdam (2012), strategic action of fields can be hierarchical and dependent or more collaborative. It can be taken, for example, the United Nations, a forum where representatives of nation states come together to discuss common problems. They collaborate on many common problems, come up with solutions, and jointly sponsor various assistance and training programs.

With the promise of EU membership for a united Cyprus and the help of positive global developments, the solution has come closer than ever. A historic breakthrough was widely expected in 2004, when communities were drafting an agreement to be approved by Cypriot citizens through separate referendums (Anastasiou2007, p.196). Meanwhile, the EU began its irreversible procedure of accepting the Republic of Cyprus as an EU member. Once fully accepted, Cyprus would be internally united.

However, where the majority of Turkish Cypriots voted in favour of Annan's solution, most Greek Cypriots voted against the plan. When Greek Cypriot President Papadopoulos came to reject the agreement, he motivated Greek Cypriots to vote against it as well. As a result, Cyprus remained divided, but the Republic of Cyprus entered the European Union (Asmussen2004, p.8). The international community felt manipulated by Greek Cypriot politicians. Nonetheless, only the Greek Cypriot side could benefit from EU membership and its advantages. The breakthrough development has turned into another moment of pain and confidence in the history of Cyprus.

Theoretically, there are also examples placed where lower-level strategic action fields exert strong control over higher-level fields. When it is taken professional sports leagues, here each team creates a court of its own, and the broader league competes with players, coaches and all other teams for victories in the strategic action field. But often in sports leagues, the high-level central administrative organization that should oversee the sport is dominated by one side of the strongest, resource-rich teams in the league. In this case, lower ranked fields (e.g. dominant teams) may have power over the entire strategic field of action (Fligstein and McAdam 2012, p.71).

In 2008, Cyprus negotiations resumed again, after the disastrous conclusion of the Annan Plan. Subsequent peace talks would raise hopes and enthusiasm among Cypriot citizens, politicians and international actors, on the contrary it would bring recurrent disappointments and discouraging setbacks. The difficulties in these negotiations included: ideological differences between the two Cypriot presidents, unsuitable political environments, and ineffective methods used to conduct negotiations. The ideological commitment of the actors is closely related to the current crises in strategic action fields. Sometimes the ideological approach of the actors can precipitate a crisis in the fields. In addition, the economic crisis, the six-month EU presidency of the RoC, and numerous congressional and presidential elections are important external-shocks that also affect the peace initiations crises. The role of state actors in restoring order in the field has already been mentioned, but other external parties may also be involved (Fligstein and McAdam 2012, p.102).

In general, if the emergent fields are the source of destabilizing shocks that trigger adversarial periods, often external parties provide models for settlements that end these crises (Fligstein and McAdam 2012, p.23). This is particularly true for the Cypriot elections, which reshaped parts of the political landscape in Cyprus at some important stages of the peace talks and often slowed down developments. Two rounds of talks led by politicians over the past decade coincided with the term of two RoC presidents and three TRNC Presidents who have their own negotiation styles and views on the protracted Cyprus conflict and solution. In some years, peace talks have been more conducive to progress than in other years, partly because the two Cypriot leaders have more similar thoughts or stronger support from their parliaments and alliances on how they conduct the negotiations.

Furthermore, it has been the readiness of the parties to return to the negotiating table and the UN's intense effort to mediate and facilitate the overall peace process that occasionally allowed progress. When the Greek Cypriot president Demetris Christofias and the Turkish Cypriot president Mehmet Ali Talat came face to face in the negotiations between 2008 and 2010, the situation pointed to the aforementioned development. Meanwhile, they reaffirmed their community's commitment to establish a bi-zonal, bi-communal federation with political equality, a single international personality, and two constituent states with equal status (United Nations Security Council 2009).

While negotiations witnessed a promising start, TRNC presidential elections blocked progress. According to Greek Cypriot politicians, the idea that if President Talat were to be replaced by his much tougher rival, Derviş Eroğlu, the negotiations should start completely over. Therefore, they refused to weaken their future hands by making more concessions in negotiations with Talat (Morelli 2018, p.3).

It can be seen that the election of the Turkish Cypriots has become a problem of the whole Cyprus rather than the local. Political organizations of all kinds have a bias in favour of exploiting some types of conflict and suppressing others. Because political organization is the mobilization of prejudice. In this sense, prejudice regarding the election of Turkish Cypriots is consciously seen as a problem. This situation serves as an appropriate historical reference, marking the point where it was organized from national politics (Fligstein and McAdam 2012, p.117). The election process would put pressure on the overall peace process. This phenomenon can be attributed to the problematic methodology chosen for conducting the negotiations discussed in theoretical background.

In the last ten years, all Cypriot presidents have participated in the Cyprus talks with the understanding that nothing will be agreed until everything is agreed (Morelli 2018, p.23). Incumbents can often attempt to remedy the old problem with the help of internal management units and international allies. Although it is not always stable, the imposition of a solution by state actors is a common method for resolving a period of conflict (Fligstein and McAdam 2012, p.22). It should be noted that the above-mentioned desire to resolve a field crisis often reflects existential motives. This means that there can never be a steady convergence before a comprehensive solution.

While this method of conducting negotiations sounded tempting as it allowed the parties to renegotiate previous agreements, it is undermined progress for the same reason. In addition to adding problematic ultimatums to the talks, the method has a number of other drawbacks that have also been true of the last decade of interviews. Where there are disagreements, the problematic chapters in the Cyprus talks are postponing the negotiations to the final stages of the negotiations such as power sharing, representation and territory, thus creating bottlenecks for the future (Tzimitras et al. 2016, p.5).

The disadvantages set out in the previous paragraphs were equally valid in the UN-sponsored talks Demetris Christofias and Derviş Eroğlu conducted between 2010 and 2012. When Eroğlu took office in April 2010 as the newly elected TRNC President, this heralded a particularly troubled period in Cyprus. While the negotiations resumed where they left off, hardly any progress was made in the first seven months (United Nations Security Council 2010). Indeed, when the negotiations were formally suspended, there was a brief development in 2012. Despite some progress in the fields related to the economy, EU membership and internal security, there was no tangible progress towards a solution (United Nations Security Council 2011).

With the arrival of Eroğlu, known as the advocate of the division in Cyprus, the Turkish Cypriot position shifted from a relatively moderate to a maximalist. Alternatively, the rise of a single actor may point to a dramatic restructuring of the entire field of strategic action under other circumstances. As a result, military guarantor of the Turkish Cypriot community, Turkey had no intention to make concessions (Napolitano 2011, p.7). In this context, we can understand the reason of a dramatic restructuring for the change by considering the influence of the relevant actors in the network structure (Fligstein and McAdam 2012, p.30).

It can be said that Eroğlu's harsh attitude caused a limited progress in the peace process compared to the previous negotiations. Therefore, the distance between core parties and their leaders would cause serious problems in negotiating sensitive and complex chapters. The property division is an example. In addition to Eroğlu's refusal to link this part, it is also defended by Greek Cypriot politicians to the territorial division became an additional topic of discussion (Napolitano 2011, p.8). When the two sides reached a complete stalemate with disappointing overall results in early 2012, the UN would turn to abandon its support for the Cyprus talks. Thus, there was a period of suspension of peace talks. There is also other reason for this suspension.

It was the economic crisis that hit the Republic of Cyprus in the same 2012. For President Christofias, getting the Republic of Cyprus back on track financially has become a priority over organizing peace talks. This would also apply to much of 2013. As a result, the resumption of negotiations was delayed until 2014, due to the presidential elections in Cyprus and recurring debates between Eroğlu and the new president of the Republic of Cyprus, Nikos Anastasiades over the content of the previously mentioned joint declaration (Morelli 2018, p.8).

Under strong US pressure, in early 2014, an agreement was reached on how to resume negotiations. And the negotiations started again. However, this new round of negotiations was interrupted due to the gas crisis between the ROC and TRNC also the guarantor powers Turkey. Where this event will be discussed in the next chapter, it suffices to say that it puts more pressure on an already bad relationship between them. It also caused the negotiations to be suspended until 2015 (Economic Development Foundation 2016).

Between May 2015 and July 2019, the last peace talks would take place. During this period, the internal and external prospects for a solution were extraordinarily high, with the replacement of Eroğlu, by Turkish Cypriot politician Mustafa Akıncı (Tzimitras et al. 2016, p.9). During these years, he acted as a mediator in the UN Cyprus talks. These two sides not only maintained a friendly relationship with each other but also became outspoken advocates of a federal solution for Cyprus (Grigoriadis 2017, p.2). Throughout 2015 and most of 2016, the talks were characterized by an intense collaboration with an extremely positive atmosphere and notable overall progress. In 2016, the UN Secretary-General reported that both leaders consistently demonstrated great determination and political will to achieve their common goal of reaching a comprehensive solution as soon as possible. In addition, UN Secretary-General would praise them for allowing the EU to participate closely in the preparation of the implementation of the *Acquis Communautaire* (United Nations Security Council 2016).

Moreover, in 2016, the collapse of the coalition government in TRNC and the nationalist parties gaining a place in the parliament would cause to leave the negotiations. However, peace talks continued (Morelli 2016, p.14). By the end of the year, the negotiations would face insurmountable problems. Where the two sides have moved forward in most of the chapters under negotiation, it was time to address the complicated issues that had been shelved during all previous negotiations.

In particular, the territorial and security guarantees chapters were constantly pushed to the final stages. When a solution looms on the horizon, these divisions would present themselves as major obstacles (Grigoriadis 2017, p.1). As the sides struggled over the regional chapter and additionally experienced historical disagreements, so, the end of 2016 witnessed the first hesitation in nineteen months. Complicating the process, Turkish leaders instructed Akinci to refrain from making concessions on the land issue without an agreement on security guarantees (Morelli 2018, p.17).

Unlike the Turkish government's relative support for the Cyprus talks in previous years, its role has become increasingly dominant in 2017. At this last stage, the Turkish leaders, in which the guarantor states were directly involved in the peace talks, put forward the demand that EU rights should apply to Turkish citizens living on the island in the future (Morelli 2018, p.18). Moreover, Turkey refused the territory demands of the Greek Cypriot. And Turkey's soldiers' presence in the future and the role of the guarantor of the Turkish Cypriot is not acceptable to Greek Cypriots. These issues proved to be important points of conflict in subsequent negotiations. Where Greek Cypriot politicians demanded the removal of historical guarantees and soldiers of Turkey, Turkish Cypriot and Turkish leaders refused, arguing that the Turkish Cypriot community would not feel safe because of Cyprus' history of ethnic violence (Morelli 2018, p.30).

The Turkish government was probably unwilling to withdraw. It has increased most of its military influence on Cyprus for geopolitical reasons. The relevant disputes in the negotiations and the deteriorating relationship between Akinci and Anastasiades created a negative atmosphere in the last meetings of 2017. It is also that the friendship of these presidents was seriously damaged after the law passed by the parliament of the Republic of Cyprus that allowed an enosis referendum to be commemorated in Cypriot public schools. And Akinci did not see any urgent attempt from Anastasiades to oppose this law. In February, the talks even came to an eight-week standstill, as Akinci demanded the repeal of the provocative law.

This situation serves as an appropriate historical reference, showing to the point where it was organized from national politics (Fligstein and McAdam 2012, p.117). The interviews were very difficult in 2017, after the blame games between the two Cypriot sides regained popularity and the most important negotiations. The last round of Cyprus talks to date would come to an end (Morelli 2018, p.20).

3.3. Conclusion

This chapter presents the striking point of the protracted conflict in Cyprus, rather than the background of the protracted conflict, important developments and provides a comprehensive analysis of the peace talks. The parties in the Cyprus negotiations and leading actors in the field the Greek Cypriot, the Turkish Cypriot, UN and Turkey have shown how important roles they can play in the peace process efforts in Cyprus. In addition, the Greek government as a guarantor of the Greek Cypriot community, the British government as a guarantor, and the US government as an effective superpower took part, albeit in a much more limited manner.

When the Cyprus talks are explained as an SAF in this chapter, it can be explained from the paragraphs above. While it can be said that the SAF has emerged, there have been multiple interruptions or pauses in the negotiations for different reasons. And each of these can be seen as an era. It can be expressed as a period of continuous contentious interaction between field actors (Fligstein and McAdam 2012, p.21). The periods between peace talks have always been characterized by a sense of uncertainty between the parties about the future of the SAF. It can be said that this uncertainty always persists until new peace talks are held and a certain period of conflict is over.

To sum up, one of the problems standing in the way of reunification is that these parties have sought to achieve this goal, often through self-interested or maximalist positions. Another factor underlying the lack of success is that both communities ultimately prefer a different scenario. Most Turkish Cypriots have long dreamed of their own state, and many Greek Cypriots believed that Cyprus should return to a unified state dominated by them. However, while failure to reunify Cyprus was the general theme, both sides repeatedly came close to reaching a final solution. Under the right circumstances, it seems possible for citizens and politicians on both sides of the island to distance themselves from the historical games of mistrust and blame. Looking at the peace talks mentioned above, the destructive potential of the parliamentary and presidential elections and the highly problematic nature of the negotiation method becomes apparent. Near-perfect political conditions would be what was needed when this method left the negotiations open-ended and the solution required the national and regional parties to reach an agreement. These should be conditions that also allow agreement on extremely difficult and sensitive parts of the territory.

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CHAPTER IV

CYPRUS NATURAL GAS AS A SAF

This chapter will explain the natural gas in Cyprus, the involvement of TRNC and RoC parties in another SAF. Regarding Cyprus natural gas, first of all, what happened between the parties mentioned above will be examined to what extent each them know other side's presence. The process experienced here is explained as a SAF. Namely, natural gas exploration off the coast of Cyprus has led to a new conflict. This is also related to the protracted Cyprus conflict and largely determined by the protracted Cyprus conflict. This conflict is between TRNC and the RoC government over ownership and exploration rights of Cypriot natural gas. In this context, TRNC and RoC are seen in another SAF.

4.1. Economic Value of the Natural Gas

First of all, providing information about the discovered natural gas and its financial value, expressing how important it is for the parties will form the basis for understanding the subject. An important natural gas discovery off Egypt, drew serious attention in other countries bordering the Mediterranean in 2003. Later, the awareness of the presence of natural gas under the Mediterranean seabed led regional states to their own exploration activities (Gürel et al. 2013, p.1). Later, with the discovery of gas deposits, it was estimated that there is potentially 122 trillion cubic meters of gas in the region (see Figure 2). For example, it accounts for about eight percent of Russia's total gas reserves. These amounts not only meet the rapidly increasing energy needs of the Eastern Mediterranean, but also ensure the financial development of the Cyprus (Kaynak 2017, p.7). Moreover, given the different forecasts, it can be said that natural gas will likely have a major impact on the future economic situation of the Eastern Mediterranean region. Additionally, this is the case important for circumstances where current conflicts can turn into cooperation (Ellinas 2016, p.1).

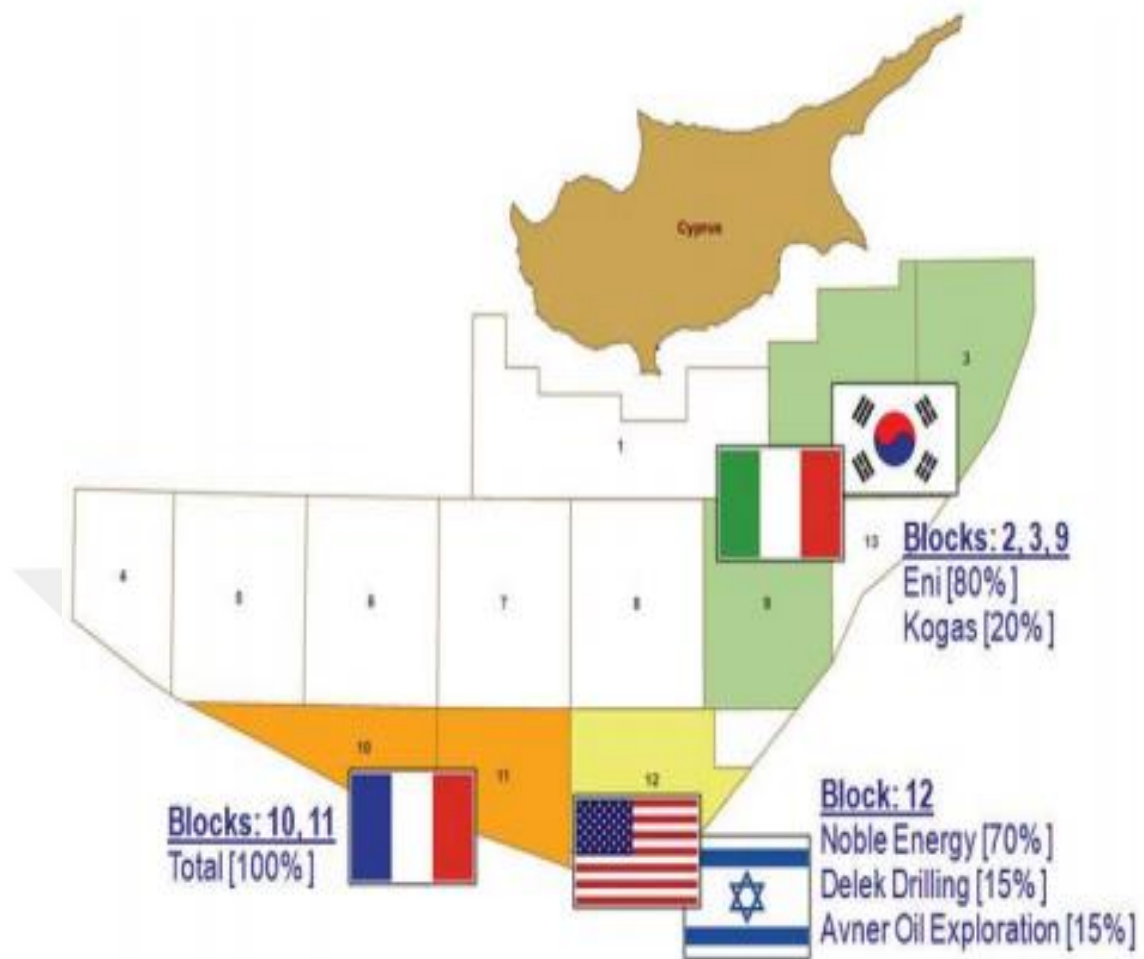


Figure 2. Cyprus Gas News (2013c).(Block 12 is in Yellow)

Above mentioned economic values are more important for the Republic of Cyprus. Because, the 0.15% share of Cyprus equals approximately 2 billion barrels. The net worth of 2 billion barrels is \$200 billion on a \$100 basis per barrel (Rolandis 2014). Total gas (\$ 150 billion) and oil (\$ 200 billion) equals \$ 350 billion. Approximately 40% of the total will be exploration and drilling costs and the rights of oil companies. Thus, Cyprus will have a net worth of 210 billion dollars, approximately 15 times the value of the Cypriot economy, based on its gross domestic product (Eminel 2016: Rolandis 2014).

The importance of this reserve for RoC can be better understood when compared with its small-scale economy and energy consumption. The effects of natural gas are extremely important in terms of both improving the economy and meeting the energy needs of RoC. Moreover, if RoC gasifies its economy and no new discoveries are made, it can meet all its economic and energy requirements. One way to illustrate this point is to take into account the number of years it takes for RoC to deplete its estimated gas reserves with and without exports (see Figure 3).

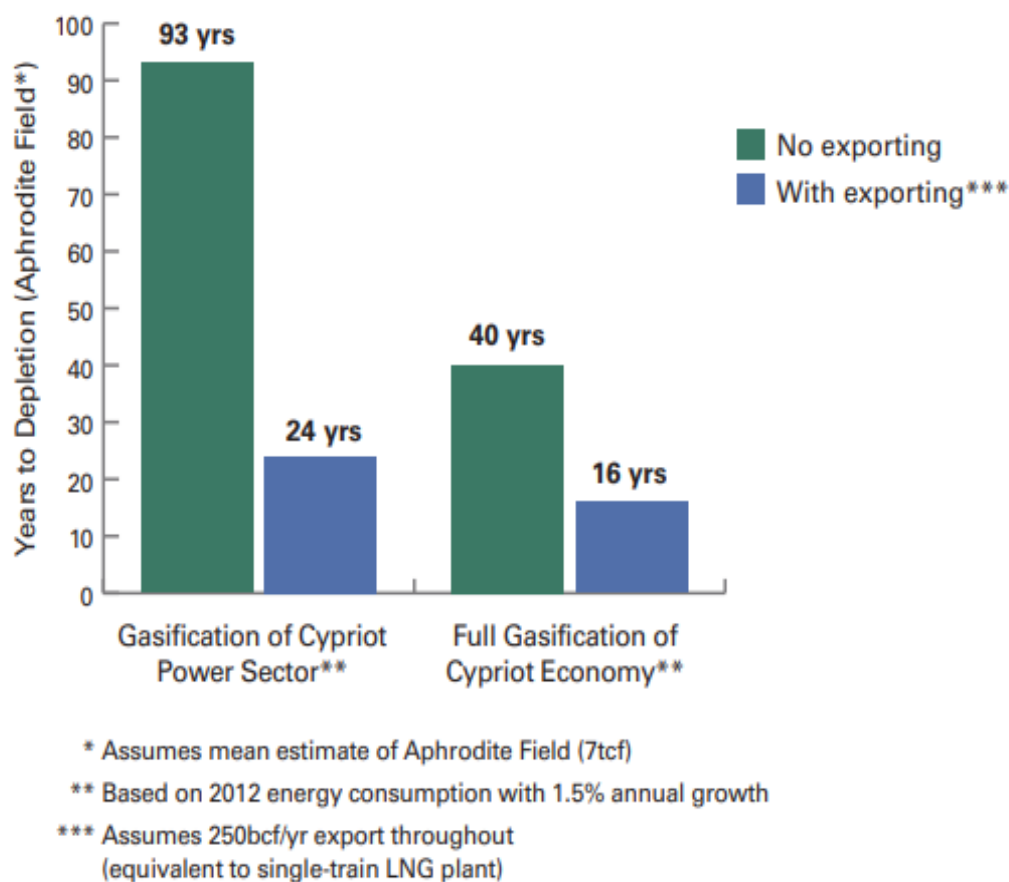


Figure 3. The MIT Energy Initiative, Massachusetts Institute of Technology 2013

On the other hand, it is clear that there is a complete harmony when the energy policy considered between the Republic of Cyprus, which is referred to as the incumbent, and the European Union. Moreover, the assessment of the Republic of Cyprus in terms of energy is related to the minimum burden maximum benefit approach to the economy. (Republic of Cyprus, Ministry of Energy, Commerce, Industry and Tourism 2015). As can be seen from the above, ending the monopoly of the Cyprus Electricity Authority (EAC) over electricity generation and supply is seen as an important goal. Thus, it is aimed to liberalize the electricity market in Cyprus. (www.mcit.gov.cy/mcit/mcit.nsf/dmlenergyservice_en/dmlenergyservice_en? 2015).

Considering the subject in a strategic context, establishing and operating a facility where the Republic of Cyprus will store oil is seen as important as the objectives stated above. A comprehensive goal is on the agenda of the Republic of Cyprus in terms of developing sustainable energy and removing the pollution created by old-fashioned energies. (www.mcit.gov.cy/mcit/mcit.nsf/dmlenergyservice_en/dmlenergyservice_en 2015). In connection with these measures, the Republic of Cyprus (RoC) also aims to promote more environmentally friendly oil products and other energy sources such as natural gas (Republic of Cyprus, Ministry of Energy, Commerce, Industry and Tourism 2015). Following the discoveries in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of the Republic of Cyprus, local energy markets and the gasification possibilities of Cypriot natural gas were overwhelmingly discussed.

It is emphasized that regardless of the size of internal gas substitution, Cyprus have sufficient resources for exports. The main reason for this is that Cyprus has a small energy consumption profile compared to the size of the discovered gas field. Oil can be replaced by natural gas in the following years (Paltsev et al. 2013). There are possibilities for Cyprus to take notice in this matter. One of the conditions is that Cyprus gasifiers effect economy positively. In this case, there will still be important export options for Cyprus (Paltsev et al. 2013).

4.2. Energy Dependencies of Both Sides

Cyprus is heavily dependent on oil as it is the only fuel available for electricity generation and other fixed use. In recent years, the consumption of indigenous petroleum products of the Republic of Cyprus is over 2 million tons per year. The Cyprus Electricity Authority (EAC) is the largest user of petroleum in Cyprus. In Cyprus, the installed electricity generation capacity increased by 46% between 2000 and 2010 from 471 Megawatts (MW) to 1465 Megawatts (MW). Electricity generation increased by 57% between 2000 and 2010. About 150,000 tons of kerosene and 330,000 tons of engine diesel used above mentioned years. Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) also used 50,000 tons of light fuel oil (LFO) in 2010 for industrial / commercial and heating needs, and 30,000 tons for the same purpose (Giamouridis 2012). As stated above, energy is always one of the most important for the economy in the Republic of Cyprus (RoC). Ensuring energy independence in both the electricity and oil sectors and providing safe and quality energy are seen as the two cornerstones of Cyprus energy policy (Pilavachi 2009, p.548). It can be said that the finding of natural gas reserves in Block 12 is the most important development in the energy and economy for RoC.

Since RoC is the only fuel available based on electricity generation and other fixed use, it is significantly dependent on oil. Domestic consumption of petroleum products is just over 2 million tons per year (Giamouridis 2012). As stated above, energy consumption has been one of the major expenditures of the Republic of Cyprus economy. Economically, it is clear that the discovery of natural gas reserves off the Cyprus coast in 2011 was the most important development for the RoC in terms of energy and economy. In addition, the discovery of natural gas in Cypriot waters seems to be an important development for Cyprus' economy. The natural gas discoveries of the Republic of Cyprus will definitely have an impact on the energy, especially the economy (Eminel 2016).

On the other hand, TRNC is a country dependent on foreign countries in terms of primary energy resources. And the primary energy source is petroleum and petroleum products. The main fuel products imported into TRNC are unleaded gasoline 95, unleaded gasoline 97, diesel, Eurodiesel, kerosene and LPG (liquefied petroleum gas). In addition, jet A-1 fuel used in air transport is among the imported petroleum products. The usage field of fuel-oil is limited to power plants. An important part of the petroleum products in TRNC is used in the transportation sector. Diesel, kerosene and LPG (liquefied petroleum gas) are used in houses and industry. On the other hand, there are no transportation vehicles with LPG in TRNC. 30-35% of the total LPG consumption is realized as mass LPG (Hocknell 2001, p185). The use of LPG in houses and industry is for heating purposes. Although natural gas is not used in the known sense in the country, It is seen that LPG and other energy products consumption has reached a certain level.

The economic value of natural gas discovered in the waters of Cyprus can be seen as a way to understand the embedded strategic action fields. In the context of the theory, Numerous economic fields can turn into crises and trigger reactions of actors in the fields. In such a situation, incumbents are likely to be displaced as the challengers take action to demand more be done to stabilize the system. This causes the perception of a legitimacy crisis. And this general perception can trigger crises in other fields as well. Indeed, war or civil unrest begins to undermine important fields of economic strategic action and further weaken control over it (Fligstein and McAdam 2012, p.76).

In the light of the information given above, it is to give an idea about the relative economy of the various ways of making money for Cyprus gas resources, which have been recently discovered. Of course, economics alone will not dictate the final choice of path; However, they play an important role and also assist in providing context. Then, it provides that some degree of guidance to any decision-making process that struggles with multiple non-economic issues such as conflict.

4.3. Effort to get Superiority

On the one hand, the Turkish Cypriots signed agreements with Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan in particular Turkey., on the other hand RoC has signed different maritime delimitation agreements with the governments of Egypt, Lebanon and Israel. In this context, strategic actors struggle with their rivals by forming a greater strategic alliance. The purpose of this is to design the fields according to their own interests. Thus, large groups challenge small groups by imposing power (Fligstein and McAdam 2012, p.15). Furthermore, RoC took the first steps towards gas exploration at the beginning of the 21st century. And this has resulted in the limitation of a 51 square km offshore field where contracted gas companies can explore for natural gas (Gürel et al. 2013, p.7). Later, the EEZ located in the waters of the southern part of Cyprus, was divided into thirteen license blocks to be offered to many international companies (www.un.org/depts/los/convention_agreements/texts/unclos/part5.htm).

Subsequently, the first natural gas drilling was carried out in 2007 by US-based Noble Energy, the company that offered and obtained exploration licenses (Gürel et al. 2013, p.3). What has changed since 2007 is that, Noble Energy made a highly promising discovery at Aphrodite, a gas field located at Block 12 in the RoC's alleged EEZ in 2011 (Giamouridis 2013, p.19). Naturally, this discovery aroused great enthusiasm among Cypriots as well. Domestic expectations for the financial future of Cyprus peaked. This would be especially true for Greek Cypriot citizens and politicians who see it as a way of preventing the difficult economic crisis of the Republic of Cyprus (International Crisis Group 2012, p.3). This process was mainly aimed at exploratory drilling, demarcating maritime borders for the RoC and aligning energy interests with those of other regional actors ignoring Turkish Cypriots. Republic of Cyprus is actor who has disproportionate influence in a field and tend to reflect their interests heavily in the organization of the strategic action field. Thus, the aims of the field are adjusted to the interests. And the status in the field are defined by RoC claiming on the lion's share of material and status rewards (Fligstein and McAdam 2012, p.13). Thus, these activities would greatly hinder the hopes that Cyprus would benefit from natural gas reserves in the near future.

Furthermore, natural gas discovered and agreements in Cypriot waters has brought problems. As explained above, the Republic of Cyprus' attempts about the unilateral natural gas discoveries and agreements seem to be required counter action for the Turkish Cypriot administration. Because RoC conduct process by ignoring the Turkish Cypriots. The step to be taken for the Turkish Cypriot leadership would be to get the support of the Turkish government. And Turkish Cypriots cooperate with the Turkish government. Turkey and the Turkish Cypriot leadership gas policies have conducted in accordance with their own interests. These attempts resulted from the agreements the Republic of Cyprus made for its own interests, ignoring the Turks' rights. Turkey and Turkish Cypriot leadership also explained the license blocks. And thus, the overlapping license fields between Turks and Greeks occurred around Cyprus. The Turkish Cypriot community, which does not have a discovery platform, licensed TPAO. The challengers will likely be the first to take innovative action and have the opportunity to develop their position and strategy in this field in new ways. (Fligstein and McAdam 2012, p.22).

With the help of Turkey, the Turkish Cypriot leadership developed reciprocity principle that based on an innovative policy, instead of continuing protest and warning that unilateral action should be shaped. These developments brought new disputes. The first of these disputes is among the two actors, RoC and TRNC governments- regarding the possessions and discovery rights of the Cyprus gas. Importantly, the Turkish government played a very important role here as well. The second is the field between the Republic of Cyprus and the Turkish government regarding the borders of the sea borders in the field that the Republic of Cyprus claims to be the continental shelf. The conflicts regarding natural gas will be explained one by one below. Relevant strategic actions will also be discussed.

4.4. Disputes are carried to International Platform

The first mentioned problem is that natural gas conflict between TRNC and RoC viewed on who owns legal rights to its natural resources. This debate is linked to the protracted Cyprus conflict as it stems from the crucial question regarding sovereign ownership over Cyprus. Greek Cypriot politicians refused to discuss cooperation with the Turkish Cypriots or the sharing of future income. However, pointing to the 1960 constitution, Turkish Cypriot politicians stated the right of equal sovereignty for both Cypriot communities. In addition, Turkish Cypriot politicians stated that they have the right to make decisions regarding natural gas (Gürel et al.2013, p.44).

The Turkish government fully supports the Turkish Cypriots. Moreover, Turkish Cypriot politicians argue that since the official power-sharing structures collapsed in 1963, there has been no suitable government to represent the Cypriot community. Therefore, they argue that no gas search should be initiated unless the protracted Cyprus conflict is resolved and there is a new government (Gürel et al. 2014, p.8).

Moreover, Turkish Cypriots argued that there should be a joint committee that could manage natural gas taking into account. The issue here is more relevant to the non-recognition of the Turkish Cypriot community as co-owner of the Cypriot gas. The establishment of TRNC is not internationally recognized as the legitimate government of Cyprus. However, while Greek Cypriot politicians have repeatedly stated that they will eventually share the gas wealth, they also reject the idea that Turkish Cypriot politicians have any say over Cypriot gas. In addition, Greek Cypriots ignored Turkish Cypriot requests to stop drilling or establish a joint committee (Gürel et al 2013, p.18). However, in 2011, the Turkish Cypriot president Eroğlu suggested that such a committee would need to seek approval for drilling and written approval for treaties and licenses (Gürel et al. 2013, p.46).

At the same time, the agreement that the wealth will be shared must be guaranteed. Despite the demands of Turkish Cypriot politicians, the international community stood behind the Greek Cypriot position. Since the international community recognizes the Republic of Cyprus as the one government of Cyprus, it naturally evaluates its actions for gas exploration appropriately international law. However, the Security Council has made clear that it expects final gas revenue to benefit both communities of Cyprus equally (Gürel et al. 2013, p.60).

A second major dispute over natural gas in Cypriot waters is primarily between the Turkish government and the RoC. While Turkish politicians already condemn the RoC's gas exploration efforts for the reasons explained above, they also argue that the RoC's EEZ boundaries violate Turkish sovereignty. That is to say, parts of the RoC EEZ are located in what the Turkish government claims as the continental shelf. The EEZ, as indicated by the Turkish government, are blocks located on a sea border determined by the Egypt and the RoC in 2003 (Gürel et al. 2014, p.10). EEZ disputes characterized the Eastern Mediterranean's current gas exploration. There are contradictory interpretations of the Maritime Law regulations that determine the maritime borders for the Turkish government and especially the Republic of Cyprus. Although the details of their legal debate will not be fully discussed, some things can be mentioned here.

First, Turkish leaders advocated the legal limitation of the RoC's maritime borders (Gürel et al. 2013, p.26). However, the Turkish government's expectation was denied by Greek Cypriot politicians. In addition, during this process, both sides have repeatedly objected to each other's statement through the UN (Gürel et al. 2013, p.29). Also, the RoC and the Turkish government would begin an energy hub rivalry for the region.

Gas discoveries in Cyprus as well as the geographic location of the island were commercially suitable for natural gas. Cyprus is in a good position to transport gas from the regional governments' reserves to larger markets such as Europe. Moreover, the EU has seen Cyprus gas as an opportunity to get rid of Russia, on which it is now highly dependent (Kaynak 2017, p.4). However, , the Republic of Cyprus made intense diplomatic efforts to position itself as a key player in these plans in context of the export of gas to Europe. As a result of these efforts, it once again brought Greek Cypriot politicians face to face with Turkish politicians. Bad diplomatic relations were placed one more time between the RoC and Turkish leaders have prevented such a route from taking place so far. Greek Cypriot politicians rejected even the slightest idea of energy export to EU with the help of Turkey (Gürel et al. 2013, p.26). Here can be mentioned as a competition rather than a dispute, the issue was re-adding a problem to the diplomatic relations between the RoC and TRNC also Turkey.

On the other hand, a pipeline between Cyprus and Turkey, the cheapest to send gas to Europe, and not only the fastest method, but also such cooperation, to build the necessary confidence for a solution of the Cyprus conflict (Gürel et al. 2013, p.27). It is mentioned above that the parties compete over the control of natural gas in Cypriot waters. The RoC and TRNC governments can be seen as the leading actors of another SAF that emerged when Cyprus gas became a political and economic interest. The gains and status awards from the control and commercialization of natural gas can be explained as what is at stake between these parties.

In addition to a clear understanding of this aim of the SAF, the field rules governing the action considered legitimate also appear to be known to each field actor. It can also be said that there are varying degrees of power when it comes to who controls and commercializes the gas. In this regard, the Republic of Cyprus can be considered to be in an incumbent position in the SAF. Where its actions are supported by the international community and recognized by international law, the RoC sees most of its interests reflected in those within the SAF.

Due to this international support, governments and gas companies of the countries of the region, RoC had advantages for energy cooperation. At the same time, it seems that TRNC government is not supported in their position like RoC. TRNC can be seen as a challenger as it has less control over the functioning of this SAF. When actors firmly oppose SAF's status quo, they can very easily express an alternative vision of the field and their position there. (Fligstein and Madam 2012, p.13). In particular, the governments of Turkey and TRNC, try elaborate this disadvantageous status quo and effort to access to innovative forms of action for strategic change.

4.5. Reciprocal Movements of Both Sides

When gas was discovered in Cypriot waters by Noble Energy in 2011, tension over Cypriot gas increased. This also meant that it would be make changes in the foreign policies of TRNC, RoC. These tensions would lead to multiple moments of crisis in the following years. When it ignored the demands of the Turkish Cypriots for cooperation in the energy field, the Turkish government came to the fore as the guardian of Turkish Cypriot interests. In this process, Turkish and Turkish Cypriot sides making objections through the UN would largely challenge the gas-related activities of the RoC (Özgür and Hayriye 2017, p.40).

The rhetoric of Turkish officials has become much more aggressive and even started warnings. According to this rhetoric, if the RoC drilled in the EEZ that indicated by the Turkish government, there would be inevitable a military conflict. During this process, the Turkish government and TRNC government also signed a continental shelf definition agreement. With this agreement, they demarcated a maritime zone that legitimized their right to exploration for gas around Cyprus. This move would cause new conflicts, as the field whose boundaries were determined in this agreement coincided with the EEZ of the Republic of Cyprus (Economic Development Foundation 2016). Thus, the governments of Turkey and TRNC would give tit for tat response to the actions of the ROC. From 2011, they would state their own exploration licenses and threaten RoC with drilling in every field RoC did (Faustmann et al. 2012, p.25).

These strategic actions are challenging in the context of the nature of this SAF surrounding Cypriot gas. Moreover, the mutual strategy between the parties in 2011 led to the first example of the first military crisis. When Noble Energy launched its first exploration initiative, Turkey's Minister Erdogan warned Turkey would send its own research ships and attack boats, military frigates would accompany it. Then, uncertainty emerged in the Republic of Cyprus as to whether the Turkish army's intervention would be imminent. The presence of Turkish warships and Turkish military exercises increased these fears, although this would not be the case in the end (Gürel et al. 2013, p.67).

But the Turkish government would also avoid military intervention. In this context, cooperation between the two Cypriot communities on gas could have been achieved with a reciprocity strategy and demonstrations of military power (Kahveci 2017, p.40). It is also, the Turkish government warned regions countries, if they collaborated with the Republic of Cyprus, they would damage the countries' diplomatic relations with Turkey. In addition, the Turkish government warned international oil and gas companies; If they are working with government of the RoC, they would be remained outside of Turkey's future energy plans (Gürel et al. 2013, p.72). Contrary to the statements explained above, the Republic of Cyprus has greatly increased defence cooperation with the Israeli and Italian governments in response to Turkish governments' statements. It was established further cooperation on natural gas with the governments of Egypt, Israel and Greece against Turkish threats (Grishin et al. 2016, p.2267).

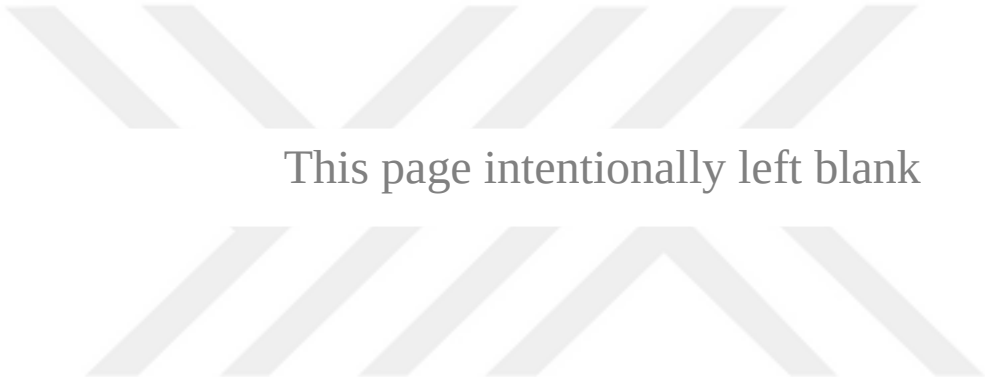
McAdam and Fligstein explain that SAFs are generally structured around competition, coercion or cooperation, but generally elements of the three forms of interaction are visible in the SAF. In this case, coercion and competition best describe the nature of the strategic actions of the parties (Fligstein and McAdam 2012, p.14). As mentioned above, these field actors also used political alliances as a form of strategic action. McAdam and Fligstein emphasize that strategic actors benefit from cooperative coalitions and imperative hierarchies as different tools to recompose the field.

They can form coalitions with some groups in a strategic field of action to form a larger group, and then use that large group to compete with other groups (Fligstein and McAdam 2012, p.15). In this context, Turkey and TRNC government improve their position in the SAF by making alliance. On the other hand, the RoC has strengthened its current position by signing agreements on defence and energy cooperation with countries in the region. Furthermore, the Republic of Cyprus's increasing defence and energy cooperation helped motivate the Turkish and TRNC governments to take strategic action in 2014. When Turkey and TRNC government failed to stop the ROC's unilateral drilling, they began to resort to more drastic measures. In 2014, the Turkish navy expelled a Norwegian search vessel contracted with TOTAL, which was planning to conduct research in the ninth block of the RoC's alleged EEZ. Later, a Turkish seismic survey ship moved to the same EEZ and sent a Navigation Telex (Navtex) in 2014. The dispute would not be resolved unless the Turkish Cypriots were given a better position in the Cyprus talks and gas sharing was discussed at the negotiating table. But, Greek Cypriot politicians refused these demands. And they condemned the action of Turkey as an attack on the sovereignty of their territory.

As a result of these, in 2015, President Anastasiades immediately withdrew from the Cyprus talks in 2015. And the talks were to be suspended until the end of Turkish seismic operations (Morelli 2018, p.12). These early moments of military crisis can be explained as a period of conflict within the SAF. The strategic actions of TRNC and Turkish governments can be explained as innovative forms of action. Because it reveals a deep sense of uncertainty among field actors about the structure and logic of SAF. As McAdam and Fligstein argue, the mobilization of both groups can get extraordinary intensity when it comes to fields that are currently characterized by established incumbents and challengers (Fligstein and McAdam 2012, p.21).

4.6. Conclusion

In this chapter, Cyprus gas has been handled as an SAF and related concepts are explained within the scope of the subject. While Cyprus could gain enormous profits from natural gas reserves in the future. And it could be a key energy player in the Eastern Mediterranean, these expectations are severely overshadowed by difficult political realities. The Cyprus conflict has also been embedded with the natural gas dispute, making it another subject of discussion. As problems arise in sharing an island, similar problems arise in sharing natural resources. Although energy cooperation would have enormous benefits for the RoC and TRNC governments, the natural gas issue so far has only exacerbated tensions. These parties interact in the natural gas SAF that is not structured around efficient cooperation, and they are shaped around competition and coercion.



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CHAPTER V

INTERACTIONS OF CYPRUS CONFLICT SAF AND CYPRUS NATURAL GAS SAF

When discoveries of natural gas off the Cyprus coast sparked great interest in TRNC government and the RoC government, and their interrelated interactions became more competitive and hostile. For these parties, the period between 2011 and 2019 included political tensions. In this chapter research question “What are the interaction of natural gas discoveries in Cyprus water and protracted Cyprus conflict?” is explained, using strategic action field concept.

On one hand, the RoC’s view of the discovering of natural gas off Cyprus with the TRNC indicates that there is no legal basis for any cooperation while the protracted Cyprus conflict continues. On the other hand, TRNC’s view of the joint discovering of natural gas off Cyprus with the RoC is embodied by their wider argument regarding the “rights” of the Turkish Cypriot community based on the 1960 Constitution. In this context, as mentioned above, the approaches of both sides to this issue will be explained one by one.

In 2010, when the RoC unilaterally established its sea borders (EEZ) with Israel, Turkish Cypriot and Turkish politicians seemed uncomfortable with this situation. In a Turkish press release, it was stated that by ignoring the rights of Turkish Cypriots, such efforts by Greek Cypriots for an agreement were rather premature and raised questions about their true intentions and sincerity regarding the peace settlement process (Gürel et al. 2013, p.52).

The year 2011, when Noble Energy had just discovered natural gas in Cyprus waters, the Turkish side adopted the more aggressive energy strategy. Natural gas hostility contributed to the negative atmosphere that led to the complete suspension of peace talks between Cypriot presidents Christofias and Eroğlu. However, there were various reasons for the collapse of these negotiations, the most important reason being that these two leaders had such opposing views of what constituted a suitable Cyprus solution.

In addition, the reason for the intensification of discussions about natural gas during the Eroğlu-Christofias years is that possible solution seems unlikely. For example, in 2011, the Republic of Cyprus approved the first exploratory drilling, knowing that this controversial move would not significantly damage the ongoing Cyprus talks. Similarly, Turkey and TRNC government has provided more provocative way of speaking again at the initiative of the Republic of Cyprus on natural gas. In 2012 and 2013, when the Cyprus talks were completely suspended, these parties launched their own discoveries and continued threatening discourses against the Republic of Cyprus without worrying about how it might hinder peace talks. In 2014, the peace talks that started between Anastasiades and Eroğlu were postponed ten times because of natural gas.

The exact cause is the NAVTEX crisis mentioned in the previous chapter. In September of that year, amid another failure of the negotiations, the Republic of Cyprus launched a new drilling operation and approved a formal agreement with the Egyptian government for the joint discovering of natural gas ([www.cyprus-mail.com/2014/09/11/egypt-ratifies-agree-ment-with-cyprus-for-co-exploitation-of-natural gass/](http://www.cyprus-mail.com/2014/09/11/egypt-ratifies-agree-ment-with-cyprus-for-co-exploitation-of-natural-gass/) 2014).

Perhaps these developments motivated the Turkish government and TRNC to move a research vessel to the EEZ of the Republic of Cyprus a month later. And TRNC and Turkey separate several concession blocks. This situation caused Anastasiades withdraw from the Cyprus talks, pointing TRNC and Turkish governments violated the maritime sovereignty of RoC. In a letter sent to UN Secretary- Ban Ki-moon-, Anastasiades said that TRNC and Turkey's actions to destroy the good and the effort to create a favourable environment. He also warned that have the potential to remove the entire negotiating process from the actual rail (www.cyprus-mail.com/2014/10/21/anastasiades-let-ter-to-ban-circulated-at-security-council/ 2014). He also wrote that, Turkish military ships and planes had previously harassed drill ships. It was the first time that a Turkish ship entered the EEZ to conduct seismic surveys. This only served to arouse more doubts to undermine the peace process and Turkey's commitment to it ([www.cyprus-mail.com/2014/09/11/egypt-ratifies-agree-ment-with-cyprus-for-co-exploitation-of-natural gass/](http://www.cyprus-mail.com/2014/09/11/egypt-ratifies-agree-ment-with-cyprus-for-co-exploitation-of-natural-gass/) 2014). Anastasiades made it clear that the negotiations can only continue if the Turkish government stops its aggressive activities (www.cyprusmail.com/2014/10/07/cyprus-talks-suspended/ 2014).

However, the more obvious reason for these renewed negotiations in 2014 was that successful discoveries in the waters of Cyprus were also observed by the United States government that started to persuade the parties in Cyprus to resume peace talks (Senay et al. 2014, p.22). Here, it is pointed out that these US diplomatic efforts are triggered by its own energetic reasons, such as the economic interest in Cyprus' natural gas reserves and the desire to free the EU from dependence on Russian gas (www.obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2014/05/12/vice-president-biden-and-dr-jill-biden-travel-romania-and-cyprus. 2014). The year 2014, when the talks resumed, Cypriot leaders would have acknowledged the important role the United States played in making this happen, possibly through strong diplomatic pressure (www.cyprus-mail.com/2014/02/18/anastasiades-gas-crucial-to-us-role-in-talks/ 2014).

Until 2015, Cyprus talks would remain in a halt so that the Turkish government and TRNC would continue to conduct research in the claimed EEZ of the Republic of Cyprus, while at the same time making gas a priority issue at the negotiating table (Grishin et al. 2016, p.2276). The hope was not only that the gas would be included in the negotiations, but an urgent agreement that Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot politicians would jointly decide on gas in the near future (www.cyprus-mail.com/2014/11/23/davutoglu-you-cant-do-what-you-want-with-the-gas/. 2014).

The Turkish government and TRNC was well aware that rising tensions could disrupt the energy exploitation environment in Cyprus and scare foreign investors. It was clear that the Turkish purpose was not to prevent companies contracted with RoC from conducting drilling activities (www.cyprus-mail.com/2014/10/15/anastasiades-measures-according-to-developments/. 2014). It can be said from the above paragraphs that the contention in the gas surrounding the SAF contributed to the protracted conflict in the Cyprus talks and possibly the other way around.

It can also be explained that the NAVTEX crisis, which was previously mentioned as an example of a conflict period, created an external shock that started another period of conflict in peace negotiations. This is directly attributable to Fligstein and McAdam, a significant change in any of strategic action field, sending ripples to all nearby fields, like a stone thrown into a stagnant pond. This does not mean that all waves will destabilize other fields. But the waves are intense enough to occur a devastating threat to the stability of the fields. (McAdam and Fligstein 2012, p.19).

Briefly, Cypriot gas and politics undermined the peace talks rather than helping to reach a solution in Cyprus. Major parties seemed more open to participating in peace talks under certain conditions. The strife over gas has undermined trust between the parties, negatively affected the atmosphere at the negotiating table and caused the negotiations to come to a complete halt. These facts contributed to the failure of the Cyprus talks between 2011 and 2019. Moreover, exploratory operations carried out on behalf of the Republic of Cyprus have repeatedly set deadlines for ending peace talks, following a somewhat unfavourable conflict for productive negotiations. The basis of this debate is that two communities-TRNC and RoC- have used Cypriot gas as a game changer in different ways to make the peace talks.

To sum up, it should be noted that another important point is that the parties use Cypriot gas in different ways to direct the other party towards a peace solution for both sides in the protracted conflict. In this sense, Cyprus gas reflects the strategic action within the SAF surrounding the peace talks. Firstly, the Turkish government has argued that the debate on the continental shelf, an important element of the gas dispute between TRNC and the RoC, is about the comprehensive settlement of the protracted Cyprus conflict (Gürel et al. 2013, p.72). Secondly, Greek Cypriot politicians provide peace settlement as a precondition to cooperate with the TRNC on gas. They also defended this decision by referring to the legal status of the Republic of Cyprus as the sole legitimate government in Cyprus.



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CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This thesis provides the analysis of natural gas field and the protracted Cyprus conflict field by utilizing the SAFs approach conceptualized from field theory of Fligstein and McAdam (2012). It is also that this thesis is to explain second research questions is that What is the role of current natural gas discoveries in Cyprus water on the protracted Cyprus conflict? The year 2011 when natural gas was discovered in the Cyprus waters, causing disputes between TRNC government and the RoC government, closely interconnected to the protracted Cyprus conflict. In detail, it is seen that the sovereignty, equality and territorial integrity come to the fore in the way of natural gas exploration activities between TRNC and RoC. In this case, it is clear that the natural gas field's processes and results in an SAF are largely built on experiences learned from the SAF- the protracted Cyprus conflict- that preceded it.

It is seen that it is possible to talk about the political and strategic importance of Cyprus. It is also seen that the concept of sovereignty equality and territorial integrity comes to the fore in a controversial manner in the way of natural gas exploration activities. The discovered natural gas off Cyprus has turned into political issues in which the concepts of sovereignty, equality and territory regarding the protracted Cyprus conflict are discussed between RoC and TRNC in a heated way. On the other hand, as discussed throughout the thesis, great importance has also been attached to natural gas resources by international actors. This situation shows the strategic importance of resources. It is important that actors learn from not only of their limited successful strategic actions, but also from their failures in the proximate SAFs.

In detail, according to Greek Cypriots, it must be respected the sovereign rights of Greek Cypriots regarding natural gas in this sense. It can be seen that the positions of the Greek Cypriots on the issue are mainly fed by their approach to the protracted Cyprus conflict. In this conceptualization, the Republic of Cyprus is presented as the sole ruler of the island. In this sense, it can be said that the important issue regarding the position of the Republic of Cyprus is international law. With this approach, natural gas exploration activities off the island should not be indexed to a solution in Cyprus, nor should it be drawn to a negotiable ground. Another point is about the rights of Turkish Cypriots made clearly by the Republic of Cyprus. According to a statement issued by the Republic of Cyprus, the rights of Turkish Cypriots can only be returned to them after the solution. Additionally, Republic of Cyprus stated that it is legally impossible to discuss the issue on a bi-communal ground before a solution. The argument rejected by TRNC pointing both communities have equality rights in these resources. Turkish Cypriots aim to point out some dilemmas that arise as a result of the discussion of the issue with regard to international law. Taking into account the necessity doctrine the Turkish Cypriot community's rights are expressed on almost every ground by TRNC.

On the other hand, external government interventions to stabilize the protracted Cyprus conflict SAF, generally for the benefit of incumbents, find political opportunities by creating a temporary stabilization that leads to the consent of both incumbents and challengers. In this context, the encouragement of General Kofi Annan for the European Union membership was agreed upon by both RoC and TRNC in 2004. This development created a temporary stabilization for both RoC and TRNC. As a result, RoC -incumbents- gained the European Union membership.

Moreover, there are attempts within SAFs by actors that limit the capabilities of their rivals to set the course of the conflict and to create positions in which their interests are prioritized. Accordingly, it is clear that they are more likely to stabilize SAFs by imposing power. In this case, Greek Cypriots tried to suppress their opponent by establishing EEZ with partnerships as described in the earlier chapters. The Republic of Cyprus's EEZ agreements and its licensing, in a sense, determines the fate of the island where there are no Turkish Cypriots. In the eyes of the Turkish Cypriots, all these developments are against extensive solution between TRNC and RoC. Thus, the Turkish Cypriots has tried to suppress their opponent in partnership with particularly Turkey, Azerbaijan and Kyrgyzstan.

Furthermore, after all attempts about power-sharing, equality rights failed, TRNC displayed a change in behaviours. These behaviours are the reciprocal and strategical actions in natural gas SAF. Turkey and TRNC signed EEZ agreement in the face of efforts to discovering natural gas. With the Turkey's support, TRNC have started natural gas exploration off Cyprus. In detail, the efforts of the Turkish Cypriots for the TPAO energy company to continue to exist off the coast of Cyprus serve as an example of the strategic and reciprocal importance of resources rather than economic. If we look at how resources are articulated in bi-communal negotiations, we can make a similar inference. In detail, when Turkey declared NAVTEX as a response to the ongoing drilling activities of RoC in the region in 2015, the Greek Cypriot side withdrew from the negotiating table on the grounds the sovereignty, so negotiations were suspended. This situation reveals destabilize the SAFs. It is also seen how sensitive the issue is in terms of the negotiations and the future of Cyprus, although natural gas is not a topic in negotiations.

This thesis also explains that the processes among SAFs partially transform a relatively stable-generally benefit for incumbents- in crisis fields. The findings show that a previous SAF-the protracted Cyprus conflict- deeply affected subsequent SAF-natural gas. It does not seem possible for the actors to evaluate these two SAFs separately. Both actors -RoC and TRNC- have tried to stabilize their fields according to their values and interests in the protracted Cyprus conflict field but faced limited success and failure. After the emergent the natural gas field, the protracted Cyprus conflict field became the case that take a lesson for both incumbents and challengers in Cyprus.

More importantly, this thesis did not conclude that this gas-related policy was also responsible for the overall failure of the Cyprus talks. There were many factors contributing to this phenomenon. Ultimately, in the context of the protracted Cyprus conflict, it is serious inconsistencies on how they imagine a future of Cyprus, with the basic animosities and complaints that characterize their relations. While these fundamental problems created newer problems that served to further complicate the peace talks, they structurally prevented a solution. One of these problems is the natural gas issue in relation to the Cyprus talks, which can be said to have eventually become a spoiler rather than a peace instrument.

With the help of the concept-strategic action field- it is provided invaluable insight at broader concepts of process, this research examined the relationship between natural gas field and the protracted Cyprus conflict field. In particular, looking at this under-researched topic, findings cannot be automatically generalized across cases. Instead, this research provided a better understanding of these political developments in and around Cyprus.

This research not only proved the dominant negative impact of this new gas policy on the progress of the Cyprus talks, but could also help to better understand the dynamics of future Cyprus talks and attitudes of both sides and international actors. Finally, McAdam and Fligstein's concept strategic action field from field theory helped explain the strategic action and change in each of the SAFs studied. Their ideas helped to understand the complex attitudes in which the parties sought to strengthen their strategic position towards each other. And with this theory, it is shown that a positive solution in Cyprus is related to these high-risk political interests of Cypriot gas. These SAFs were described such proximate fields as natural gas field and the protracted Cyprus conflict field, highlighting how the periods of gas conflict surrounding the SAF affect the field stability of the Cyprus talks.

Focusing on the relationship between two interconnected SAFs, this study found a strong indication that disruptions in peace talks were causing a serious intensification of natural gas-related disputes. Therefore, future research can take a closer look at how the strategic actions and changes in the Cyprus talks since 2011 have affected gas policy. Undoubtedly, RoC and TRNC within the dispute have found themselves in this new reality of natural gas geopolitics. How they will determine their role and interests in this new reality will undoubtedly shed light on whether natural gas is a curse or a gift for the region.

To sum up, in addition to the above, possible solutions for RoC and TRNC are as follows. Given the many possible relationships between strategic action fields, it is important to know when the two fields are related and to be able to characterize the nature and proximity of this relationship. With this view point, the ways in which natural gas efforts off Cyprus field have influenced the negotiations so far. It is clear that the discovery of natural gas reserves in Cyprus depends on the solution of the protracted Cyprus conflict.

Considering the above, the economic and strategic importance of natural gas is of considerable importance for peace negotiations. In the context of this importance, it can be seen as the main motivation for peace talks and comprehensive resolution between TRNC and RoC. Furthermore, it is also concluded that the economic prospects of the gas reserves are convincing enough to suggest that it can provide a motivation for a solution to the protracted Cyprus conflict. It is also understandable to view natural gas as triggering factors for a solution in Cyprus. TRNC emphasizes that Turkish Cypriots have the right to benefit from the resources in particular natural gas of the island like Greek Cypriots. There is no doubt that the issues regarding the development of natural gas which are already discovered should be decided by the two communities. Therefore, Turkish Cypriots emphasize that the issue of natural resources should definitely be discussed at the negotiating table as a topic. Undoubtedly, moving the issue to the negotiating table can be beneficial as it could mean the presence of a channel through which dialogue can continue.



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APPENDICES

Appendix A



Figure 1. The UN buffer zone or "Green line" delineation, (GlobalSecurity.org, 2017)

Appendix B

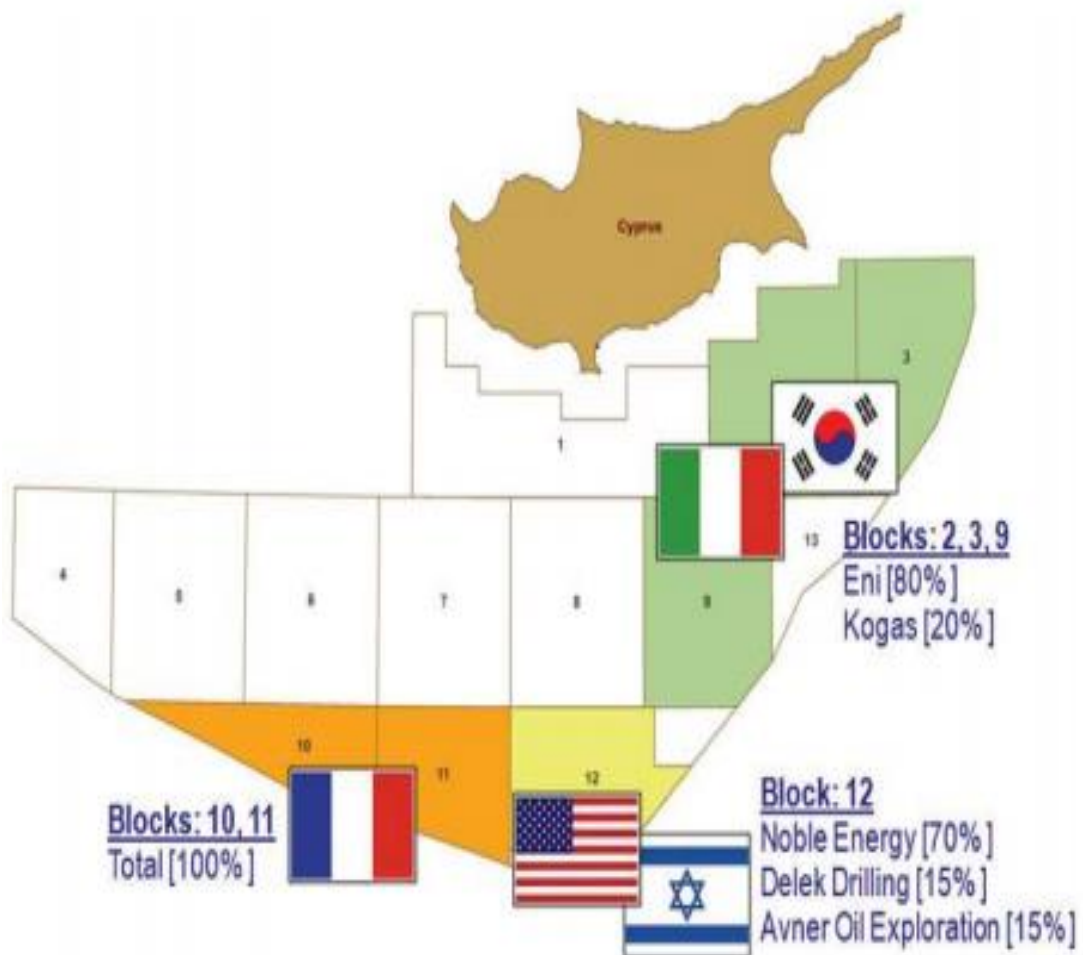


Figure 2. Cyprus Gas News (2013c) (Block 12 is in Yellow)

Appendix C

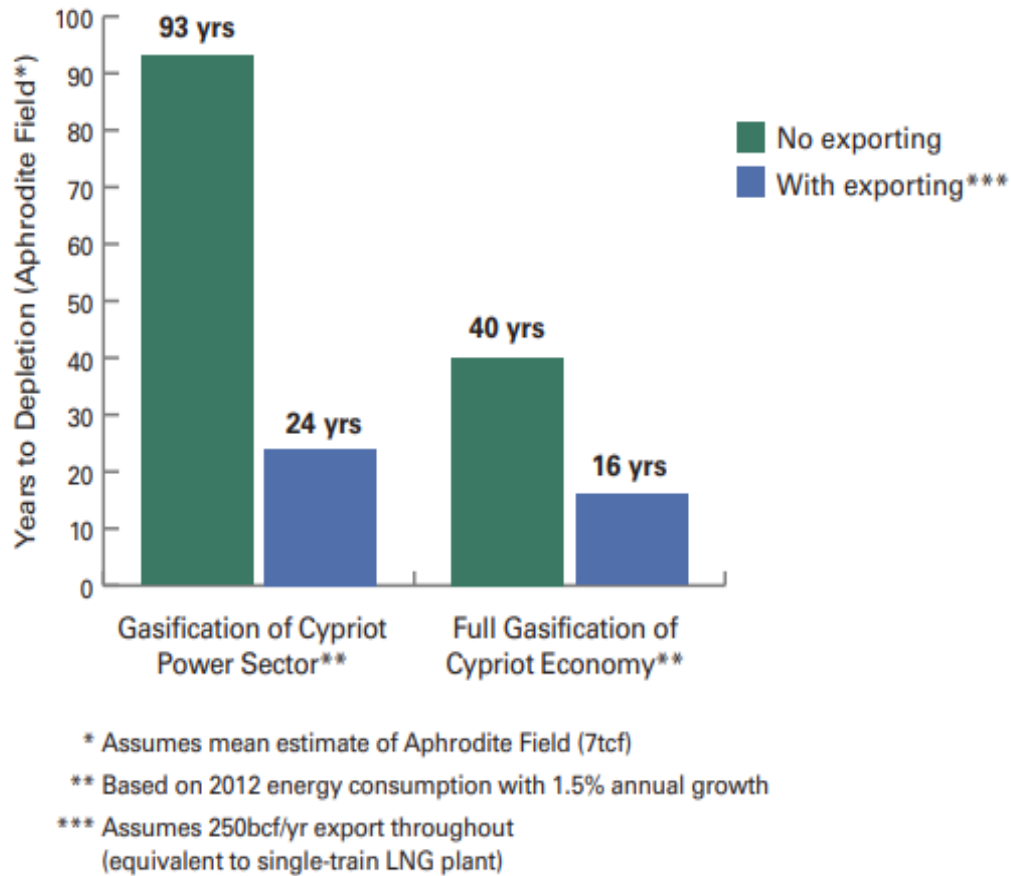


Figure 3. The MIT Energy Initiative, Massachusetts Institute of Technology 2013