A Land for Strangers
Non-Native Individuals and Communities in Cyprus

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Carlotta Brignone, Lorenzo Calvelli,
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Collana diretta da
Luca Bombardieri
Lorenzo Calvelli
Luigi Silvano
Mia Gaia Trentin

5

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Abstract

What happens when 'strangers' become part of the very fabric of a place? In Cyprus, newcomers have never been a rarity. Owing to the island's strategic position at the crossroads of the eastern Mediterranean, they have long played a central role in its history. Far from disrupting the cohesion of local society, their presence has often enriched Cypriot culture, fostering coexistence and diversity rather than friction and division.
This volume comprises seven essays that explore the diverse circumstances, narratives and contributions of non-native individuals to Cypriot society, economy, politics and culture – from prehistory to the present day. The authors, whose expertise spans archaeology, epigraphy, history and anthropology, apply distinct methodologies to a broad range of topics: the circulation of Aegean pottery; epigraphic practices in Hellenistic inscriptions; the presence of Greek Orthodox Venetians in mid-eighteenth-century Larnaca; the activities of French consuls in Cyprus during the mid-nineteenth century; the 1962 visit of Soviet professor Sergey Kisselyoff, marking the first contact between the USSR and Cyprus; the service of Václav Ježek as a priest in twentieth-century rural Cyprus; and a reflection on Cypriot antiquities collections through the work of contemporary artist Marianna Christofides. A thought-provoking preface and an introspective afterword provide the broader interpretive frame for the volume.
A Land for Strangers offers insight into Cyprus's identity as a meeting ground for human encounters, while also proposing a model of fruitful coexistence of lasting relevance to contemporary societies.

Keywords Cyprus. Mobility. Identity. Coexistence. Connectivity. Human interaction. Interdisciplinary studies.

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Table of Contents

CONTEMPORARY TIMES

AFTERWORD

A Land for Strangers

Non-Native Individuals and Communities in Cyprus

Preface
Stranger for a Day, Cypriot for a Lifetime. By Way of a Foreword

Luigi Silvano
Università di Torino, Italia

One of the things I share with the fellow editors of this Series is a genuine love for Cyprus. Nothing to be surprised about, as its stunning landscapes, its wonderful people, its diversities and contradictions – past and present – are indelibly inscribed in the memory of all fortunate to have stayed there for a while. It was Luca Bombardieri who introduced Tommaso Braccini and myself to the beauties of the island, at a time when we decided, some years ago, to start the experiment of a summer school based at the Phivos Stavrides Foundation in Larnaca. That successful experience, coupled with Luca's archeological excavations at Erimi and Lorenzo Calvelli's long expertise in studying the island's Roman past, was the natural prelude of the launch of the *Studi Ciprioti* editorial project.[1]

Nowadays Cyprus is the kind of place where one immediately feels at ease, and once back in her/his country, counts the days to returning. This surely depends on the Cypriots' hospitality and openness to multiculturalism, which, in turn, results from an uninterrupted history of migrations, foreign dominations, experiments of coexistence among groups of different ethnic, linguistic, and religious backgrounds. On the other hand, it is obvious that the experience of the present-day traveler, scholar or worker from abroad coming to the island is entirely different from that of those outlanders who arrived there in the past centuries as invaders, refugees, merchants, explorers, diplomats originating from the most diverse regions of a non-globalised world. This was the case – to mention just a couple of

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examples taken from the present book – of the anonymous traders who landed on Cyprus's shores during the Late Bronze Age, as well as of the Soviet archaeologist who visited the recently independent state on behalf of the Russian Academy of Sciences in the early 1960s.

The theme chosen for this volume, i.e. the exploration of interactions between insiders and outsiders, is connected with multiculturalism, multiethnicity, coexistence, *convivencia* on the one hand, and with insularity, connectivity, and their influence on the development of island culture(s) on the other. All these issues have been discussed numerous times in recent years, referring to both ancient and modern civilizations of the Mediterranean. Yet, the idea underlying the present collection of essays was to address such topics from a perspective not merely theoretical, but first and foremost practical, through a series of case studies revolving around the fresh examination of very different types of sources – pottery, inscriptions, archival documents, narratives, historical accounts, life stories, exhibition materials – along an intentionally broad chronological span. The Editors of the volume managed to achieve this goal by putting together a miscellany of original papers whose guiding threads are the dialectics between foreigners and locals, and the constant reshaping of the interactions between former inhabitants and newcomers. The authors of the articles have succeeded, I believe, in presenting many novel insights of the multifaceted nature of Cypriot history, and in providing new evidence on that complex and uninterrupted process of arrivals and departures, emigrations and returns, which started four millennia ago and has not yet ceased to evolve.

It is often said that studying the past may help us understanding the present, if not even finding suggestions on how to improve it. As we deliver this book to the publisher in conjunction with the 50th anniversary of the dramatic Turkish invasion and division of the island in July 1974, we cannot but hope that it may provide some food for thought to address the hitherto unresolved issue of Cypriot identity: a question that will hopefully find shared responses and reasonable solutions with the help of the new generations.

Appendix

From Livorno to Larnaca in the Late Eighteenth Century: Two Letters by Tuscan Émigrés to Giovanni Mariti

As an appendix to this foreword, I would like to offer a small contribution to the topic of the non-native presence in the island, by presenting a couple of unpublished letters written from Cyprus in the same year, 1767, to Giovanni Mariti, one of the very first enthusiasts of Cypriot antiquities and author of the successful travel-book *Viaggi per l'isola di Cipro e per la Soria e Palestina fatti dall'anno 1760 al 1768* (9 vols, Lucca/Florence, 1769-76).[2] Mariti, born in Florence but raised and educated in Livorno, resided in Larnaca from 1760 until the end of summer 1767. There he firstly operated under the orders of the British Consul Timothy Turner, and was later employed as Chancellor of the British consulate, representative of the Empire, and of the Grand Duchy of Tuscany. After his return to Italy, he kept contacts with several persons still living in the Levant.

Among these, there were other Livornese who had settled in Larnaca during the late eighteenth century. One was the merchant Antonio Mondaini, whose relationship with Mariti has been studied in depth (see Bombardieri 2021). Another two are the lesser-known authors of the letters published below.

The first one is Francesco Ricci, qualified as "Livornese, negoziante[3] in Cipro" by a handwritten note on the folio preceding it in the Archivio Mariti folder. Ricci apparently does not like his job and life in Larnaca, and longs for return; however, his message looks more like a playful prank rather than a serious complaint. Indeed, he writes about erotic reveries and sex jokes, and talks in mocking tones and almost coded language.

The second correspondent, Giovanni Rossiotti, is also to some extent homesick and asks for news from Livorno. On the other hand, he informs his friend of the news and gossip about common acquaintances in Larnaca. Interestingly, the same people's names appear together in the wedding register of the Latin parish church in Larnaca: the picture emerging from both documents, the register and Rossiotti's message, is, therefore, that of a very little but unite community of foreigners residing in town. Also noteworthy are the supply requests that Rossiotti makes to Mariti, that give us a glimpse of the most sought-after import goods (books, tobacco, etc.). Also notable is the postscript concerning a man trying to pass off as genuine some clearly fake ancient coins or medals, as it attests the incipient traffic of antiquities on the island.

In the following transcription I did not conform the spelling to current usage; when needed, I added accents and apostrophes if missing, and slightly modified punctuation in order to make the reading more fluent.

I.[4]

Baruth,[5] Sig.r Giovanni Mariti

Larnica li 6 Luglio 1767

La graditissima vostra del 27 spirante è la sola che abbia ricevuta, e devesi in conseguenza essersi smarrita l'altra che mi dite avermi scritta, senza di che accertatevi che non averei mancato rispondervi. Vi averei altresì date prima d'adesso le mie nuove, ma oltre non sapere precisamente dove indrizzarvi le mie lettere, non l'ho fatto per non cagionarvi distrazioni, e spero che saprete compatire questa mia discretezza ancor che forse troppo rigorosa.
Ancora io, se mi trovasse con una sbarbata al mio comando, sarei più grasso, e mi troverei colle carni sode, come le avevo quando respiravo l'aria nativa; ma, caro amico, voi che siete[6] nell'istesso caso di me, ditemi, come è possibile ingrassare a fare la vita che facciamo? Tutto il giorno aviamo il culo sopra una seggiola, quale colla durezza ci tormenta (per non dire macera) l'ano; che trattiene il libero canto, tanto necessario a' Itali;[7] stiamo colle gambe piegate, colla vita curva, e colle braccia appoggiate ad una tavola per sostenere il capo, ed il collo; una positura e attitudine simile impedisce la libera circolazione al sangue, una comoda digestione, e produce quasi un totale assopimento di spiriti; tutto il moto consiste nell'alzare un braccio per intingere la penna nel calamaro, e porre sopra quella gamba che un quarto d'ora è stata sotto dell'altra.
Converrete dunque meco che un tale esercizio non puole avere fatto ingrassare l'amico Mondaini, e deve averne l'obbligazione totale a Monsieur Coito. Questo si suol chiamare esercizio salubre perché omogeneo, e naturale e che per compirlo non si mette il culo sopra una seggiola, colla vita curva, gambe piegate, ma liberandosi da qualunque legatura e impaccio, col semplicissimo mobile alla camicia standosi sopra un morbido letto molte cose si fanno quali tutte giovano alla salute; come livornese dovete saperle, onde le taccio, anche per liberarmi dal prurito che sento cominciare a venire di metterne qualcheduna in pratica.

To Mr Giovanni Mariti, Beirut

Larnaca, July 6, 1767

Your very welcome letter dated 27th of the last month is the only one I have ever received: therefore, the other letter you claim to have written to me must have gone lost – otherwise, you can be sure that I would not have failed to reply. I would have given news from my side sooner, but besides not knowing precisely where to address my letters, I did it on purpose, in order not to cause distractions to you. I hope you can excuse this admittedly too strict discretion of mine.
Well, if I had here a pretty young woman[8] at my disposal, I would look perky and I would put on firm muscles, like those I had when I breathed the air of my native country. Since you are in the same conditions as me, my friend, would you tell me how we could be in shining shape while living the life we are leading? All day long we stay with our bottom on a chair, that torments us with its hardness (not to say macerates our asses), and prevents us from free singing,[9] something really necessary for Italians. We stay with our legs bent, our back curved, our arms lent on a desk to support our heads and necks. Such a posture prevents the free circulation of blood, impedes smooth digestion, and induces heavy drowsiness. The only movement I do consists in raising my arm to dip the pen in the inkwell and to put one leg over the other at intervals of fifteen minutes.
You will then agree with me that it is not thanks to such an exercise that our friend Mondaini looks nice and perky, and that he owes this entirely to Mr Coitus: this can truly be called a healthy exercise, for it is harmonious and natural and does not need that one puts his bottom on a chair to perform it, curving one's neck and bending one's legs; conversely, it demands he who wants to practice it to be freed from any bindings and entanglements, to get rid of the shirt covering one's member,[10] and to lie on a soft bed, where one can perform many actions, all of them benefitting one's health. As a Livornese you must know these things, and thus I don't mention them, also to free myself from the itch to put them into practice.

Beato voi che siete vicino a mettere i piedi sopra quei terreni che lasciano una piena libertà all'uomo d'alleggerirsi i fianchi coll'aiuto d'una compiacente ragazza, se se li trova pieni per l'applicazione al tavolino.
Per me come sapete devo consumare ancora cinque anni tra l'astinenza e lo stento. Procuro di consumare il tempo con rassegnanza, ma per quanto mi sforzi vi assicuro che ho de momenti più critici di come potrei spiegarvi e possiate immaginarvi.
Il parlare di questa materia me ne concilia il ritorno, onde prendo la resoluzione di troncarne il discorso.
Seguitate a divertirvi per me, ma fatelo con li dovuti riguardi alla vostra salute; li miei rispetti alla sig.ra Tommasina, l'amico Mondaini,[11] e sono con tutto il cuore.
Vostro affezionatissimo amico[12]
Francesco Ricci[13]

II.[14]

G.G. Rossiotti[15]

Cipro 3 novembre 1767

Mio caro amico Mariti,

li favorevoli venti che sin ora hanno regnato mi fanno sperare che molto prima di ora sarete felicemente costì giunto in quel ottimo grado di salute che ora per sempre di vero cuore vi desidero insieme a ogni vera prosperità, e contentezza che potete bramare, qual notizia sarammi sommamente grata per mia quiete.

Lucky you, who are about to set your feet on that land that gives a man complete freedom to relax his hips with the help of a compliant girl, in case he has them tired due to desk fatigue.
Speaking about myself, as you know, I still have to consume (here) five years in abstinence and hardships. I try to pass the time with forbearance; however, no matter how hard I try, I assure you that I have more difficult moments than I could explain to you, and that you could imagine. Talking about this topic brings these pains back to my mind, and therefore I decide to interrupt this conversation.
Keep enjoying on my behalf, but do it with due regard to your health.
My heartfelt regards to Mrs. Tommasina and to our common friend Mondaini.
Your most affectionate friend,
Francesco Ricci

II.

G.G. Rossiotti

Cyprus, November 3, 1767

My dear friend Mariti,

the favorable winds that have been blowing so far make me hope that by now you have arrived there quite some time ago now, happily and in perfect health. Indeed, what I wholeheartedly wish for you are health, genuine prosperity and happiness, as much as you want: and if I received a word about that, it would be greatly appreciated and would give me relief.

Il capitano Morfi si trova tuttavia in Alessandretta caricando per costì, e con quel occasione vi scriverò a lungo, ma frattanto non manco darvi la buona notizia che tanto il signor Stefano quanto la signora Elisabetta godono perfetta salute;[16] *eglino sono tornati dal loro spasso di campagna ma ò saputo che ànno goduto poco perché in luogo di cam(m)inare con comodo ànno dovuto correre giorno e notte per non disgustare il capo Guidone, di cui sapete 'l nome; la signora Vas(s)alla*[17] *però ha fatto meglio di tutti perché li à piantati, e se ne è andata in Niccosia dove è restata 5 giorni e solo ieri è ritornata.*
Ditemi di grazia come avete trovata la cara patria ma particolarmente Livorno, che credo vi sia parso un mondo nuovo, mediante le gran metamorfosi accadute dopo la vostra e mia partenza; datemi tutte quelle novità, di grazia, che crederete possino piacermi per mia consolazione, sulla sicurezza che ve ne conserverò infinita obbligazione.
Vi raccomando l'effettuazione delle commissioni datevi de' libri come per nota e tabacco in carote di San Domingo, e sigillo *il quale sarà meglio farlo intagliare in argento per attaccarlo a(l)*l'orologio*, ma guardate bene di non fare scolpire altro che l'arme, per mandarmi il tutto quando vi capiterà occasione notandomene il costo et ordinandomi in che maniera dovrò rimborsarvi, che sarete pontualmente servito.*
Spero avrete occasione di vedere il mio cugino Sig.or Giuseppe Modoi,[18] e la Sig.ra Agnese sua consorte, onde vi prego non scordarvi di presentargli gli miei distinti complimenti, come pure alla Sig.ra Agatina, e suo fratello, loro figli, et insomma a tutti li miei parenti et amici che vi chiederanno mie notizie. *Per il qual favore vi conserverò infinita obbligazione.*
Monsieur Gross e Monsieur Blanc si trovano tuttavia in Cipro, e non so quando penseranno di andarsene. Il piccolo Giarich[19] *à ottenuta la vittoria perché madamoiselle Doublet è cotta spolpata di lui. Io se devo dirvi sinceramente la verità desidero che la prenda tanto presto che sia possibile per vedere finita questa canzona, ma esso mi giura che neppure vi pensa onde staremo a vedere quello che accaderà.*

Captain Morfi is still in Alexandretta[20] and is getting ready to embark on ship and head here in Cyprus. On the occasion of his departure, I will write you a longer message; in the meanwhile, I want to inform you that both Mr Stefano and Ms Elisabetta enjoy excellent health; they returned from their hike in the countryside, but I have been informed that they did not enjoy it much because, instead of walking comfortably, they had to rush day and night not to displease master Guidone, whose name you know. Lady Vassalla did better than all of them, as she jilted them and went to Nicosia; she stayed there five days, and she came back just yesterday.

Tell me, please, in which conditions you found our dear homeland, and in particular Livorno. I assume it must have looked like a different world to you, due to the big changes occurred after your and my departure. Give me, please, all latest news that you think I could like and that could comfort me, and be sure that I will be immensely grateful to you.

I recommend that you run the errand that I requested: the books whose titles I wrote, carrots of Santo Domingo tobacco, the seal that you'd better have carved in silver so it can be fixed to the watch – and beware not to carve anything else than my coat of arms on it –. And please, do send me all of it at your earliest convenience, do let me have the detailed amount, and do let me know how you prefer to get reimbursed: you will be promptly paid.

I hope you will have the occasion of seeing my cousin, Mr Giuseppe Modoi, and his wife, Mrs Agnese: in that case, please pass on to them my best regards, as well to Mrs Agatina, and his brother, their sons, and in short to all my relatives and friends who might be asking about me. I would be extremely grateful for this favor.

Mr Gros and Mr Blanc are still in Cyprus, and I do not know when they think to depart. Little Giarich got his victory, as Ms Doublet has a crash on him. If I have to tell you the truth, I wish that he marries her as soon as possible, so that we can stop listening to the same old story. Indeed, he swears that he does not think about it at all, so we'll see what happens.

Avete mille saluti della signora Elisabetta, mille del signor Stefano,[21] *che fanno due mille, quali vi prego di raddoppiare e riceverli da mia parte, mentre il tempo non permettendomi di scrivervi più a lungo resto sinceramente confermandomi.*

P.S. Ho ricevuto notizia che il Fontani vostro affezionatissimo amico vero e servo è stato imbarcato in Alessandria dal Console per costì, onde se lo vedete diteli che le sue medaglie nessuno le vuol prendere tutte insieme per mezza piastra, e voi che le avete tutte esaminate potete disingannarlo della falsa credenza in cui egli è che sieno di qualche valore, non potendo mai credere che esso le hà comprate, bensì trovate, ovvero stateli regalate da qualcheduno che non sapeva che farne.[22]

Oggi ho ricevuto lettere da Aleppo con le quali l'Amiro a voi noto mi dà buonissime speranze per il noto stabilimento di Acri, onde con altra mia sentirete qualcosa di sicuro.[23]

Mrs Elisabetta sends you a thousand greetings, the same does Mr Stefano, and that makes two thousand; these are doubled if coupled with mine. Time no longer allows me to write more. Sincerely yours.
Post scriptum: I got news that Mr Fontani, your devoted friend, has taken a ship in Alexandria for Cyprus by order of the Consul. So, if you see him, tell him that nobody wants to buy his medals, not even for half a piaster for all them; you, who have examined them, can free him from the false conviction that they have any value – I cannot believe that he purchased them; rather, he must have found them, or someone who did not know what to do with them has probably given them to him.
Today I received letters from the Emir you know, who gives me very good hope that I will succeed in my transfer request to Acri, which you are well aware of: I will give you more certain information on that in another letter.

1 This paper is dedicated to my Larnaca friends Mia Gaia Trentin and Iosif Hadjikyriakos. I owe thanks to Franco Arato and Nello Bertoletti for their advice on the interpretation of some passages of the texts. All remaining mistakes are my own.
2 For a biographical overview see Pasta 2008; for Mariti's activity as student of Cypriot antiquities and for his travelogues see Pasta 2021 and Bombardieri 2024.
3 Besides 'trader', which is its most common meaning, the noun could also signify 'diplomat'.
4 Università di Bologna, Archivio storico, Fondo Mariti, b. 3 (examined on-site).
5 Mariti made a trip to Jerusalem and the Holy Land in the Spring of 1767, and Beirut was the last leg of the journey before returning to Cyprus: see Pasta 2021, 14.
6 Corrected above line from *vi trovate*.
7 *Ilati* in the MS.
8 According to Tuscan usage: see Fanfani 1863, s.v. "sbarbata" ('ragazza bella') and Battaglia 1961-2002, s.v. "sbarbata" ('donna giovane e bella').
9 Here 'singing' is probably to be intended as a metaphor for 'coitus' (see Boggione, Casalegno 2004, s.v. "canto" and "cantare"): the expression is in line with the metaphorical use of *uccello* to mean 'cock'.
10 The adjective *mobile* can be used in the sense of something capable of moving, as a human or animal 'member' (Battaglia 1961-2002 s.v. "mobile[1]", 24): in this context, as a substantive, it probably indicates the penis. The word *camicia* may be understood either literally, to mean the piece of clothing ('shirt'), or perhaps metaphorically, to mean the foreskin.
11 For Mondaini see Bombardieri 2021 and 2024. He and Thomasine Barthélemy got married in the church of Santa Maria delle Grazie in Larnaca on January 31, 1762 (see the relevant parish church register entry in Trentin 2019, 50-1, no. 58).
12 *Amico* is corrected from *Fratell*(o) ('brother').
13 On the back of the folio the indication of the addressee ("Al Sig.re Giovanni Mariti, Baruth") and of the sender ("Cap(ita)no Ricci, 1767").
14 Università di Bologna, Archivio storico, Fondo Mariti, b. 3 (examined on-site). The letter is written mostly in Greek alphabet: I print these parts in Italics. Here is a diplomatic transcription of the first lines: κίπρω „3„ νουέμβρε 1767. μίω κάρω αμίκω μαρίτι, λί φαυορέυολι υέντι ϗ σίν ὄρα ἄννο ρεγνάτο μι φάννο σπεράρε ϗ μόλτο πρίμα δί ορα σαρέτε φελιζεμεντε κοστί γιούντω ιν κουελ ὄττιμω γράδω δί σαλούτε ϗ ορα περ σεμπρε δί υέρω κϋὼρε υί δεσίδερω ινσιέμε α ὄγνι υέρα προσπεριτά, ε κωνταντέζζα ϗ ποτέτε βράμαρε, κϋαλ νοτίζια σαράμμι σομμαμέντε γράτα περ μία κϋιέτε. Apart from the inconsistent use of spirits and accents, note that ϗ, the common abbreviation in Greek manuscripts and early printed books for the conjunction καὶ ('and'), here is to be read /*ke*/ according to the modern pronunciation, and corresponds to Tuscan 'che'; and that the ligature ϋ, corresponding to ου, is used after κ to reproduce /*kw*/, i.e. Tuscan 'qu'; forms like ὼ and ἄννω correspond to the old fashioned ὸ (for *ho*) and *ànno* (for *hanno*). Texts in Romance languages written in the Greek alphabet are widely attested in various areas of the medieval and early modern Mediterranean, mostly in regions of coexistence of different cultural traditions, as Southern Italy and Sicily (see e.g. Maggiore 2018; further reading can be found in his bibliography); there are also examples of Turkish texts in Greek characters, known as *Karamanlidika*, dating from the eighteenth to the beginning of the twentieth centuries and produced in Istanbul and other Ottoman cities (see Kappler 2015).
15 The name of the sender ("Cap(ita)no G Rossiotti") is found on the back of the second of the two folia containing the letter, above the name of the addressee (written in Arabic). The handwriting is identical to that of the signature "Girol. Gius. Rossiotti" found in the list of the witnesses of the wedding of Antonio Mondaini and Thomasine Barthélemy (cf. above, fn. 11): see the reproduction of the relevant page of the parish's wedding register in Bombardieri 2021, 35, figure 12 (Rossiotti's is the fourth signature in the list). Rossiotti is the author of further nine letters, dating from 1767 to 1771, comprised in folder no. 3 of the Mariti Archive in Bologna.
16 These are Stefano Saraf and his wife Elisabetta: they got married in Larnaca in 1758 (see Trentin 2019, 44, no. 51) and both signed as witnesses, together with Rossiotti and Mariti, the act of marriage between Antonio Mondaini and Thomasine (see above, fnn. 11 and 15).

17 As a family name, Vassallo is attested several times in the Larnaca parish wedding registers. All mentions, however, are later: a Caterina Vassallo, Venitian, is found in an entry dated 1769 (Trentin 2019, 62, no. 73); an Elena Vassallo gets married in 1781 (Trentin 2019, 93, no. 112). Furthermore, an Emanuele Vassallo was Venitian consul in Cyprus from 1779 onwards (Özkul 2013, 263; see also Trentin 2019, 53 and fn. 2; the person mentioned here cannot be identified with his wife, as he got married only in 1787: Trentin 2019, 107, no. 128).
18 Notable mentioned in Aubert 1766, 6 as "Deputato per l'Economia" in Livorno.
19 A Giuseppe Giaxich (also spelled Jiasich) is mentioned as wedding witness in two Larnaca marriage acts dated 1769 (Trentin 2019, 62, no. 73) and 1771 (Trentin 2019, 66, no. 78).
20 Modern İskenderun in Turkey, on the Mediterranean coast, not far from the Syrian border.
21 See above, fn. 16.
22 On Mariti as a collector of coins see Bombardieri 2024, 50 and 62.
23 Mariti had been employed in Acri for a year and a half in the early Sixties: see Pasta 2021, 12-13; Bombardieri 2024, 11. The letter next to this one in folder 3 of the Fondo Mariti was indeed sent by Rossiotti from Acri (it is dated September 27, 1768).

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Introduction

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Modern research has shown a growing interest in studying interactions between diverse social and cultural groups. The present volume aims to contribute to this newest research approach by reflecting from a multicultural and interdisciplinary perspective on the impact of newcomers on local communities in Cyprus. Diversity of methodologies helps to tackle such a complex topic over a broad time frame, spanning from Prehistory to Contemporary Age.

Lying at the heart of the eastern Mediterranean basin, from the earliest times Cyprus has been visited by seafarers, fishermen, various travellers, colonists, conquerors and ultimately merchants and traders. Furthermore, its natural resources and strategic position attracted new settlers, refugees and, at times, foreign invaders. The Cypriot cultural heritage is, thus, the product of a complex history characterised by an increasing reshaping of interactions between locals and non-natives, which resulted in the constant renewal of the demographic, economic, political, and social landscape of the island.

Arranged according to a chronological order, the collected essays pertain to different fields like archaeology, epigraphy, history, and anthropology. They explore a wide variety of themes implementing diverse methodologies. A brief overview follows.

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The contribution "To Import and to Imitate. The Role of Aegean Pottery in the Community of Late Bronze Age Hala Sultan Tekke, Cyprus" by Lorenzo Mazzotta (University of Pisa) and Laerke Recht (Moesgaard Museum, Denmark) has an archaeological topic. The focus of analysis centres on Hala Sultan Tekke, a Mediterranean trade hub located in South Eastern Cyprus dating to the Late Bronze Age. In particular, the scholars propose a typological and functional analysis of the Late Helladic IIIA-B Aegean pottery imported at the site. Imported ceramic Aegean materials are found above all in the settlement and in the funerary area. They played an important role in expressing the identity and conveying the social status of the community living in the city.

The contribution "Inscribing Texts in Hellenistic Cyprus. Epigraphic Habit as a Tool for the Study of Social Interactions under Ptolemaic Rule" by Anaïs Michel (former member of the French School at Athens) addresses the Cypriot mixed society during Classical Antiquity. By studying a selection of inscriptions dating from the 4th to 1st centuries BC, the Author demonstrates how epigraphic habits intertwine with the socio-historical context, offering insights of the ongoing social interactions between Cypriot and external communities at that time.

The contribution "Venetian Reaya. Greek Orthodox Zantiots in Cyprus in the Eighteenth Century" by Theoharis Stavrides (University of Cyprus) is on a historical topic. The scholar analyses the figure of the 'Zantiots' (literally denoting the natives of the island of Zante), Greek Orthodox Venetians from the Ionian Islands. They arrived in Larnaca around the middle of the eighteenth century. The scholar attempts to delineate the social identity of the group, analysing numerous Italian, Greek and Ottoman sources for this purpose. The Zantiots, often described as troublesome subjects, had an ambiguous status, exemplified by the case of Evangelista Peristiani, sometimes described as Raja, other times as a subject of the Sultan. Lastly, the contribution describes the role assumed by the Zantiots as social and cultural intermediaries.

The contribution "French Consuls in Cyprus, 1840-70. Their Roles and Impact, with Archive Evidence" by Lucie Bonato (University of Paris Nanterre) reconstructs the vast and complex activity of the French consuls in Cyprus during the mid-1800's, when the Ottoman Empire went through an intensive reorganisation of its administration. The historical analysis is developed by the Author through a systematic and rigorous investigation of the rich archive evidence of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, including a vast collection of letters. This article offers a detailed picture of the French Consuls' politics with regards to internal situations in areas of trade, agriculture, taxes, customs duty, quarantine and water supply, but also foreign affairs and international diplomacy. In this

context, French consuls are crucial for the formation of the earliest Louvre Museum Cypriot archaeological collections.

"A Stranger's Visit from the 'Iron Curtain': Cyprus as an Unrealised Project of Soviet Archaeology in the 1960s" by Pavel A. Evdokimov (Moscow State University) offers a detailed narration of the visit of the USSR Professor Sergey Kisselyoff to the island of Cyprus in 1962, based on unpublished archives materials and Kisselyoff's original trip diary. The visit represents the first contact between the USSR and the young Republic of Cyprus. Kisselyoff's activity on the island is contextualised in the broader historical framework of Cypriot foreign affairs and the relative liberalisation of the Russian political regime during the so-called Khrushchev Thaw. The Author gives a comprehensive description of the various Cypriot and Russian characters encountered by the Professor during his trip, engaged in a delicate embassy where foreign archaeological interests became a crucial element in the USSR 'soft power'.

"Some Reflections of a Foreign Orthodox Priest" in Cyprus is a sort of field-work journal, in which Václav Ježek recorded anecdotes and stories from his years as a priest in Cyprus. However, this contribution extends beyond mere memoirs of first-hand experiences. The Author shares his personal thoughts and provides his perspective on Cypriot society, especially in rural areas. Due to his priestly appointment, Václav Ježek transitioned from an outsider to an insider. Accordingly, he not only proves to be a privileged observer but also a knowledgeable interpreter of contemporary culture in rural Cyprus.

The contribution "Unbuffered zone. Here let me stand by Marianna Christofides and the loop of extractive archaeology" by Luca Bombardieri (University of Siena) is dedicated to the video installation by Marianna Christofides, exhibited in Berlin in 2014, in Palermo in 2017 and in Turin in 2021 on the occasion of the exhibition *Cyprus. Crossroad of Civilizations held at the Royal Museums*. The Cypriot artist unmasks the colonialist and extractivist model acted by the nineteenth century, twentieth century and contemporary Western archaeology against the Cypriot antiquities and the Cypriot communities. Through processes of competition and accumulation typical of capitalism, colonialist archaeology triggers the continuous formation of collections of antiquities which are characterised as real commercial catalogues. The slow loop of *Here let me stand* gives us back the images of those antiquities extracted from the island: cold, dead and rootless.

Given the complexity of the topic, the present volume did and could not aim for exhaustivity. Yet, it hopefully demonstrates the value of a multidisciplinary and diachronic approach, paving the way for future research.

Prehistory

A Land for Strangers
Non-Native Individuals and Communities in Cyprus
edited by Carlotta Brignone, Lorenzo Calvelli,
Giulia Gollo, Lorenzo Mazzotta

The Role of Aegean Pottery in the Community of Late Bronze Age Hala Sultan Tekke, Cyprus

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Abstract Hala Sultan Tekke in southeastern Cyprus was a major Late Bronze Age Mediterranean trade hub. A wide range of materials was imported from the Aegean, Anatolia, Egypt, the Levant and as well as from central Mediterranean. Imported exotic materials were means of expression of identity and display of social status among the community living in the city. The paper focuses on typological and functional analysis of the Late Helladic IIIA-B Aegean pottery imported at Hala Sultan Tekke. The presence in the settlement and in the funerary area of large amount of Aegean imported materials reflects complex processes of deliberate selection of shapes and types, adaptation of uses, and appropriation, hybridisation and imitation of a stranger ceramic tradition in the local Cypriot social context. The choices made in importing and imitating the Aegean pottery represent various dynamics of direct and indirect engagement with and between 'strangers' in Late Bronze Age Cyprus.

Keywords Hala Sultan Tekke. Late Helladic. Late Cypriot. Aegean pottery. Functional analysis.

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1 Introduction

In the Late Bronze Age, Hala Sultan Tekke in southeastern Cyprus was a trade hub. A range of material culture was imported from the Aegean, Anatolia, the Levant and Egypt, as well as from further afield, most recently evidenced by the presence of Sardinian ceramics at the site (Bürge, Fischer 2019). Frequently, this imported material becomes parts of expressions of identity and social status,[1] and processes that have been associated with adaptation, appropriation, hybridisation and imitation (e.g. van Wijngaarden 2008; Knapp 2010; Stockhammer 2012). This paper will examine the role of Aegean pottery at Hala Sultan Tekke as a case study of a type of material culture that was imported via several identifiable trajectories (Mainland Greece, Crete, the Dodecanese). The vessel types were subject to selection and adapted for Cypriot use; certain shapes and motifs were imitated in the local pottery production in the so-called 'White Painted Wheelmade III' tradition.[2] The choices made in imported and imitating pottery represent various types of direct and indirect engagement with 'strangers' in Late Bronze Age Cyprus.

One of the most complex and debated topics in the recent history of archaeological research in the eastern Mediterranean concerns the economic and cultural relationships between Cyprus and the Aegean during the Late Bronze Age (c. 1650-1100 BC), especially regarding ceramic finds.[3] Van Wijngaarden has collected data concerning the distribution of imported Aegean ceramics in Cyprus, resulting in maps that reveal a rather broad but uneven pattern (Van Wijngaarden 2002). The maps record 96 Cypriot sites where Late Bronze Age imported Aegean ceramics have been recovered (Van Wijngaarden 2002, map 8). Although the ceramics are widely diffused in all parts of the island, from the largest harbours to the smallest inland sites, the presence of Aegean material culture in Cyprus is far from consistent, both from a qualitative and quantitative point of view. Among the sites that have produced Aegean pottery, a limited number contains

Contributor roles: Conceptualization; Methodology; Writing - original draft: LR and LM. Investigation (data collection): LR (2014-2019) and LM (2014, 2016-2018). Data curation: LR. Visualization: LR. Writing - review and editing: LM.

1 See also Steel 1998 for the social role of imported Mycenaean pottery in Cyprus.

2 This designation (suggested in Åström 1972) does cause some problems in that distinguishing between White Painted Wheelmade I-III is very difficult; alternative terms have been suggested by Fischer (White Painted Wheelmade Geometric Style and White Painted Wheelmade Pictorial Style; Fischer 2012b). The local production of Aegean-type ceramics in Cyprus and the Levant dated to the final stage of the Late Bronze Age has recently been reviewed in detail by Mountjoy (2018).

3 See Cline 1994; Cline, Harris-Cline 1998; Van Wijngaarden 2002; Maran, Stockhammer 2012, to name but a few.

more than ten sherds or vessels, and very few have produced large quantities (500 specimens or more) (Van Wijngaarden 2002, map 9). Only Hala Sultan Tekke, Kition and Enkomi have finds of more than 500 specimens of imported Aegean pottery (sherds and complete vessels), and evidently interaction with the Aegean sphere was particularly intense at these sites compared to the rest of the island.

2 Background

Hala Sultan Tekke is a large metropolis located on the southern coast of Cyprus, near the international Larnaca airport and close to the famous mosque from which it gains its name, on the banks of the Larnaca Salt Lake. As determined by previous archaeological surveys, the city flourished primarily during an advanced phase of the Late Bronze Age, from the fourteenth to the twelfth centuries BC. Extensive excavations were carried out from the 1970s onwards by the Swedish Cyprus Expedition. Recent research carried out by the New Swedish Cyprus Expedition, however, has proved that the site must have been an important, active and international harbour as early as the sixteenth century BC, at the very beginning of the Late Bronze Age.

The excavations of the New Swedish Expedition have partly unearthed four City Quarters (CQ1-4) located near the ancient city's harbour, and a significant number of wells, tombs and 'offering' pits on the plateau approximately 600 m east of CQ1, known as Area A.[4] All areas of excavation have produced Aegean ceramics. Although occasional references will be made to objects from Area A, the main focus in this paper is on the material from the settlement itself – the so-called City Quarters. Three main horizons or strata have been identified in the stratigraphic sequence of the City Quarters. Stratum 1 is the most recent. In all areas, it is extremely disturbed, and due to its proximity to the surface, plough marks are clearly visible in some parts. Stratum 2 also suffers from some disturbance, but not to the same degree. Extensive buildings with domestic spaces, a possible shrine, storage space and workshops (especially for the production of textile and metal) have been uncovered from this stratum. The earliest stratum that has been excavated to a greater extent so far is Stratum 3, best illustrated in CQ1. There is a significant change of the use of space and the features of the architecture between Stratum 3 and Stratum 2, with broader walls made of larger stones

4 Fischer 2011; 2012a; 2019; Fischer, Bürge 2013; 2014; 2015; 2016; 2017a; 2017b; 2018a; 2018b; 2019; 2020; 2021; see map of the site with location of CQ1-4 in Fischer, Bürge 2020, fig. 1.

characteristic of Stratum 3. The investigations so far suggest a date of LC IIIA[5] for Stratum 1, LC IIC-IIIA for Stratum 2, and LC IIC and earlier for Stratum 3 (Fischer, Bürge 2018b, 606-7).[6]

In CQ1 there is now also good evidence for an earlier Stratum 4, with hints of even earlier strata below this (Fischer et al. 2020), but the excavation of these areas is still quite limited and the ceramics very few (sherds from five different imported Aegean vessels, including four joining pieces of a pictorial amphoroid krater, tentatively dated to LH IIIA2 late).

3 Aegean Ceramics at Hala Sultan Tekke

The material included here comes from our preliminary analysis of the imported Aegean pottery recovered at Hala Sultan Tekke over the past seven excavation seasons in the settlement, conducted on the site from 2013 to 2019 by the New Swedish Cyprus Expedition. An overview of the implications of typological and functional classifications is followed by a reconstruction of possible intercultural trajectories between Cyprus and regional areas of the Aegean in light of the more notable finds from the recent excavations. At the end, we shortly present and discuss some of the local production of Aegean-style pottery in the community of Hala Sultan Tekke.

Sherds or vessels imported from the Aegean[7] appear in every part of the settlement and Area A. A total of 925 sherds have been recorded from the settlement from 2013-19,[8] respectively 478 from CQ1, 232 from CQ2, 179 from CQ3 and 36 from CQ4 **[graph 1]**. Although the number of Aegean finds at Hala Sultan Tekke is among the highest in Cyprus in the Late Bronze Age, they only make up a small percentage of the total ceramic assemblage – typically around 3% in the City Quarters. Some contexts in Area A have greater concentrations, with for example 35.7% in Pit V and 28.6% in Tomb X.[9]

5 LC = Late Cypriot; LH = Late Helladic; LM = Late Minoan.

6 Stratum 3 is sub-divided into 3A-C, with material from 3B and 3C dated to LC IIB and possibly earlier, but analysis of these substrata is still ongoing (see preliminary comments in Fischer, Bürge 2020, 97 and Bürge 2022).

7 We have opted for the term 'Aegean' over 'Mycenaean'. As will be seen below, not all sherds come from the Greek mainland, and 'Aegean' is therefore more accurate for the entire assemblage.

8 Sherds belonging to the same vessel are recorded as one; a complete but restored from fragments vessel is also recorded as one. Every effort is made to identify sherds coming from the same vessels. A previous preliminary analysis can be found in Mazzotta, Recht 2015.

9 These numbers are based on Class 1 and 2 finds (from Fischer, Bürge 2017b), which are the complete or nearly complete vessels from these contexts, and the numbers may therefore be higher than for all sherds, but nevertheless represent a significant difference.

In the settlement, the sherds are almost all residual, with a very high level of fragmentation.[10] Most sherds are fairly small, sometimes quite worn, and only rarely do we find several sherds coming from the same vessel **[figs 1-2]**. So far, very few complete Aegean vessels have been found in the settlement.[11] There are, however, degrees of fragmentation as we move down through the strata: the Stratum 3 sherds are larger and, in some instances, we can reconstruct substantial parts of vessels (e.g. figs 1d, 1f). The residual nature of the ceramics (which applies not only to the Aegean finds, but also all other types) means that we generally do not find them in their primary use context, but rather as fills and disturbed deposits.

4 Methodology

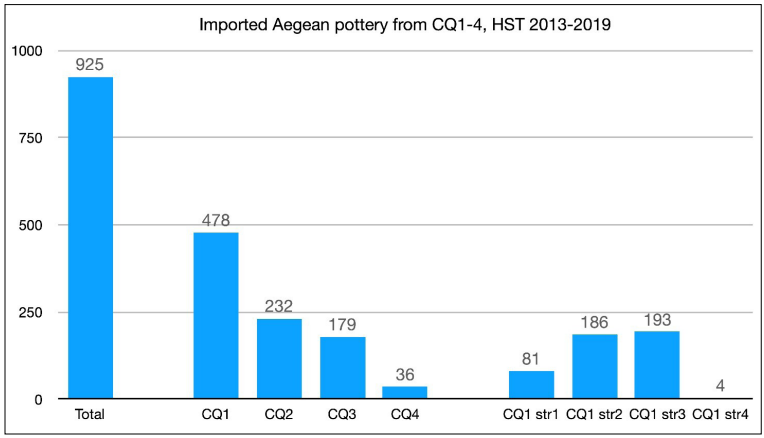
All specimens of imported Aegean ceramics uncovered from the settlement throughout the 2013-19 excavations have been systematically gathered in a customised database. Each recovered vessel or sherd is typologically classified using the system developed by the Swedish scholar Arne Furumark (1941), which has since been adopted by most researchers and further developed by Penelope Mountjoy (1986; 1999). This classification scheme permits identification of a specific shape or decorative motif using standardised terminology and numeration – *Furumark Shape* (FS) and *Furumark Motif* (FM). For the Hala Sultan Tekke ceramics, wherever possible, the shape and decoration of each sherd or vessel is identified through this typological classification, allowing a tentative reconstruction of their age and the chronological placement of the stratum in which it was recovered. This typological classification has resulted in preliminary suggestions regarding the origin of the vessels (pending petrographic and chemical analyses), as well as the network of exchange connecting Cyprus to the Aegean region during the Late Bronze Age.

10 This is in marked contrast to Area A, where there are many complete vessels as part of burials and ritual deposits. The total number of Aegean imports in that area is likely also significantly higher than in the settlement, but this material is still under analysis – preliminary reports appear in the references given above (Fischer, Bürge publications).

11 Examples include two miniature juglets (Fischer, Bürge 2018b, 312, fig. 3.60.1-2).

Figure 1 Selection of sherds from CQ1-4. a. deep bowl, b. cup/kylix, c. cup/goblet, d. cup/kylix, e-f. shallow bowl. Photographs by L. Recht/E. Peri (a-c, e-f) and T. Bürge (d)

Figure 2 Selection of sherds from CQ1-4. a. stirrup jar, b. transport stirrup jar, c. kylix, d. piriform jar, e. amphoroid krater. Photographs and drawing by L. Recht



Graph 1 Imported Aegean sherds from Hala Sultan Tekke CQ1-4, 2013-19 excavations

Each sherd or vessel is also categorised according to the functional classification developed by Giampaolo Graziadio and Elisabetta Pezzi specifically for the study of Mycenaean ceramics recovered in funerary contexts at the Enkomi tombs (Graziadio, Pezzi 2009; 2010; 2013). This system, developed based on both the morphological characteristics of the vessels and the results of gas-chromatographic analyses of Aegean and Cypriot ceramic materials (Tzedakis, Holley 1999; Beck et al. 2003; 2008), distinguishes four main functional categories of Aegean pottery, as illustrated in figure 3: F1) fine tableware, F2) small closed shapes for precious commodities, F3) storage vessels, and F4) ritual vessels and figurines.[12] Of these, fine tableware (F1) and small closed shapes for precious commodities (F2) are further divided into sub-categories: F1.1) drinking sets – vessels for mixing, pouring and drinking, F1.2) eating/drinking vessels, F2.1) liquid substances containers, and F2.2) viscous substances containers **[fig. 3ab]**. There may be some overlap between the categories, and certainly some vessels would have been used for a variety of purposes, not all of which we are able to reconstruct. Nevertheless, it offers a general idea of the kinds of vessels that were of interest to ancient Cypriots and how they might have been used.

12 Figurines are not included here. For some examples, see Bürge 2018.

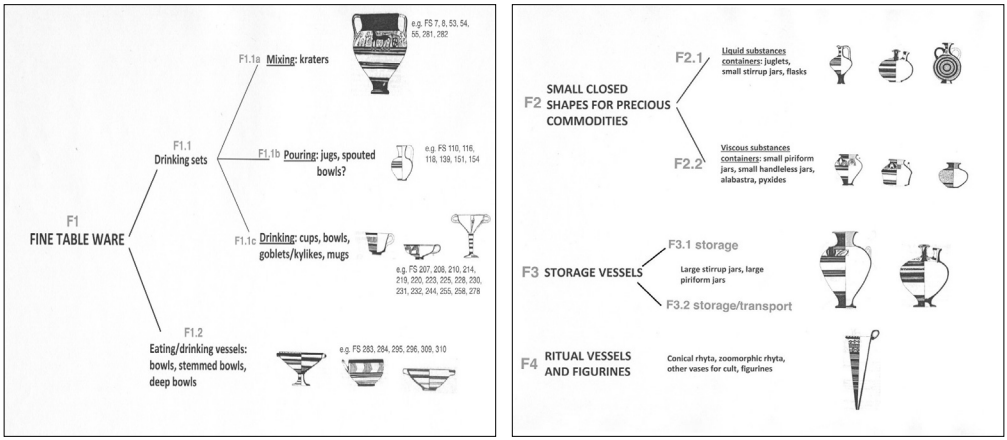


Figure 3ab Classification by function (based on Graziadio, Pezzi 2013, figs 3-4)

5 Typological and Functional Analysis

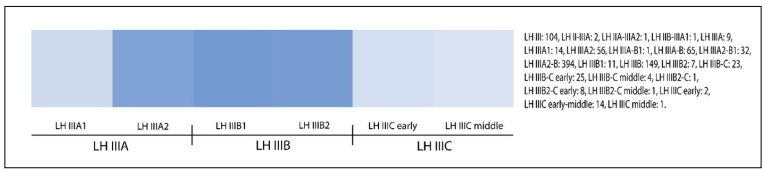
The Aegean imported pottery from CQ1-4 ranges in date between LH IIIA1[13] – LH IIIC. The typological-based chronology shows a peak in Aegean imports between LH IIIA2 and LH IIIB (LC IIB-C, c. 1400-1200 BC) **[graph 2]**. Still present, but in much smaller percentages, are Aegean ceramics from LH II – LH IIIA1 (LC IB-IIA, c. 1600-1350 BC) and LH IIIC Early – Middle (LC IIIA, c. 1200-1100 BC).[14] The oldest Aegean imports, from LH IIA/LM IB, were recovered in Area A (Fischer, Bürge 2017a, fig. 13). This seems to be principally due to the fact that, in the settlement, excavations have still not uncovered substantial parts of occupational levels datable to LC IB. This chronological tendency is in line with the global diffusion of Aegean ceramics in Cyprus and the eastern Mediterranean.

A significant range of Aegean shapes and motifs is present in the Hala Sultan Tekke repertoire. Jars, bowls, *kylikes* 'cups' and kraters are the dominant shapes **[graph 3]**. The jars are mostly the characteristic Aegean stirrup and piriform shapes, bowls come in both the deep and shallow variations, identifiable cups and kylikes are almost evenly distributed, and most identifiable krater sherds come from the amphoroid and ring-based types. The other shapes

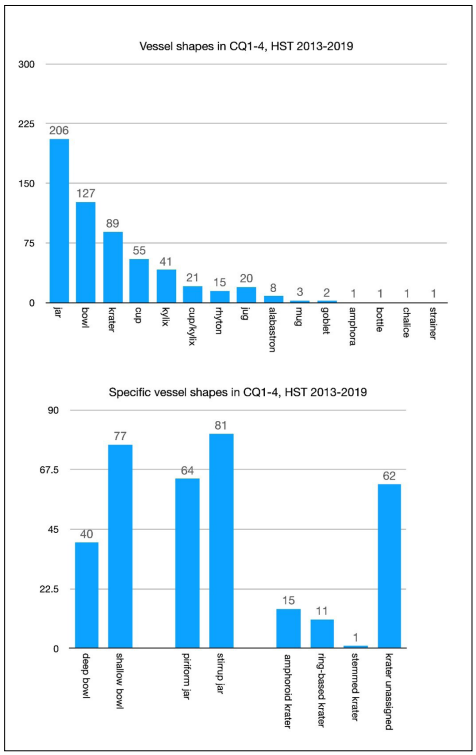
13 One sherd of a conical rhyton is dated LH IIA/LH IIIA2 (see Recht, Mazzotta 2015, no. 1), but all other sherds from the settlement are LH IIIA1 or later.

14 It should be noted that any LH IIIC dates are very tentative, and that most sherds with this designation have been given a range of LH IIIB-C.

that are present occur in very small numbers and functionally mirror the main shapes: chalice, amphora, alabastra, goblets, jugs and mugs. The presence of sherds from 15 different *rhyta*, all of the conical type, suggests that this shape also held some importance. Despite the range of shapes, it is clear that careful selection took place. Some shapes which are fairly common in the Aegean are very rare or completely absent at Hala Sultan Tekke.

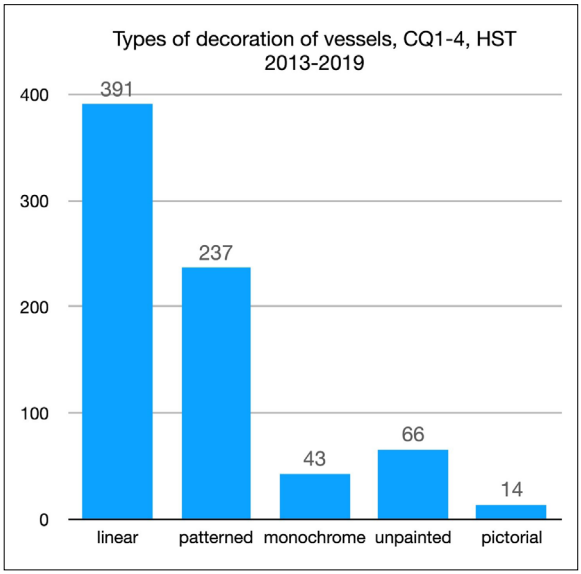


Graph 2 Chronological distribution of imported Aegean sherds (based on typology)



Graph 3
Vessel shapes, by main shape and sub-shape

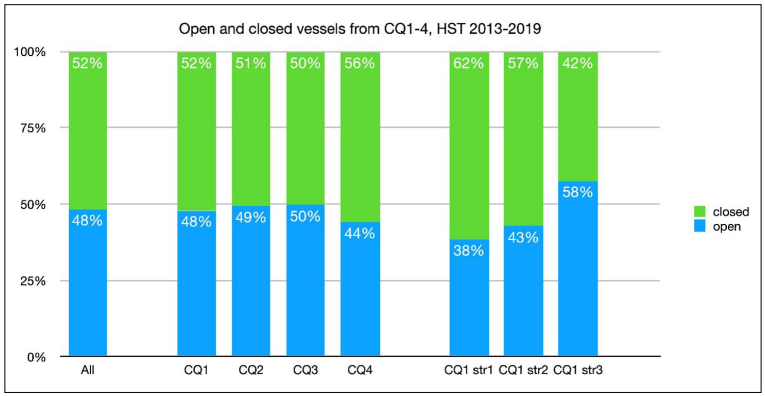
Along with very hard-fired clay and lustrous paint, one of the characteristic features of the imported Aegean pottery is its finely burnished surface treatment (both exterior and interior for open vessels; exterior with interior of neck of some closed vessels). The vast majority of the imported material has also been decorated with lustrous paint that ranges from orangey-red through shades of brown to black. The paint is always lustrous (as opposed to the locally made White Painted Wheelmade, which is usually matt, though it can also be glossy). Only one colour is used, although differences in shading may occur due to conditions of firing during the process of production or conditions of preservation. Added white is occasionally used, especially on shallow bowls and amphoroid kraters. The decoration has been divided into linear, monochrome, patterned, pictorial and unpainted (as preserved on the individual sherds) **[graph 4]**. The vast majority of sherds are painted with simple linear bands of varying thickness. It is possible that some of these in fact come from patterned vessels, since the designation is necessarily based on the preserved fragment only. Patterned vessels are also frequent. No particular motifs dominate, although spirals, wavy lines and triglyphs seem slightly more popular. Monochrome sherds are less common, and in most cases the monochrome surface is only on either the interior or the exterior of a vessel. As with the linear sherds, some may in fact belong to linear or patterned vessels; most of the sherds without preserved paint very likely also come from decorated vessels. Sherds with pictorial decoration are extremely rare in the settlement, with only 14 examples securely identified so far – 12 of which come from kraters. Only very rarely do we get other types of decoration, such as plastic decoration or knobs, if indeed such are decorative rather than functional. In contrast to the shapes, there is no clear indication of deliberate selection in the range of motifs. It seems that, broadly speaking, shape (and content) was more important than decorative types when the people of Hala Sultan Tekke chose which vessels to import.



Graph 4
Types of decoration

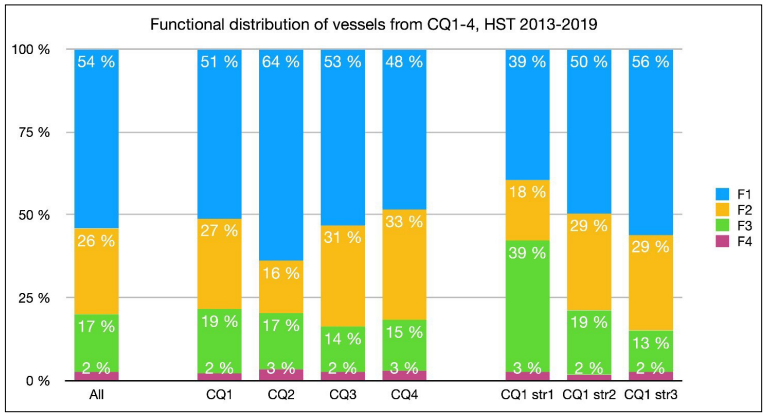
Dividing the sherds broadly into open and closed vessels, we can observe an almost equal distribution between the two **[graph 5]**. This observation applies not only overall, but also for each of the City Quarters 1-3, while there is a slight preference for closed vessels in CQ4.[15] The implication is that a variety of goods were imported, and that Aegean vessels were imported both for their contents (closed vessels) and for their own sake, primarily as tableware (open vessels). However, looking at the sequence in CQ1 (the only area where substantial Stratum 3 material has been excavated so far), there is a clear change between Stratum 3 on the one hand, and Stratum 2/1 on the other hand. Stratum 3 has a preponderance of open vessels, whereas there is an increasing preference for closed vessels in Stratum 2 and 1. This is entirely consistent with the architectural and archaeological sequence, where there is a substantial change in the use of space and building technique between Stratum 3 and 2, and a less marked change between Stratum 2 and 1. While keeping the residual nature of the material in mind, the Aegean pottery suggests that there may have been an equivalent change in the types of goods that were imported, at least in terms of settlement use.

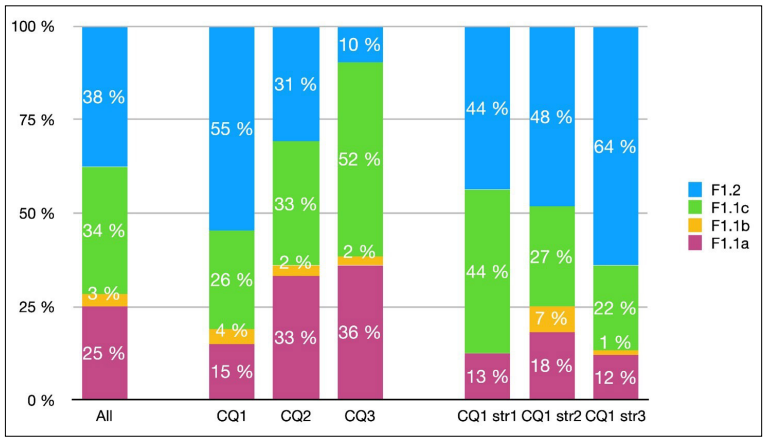
15 Note, however, that the number of Aegean sherds from CQ4 is still quite low, in line with the excavations in that area not yet reaching the lower strata.

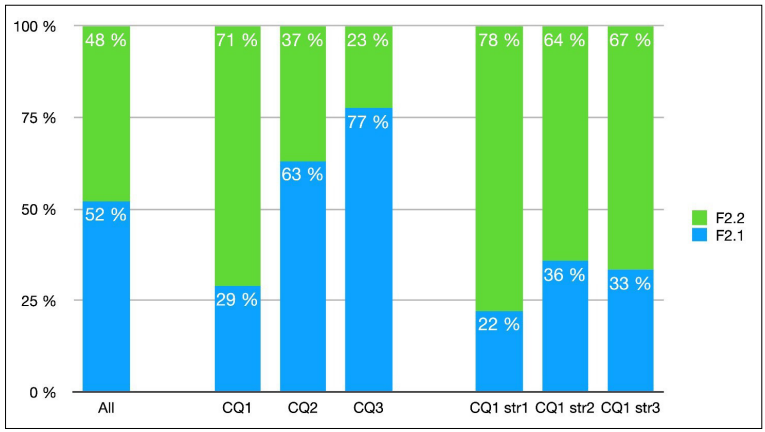


Graph 5 Distribution of open and closed vessels

We can break this functional analysis down even further **[graph 6a]**. Looking at the overall distribution, tableware of mostly open vessels (F1) makes up about half the assemblage, while vessels for precious substances (F2) and larger storage vessels (F3) cover the remaining; 'ritual' vessels (F4) only occur in small numbers. In City Quarters 1, 3 and 4, tableware stays at roughly half, but there are some variations in the distribution of vessels for precious substances and transport vessels. In CQ2, the proportion of tableware (F1) is even higher than elsewhere, possibly suggesting slightly different uses of the imported wares in different parts of the settlement. Returning to the stratigraphic sequence as represented in CQ1, we again see clear changes from Stratum 3 to Stratum 2, but also from Stratum 2 to 1. In Stratum 3, there was a strong emphasis on tableware, which is over half of the entire assemblage. In Stratum 2, tableware vessels were reduced to 50%, with corresponding increase in storage containers. The functional distribution also reveals a distinction between Stratum 2 and Stratum 1 that is less obvious in the simpler open-closed vessels distribution. The most significant change is in the further decrease in tableware, increase in storage vessels, which now make up as much as 39% of the assemblage, and decrease in small closed shapes for precious commodities (from 29% to 18%). These chronological features are striking, and reflect developing trading relations, social values and changes in the engagement with imported material culture directly and its producers indirectly.







Graph 6ac Distribution of vessels by function and sub-function

The fine tableware category consists, as seen in figure 3, of vessels for mixing **[fig. 1.1a]**, pouring **[fig. 1.1b]**, drinking **[fig. 1.1c]** and drinking/eating **[fig. 1.2]**. Analysing these in further detail, we can see that, overall, drinking/eating vessels are the most common, closely followed by drinking vessels **[graph 6b]**. Pouring vessels are few, but there is a substantial number of mixing containers (kraters). The more detailed distribution again reveals both slightly different assemblages in the city quarters, and some changes over time. The popularity of tableware suggests that Cypriot engagement with Aegean imported pottery was frequently focused on consumption and very likely on a public display of this consumption.[16] The composition of the F1 vessels indicates sets of several cups/kylikes and bowls, and contents distributed from kraters and to a lesser extent jugs (and/or vessels of local wares). The high number of kraters may indicate that distribution was primarily through this shape (which also has a large surface suitable for decoration), perhaps by dipping a drinking vessel into it. Combined with the sometimes striking painted decoration and a prestigious yet not extremely luxurious or expensive product, such tableware would be fitting for communal or public events. That such shapes and functions were particularly important to the Cypriots is also reflected in the preference for similar vessels in the later, locally produced 'White Painted Wheelmade III' ware, where kraters, shallow and deep bowls often mirror the Aegean counterparts.

Concerning the small closed shapes for precious commodities (F2, **[graph 6c]**), we can note the predominance of viscous substances containers in CQ1 (71%), compared to liquid substances containers (29%). The reverse trend can be observed in both CQ2 and CQ3, where liquid substances containers are the vast majority (ranking from 63% to 67%) while viscous substances containers are attested in smaller quantities. Furthermore, CQ1 seems to maintain the same overall trends for F2 vessels in Stratum 1, 2 and 3 (with an even greater preference for small containers for viscous substances in Stratum 1), indicating a continuity of the choices made by the community in this area in relation to small closed vessels, and possibly their contents.

The F4 category, 'ritual' vessels, consists primarily of conical rhyta and miniature jars and jugs **[fig. 4]**, and includes the highest concentration of conical rhyta from settlement contexts in Cyprus (Recht, Mazzotta 2015). They are mostly found in settlement contexts at Hala Sultan Tekke, and appear to be rare in the tombs. The exact function of these vessels in Cyprus is not clear. Conical rhyta in the Aegean may have had both symbolic and practical uses, perhaps acting as filters in the spicing of wine (Koehl 2006). Whether or

16 See also Steel 2004 on the use of tableware in consumption and feasting in Bronze Age Cyprus.

not they had the same function at Hala Sultan Tekke cannot be determined from the preserved sherds and contexts. It is possible that at least some of the miniature vessels were used in cult activities: three miniature jars/jugs found in the same small area in Stratum 3 of CQ1 were in a context that suggests large-scale ritual and feasting **[fig. 4c-d]** (Fischer et al. 2020).

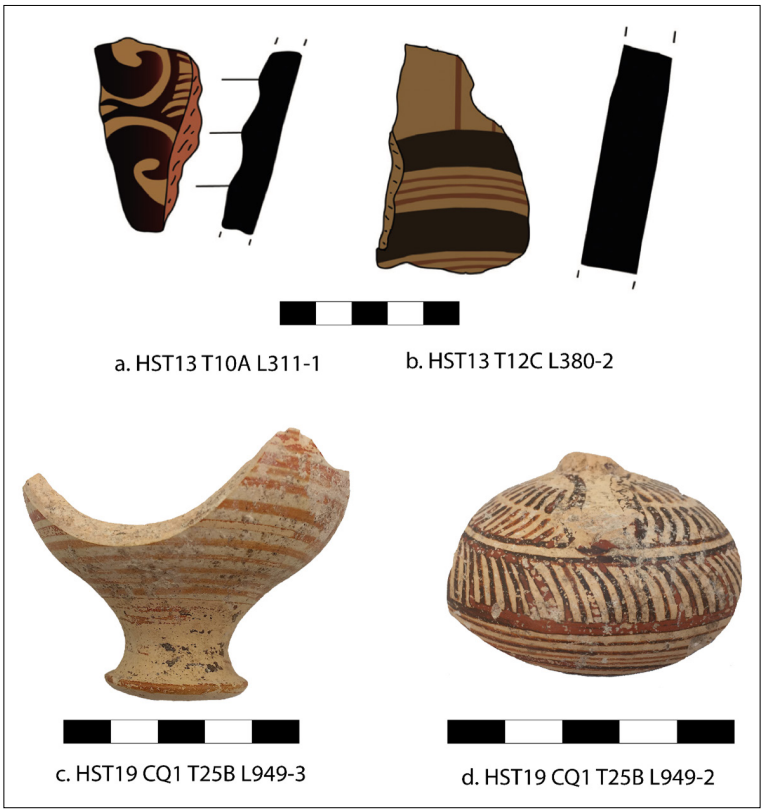


Figure 4 Selections of sherds of rhyta (a-b) and miniature jars/jugs (c-d). Photographs and drawings by L. Recht

6 Strangers from the Aegean and Cultural Trajectories

The imported Aegean pottery found at Hala Sultan Tekke suggests networks of exchange and interaction between Cyprus and the Aegean region during the Late Bronze Age. The inferences concerning these exchanges are here typological; ongoing archaeometric analysis may support or prompt a review of some of the implications discussed. The island of Cyprus and the Aegean region are connected by a system of cultural trajectories consisting of interconnected hubs (Cline 2009). The ceramic finds at Hala Sultan Tekke help identify some of the main active hubs in this complex web of long-distance interactions.[17]

The first and most obvious node is mainland Greece, the heartland of the Mycenaeans. Many of the imported Aegean artefacts recovered on the island of Cyprus, in particular from the advanced phases of the Late Bronze Age, are widely regarded as being of Peloponnesian origin. Imported artefacts from the formative phases of the Mycenaean civilisation (between LH I and LH II), however, are much rarer.

Pictorial style vases, in particular, are documented on the island as early as LH IIIA (Morris 1989; Anson 2017). Various archaeometric analyses carried out since 1986 confirm that the vast majority of these artefacts, as well as other Mycenaean ceramics, is of Peloponnesian origin (Jones 1986, 599-601; Mommsen, Maran 2000-01). Many more samples recovered in the Levant, in particular from Ugarit, have been scientifically proven to be from the Peloponnese (Asaro, Perlman 1973; French 2004).[18] The pictorial style is relatively poorly represented in Mycenaean urban and funerary contexts, as opposed to the strong presence found in Cypriot funerary contexts.[19] This has led to the hypothesis that some Peloponnesian ceramic production was specifically intended for export to Cyprus and the eastern Mediterranean.[20] These styles were tailored to fulfil international demand, catering in particular to the tastes of the Cypriot elites. Potter's workshops such as that found at Berbati (Åkerström 1987; Schallin 1997) may have functioned as production centres of much of the pictorial style ceramics destined for Cyprus. Based on our analysis, the majority of the imported Aegean ceramics found at Hala Sultan Tekke is consistent with a provenance from the Greek mainland.

17 Ceramics was not only imported from the Aegean at Hala Sultan Tekke: Levantine and Egyptian ceramics are also represented at the site (see e.g. Fischer, Bürge 2017b), as are many other types of imported objects.

18 For the modalities of arrival and distribution, and the use and social meaning of the imported Aegean ceramics at Ugarit, see Mazzotta 2017; 2019.

19 See for example Recht, Morris 2021 for the case of the so-called chariot kraters.

20 As discussed in for example Sherratt 1994.

A second fundamental node in the web of interactions that connected people from Cyprus with the Aegean region, particularly in the early phases of the Late Bronze Age, is the island of Crete. Almost all of the earliest pieces from the Late Bronze Age recovered in Cyprus were in fact imported from Crete.[21] Several pieces recovered in recent excavations bear testimony to the close ties between Hala Sultan Tekke and Crete. The most common type of import from Crete at Hala Sultan Tekke is the so-called Minoan transport stirrup jar dated to Late Minoan IIIA-B **[fig. 2b]**. Sherds from at least 25 different transport stirrup jars with a fabric and ware consistent with Cretan production have been identified in the settlement so far (with more examples from Area A); they confirm the existence of lively interaction between the two areas, whether direct or indirect. By their very nature, these large transport vessels demonstrate that the object of economic transactions between the two islands must not have been limited to the pottery *per se*. Liquids transported in these jars and vessels, quite possibly oil or beverages (wine, beer), were as much part of the trade. The sherds found at Hala Sultan Tekke are not enough to reconstruct actual size, but a general estimate of these types of vessels is that they can contain 12-14 litres (Haskell et al. 2011, 3). Large transport stirrup jars were produced both on Crete and in mainland Greece. They attest to movement of goods both within the Aegean and in the eastern Mediterranean, as they are widely distributed (Haskell et al. 2011, 4, illustration 1.4). Their part in this broader trade network is confirmed by their presence on the Uluburun shipwreck (Bass et al. 1989, 11). The identification of fragments of transport stirrup jars found at Hala Sultan Tekke as of possible Minoan origin is based on fabric and decoration. Further, eight of the these have the deep wavy line and/or octopus motif, which is strongly associated with transport stirrup jars produced in central Crete. This is demonstrated by a combination of chemical, petrographic and typological analysis (Haskell et al. 2011, 90). Other imports from Crete come from Area A, for example in the form of a piriform jar, recovered during the 2017 excavation season from Tomb LL (Fischer, Bürge 2018a, 53-8, fig. 20), which is markedly Minoan in its characteristics, such as decorations and fabric, and could be dated LM II-IIIA1.

A third node of great importance in this network of interaction appears to be the southeastern Aegean, specifically the Dodecanese islands, and in particular Karpathos and Rhodes. The role of the Dodecanese islands in the long-range international trade between

21 See for example the cups published in Pecorella 1977; Vermeule, Wolsky 1990. There are also examples of even earlier imports from Crete dating to MM IA and MM IB-IIA (Buchholz, Karageorghis 1973).

Cyprus and the Aegean, particularly during the early phases of the Late Bronze Age, is best understood with a brief description of current archaeological evidence. In Rhodes, the site of Trianda is noteworthy for its role as a necessary transit point in the trade routes between Cyprus, Crete and the Aegean area. Several imported Minoan pieces, dated to between LM IA and LM II, have been found here, in association with White Slip I, Base Ring I and Red Lustrous Wheelmade Ware imported from Cyprus (the most remarkable collection of Cypriot exports in the Aegean after Kommos) (Hirshfeld 1996; Marketou et al. 2006). This picture is completed by local imitations of Cypriot pottery also found at Trianda (Karageorghis, Marketou 2006), Rhodes playing a crucial role in the process of assimilation of the wishbone handle in Neopalatial Crete and the Aegean islands (Graziadio 2005, 332), and by imported southeast Aegean vessels found at Enkomi and Maroni Vournes in Cyprus. Some of the ceramic finds at Hala Sultan Tekke seem to be part of this network, and shed new light on the possible role of this area as a node in the connection between the other major vertices – mainland Greece, Crete and Cyprus.

One example suggests a route where the Dodecanese acted as an intermediary between Crete and Cyprus. It consists of a narrow-necked jug dated to LM IIIA2, found in Pit V in Area A (Fischer, Bürge 2017a, fig. 13.1). It is remarkably Minoan in its decoration and shares many similarities with the Minoan pottery found at Karpathos, the first Dodecanese Island encountered on the seaway connecting Crete to Cyprus.[22] A similar iconographic model is also found on the pottery from the Ialysos necropolis in Rhodes.[23] It is thus possible that some goods from Crete were imported into Cyprus through the Dodecanese islands.

Another example, a beaked jug dated to LH IIIA1, was also found in Pit V (Fischer, Bürge 2017a, fig. 12.5). The pieces it shares most similarities with – both in shape and in specific decorative motif of the curved-stemmed spiral (FM 49) – are found on the island of Rhodes, specifically in the Ialysos necropolis (Mountjoy 1999, 991, fig. 401.10, 998, fig. 404.29). This very same curved-stemmed spiral occurs on other pieces from Hala Sultan Tekke, for example on a cup/goblet from one of the deepest strata yet investigated in the settlement **[fig. 2c]**. In this case, too, there are many similarities with Rhodian pieces – in particular from Lachania (Mountjoy 1999, 993, fig. 402.13-14). If it was indeed a favourite decorative motif in Rhodes, this find could be added to the evidence sustaining the hypothesis of the Dodecanese islands as a node in the route between Cyprus and the Aegean.

22 Mountjoy 1999, 972, fig. 395.3, LM/LH III A1 amphoroid krater.

23 See examples in Benzi 1992.

The use of the so-called 'multiple stem' pattern (FM 19) in its angular and semicircular variation, is very common on Rhodes in the large closed shapes (Mountjoy 1999, 1000, fig. 405.37, 1002, fig. 406.38). This also occurs at Hala Sultan Tekke in some closed vessels both from the settlement and from the Area A, and points to Rhodes and the Dodecanese as a node of particular relevance in the network of interactions between Cyprus and the Aegean. Finally, the relationship with Rhodes is not limited to pottery, as demonstrated by a finely decorated stone mortar from CQ1 (Fischer, Bürge 2018b, 71, fig. 2.54). It has exact Rhodian counterparts, which are believed to be exports from Cyprus (Buchholz 1999, 319-20).

The typological study of the Aegean ceramics at Hala Sultan Tekke thus highlights a complex network where the community at Hala Sultan Tekke encountered material culture, if not people, from various areas of the Aegean, including mainland Greece, Cyprus and the Dodecanese. There was a diachronic dimension to this: early Late Bronze Age ceramics came primarily from Crete, while mainland Mycenaean pottery dominates in the later phases, Minoan examples still occur (especially in the form of transport stirrup jars), and ceramics from the Dodecanese are also found. Throughout, there is a clear selection of shapes, and presumably contents, and the imported vessels became part of a broader pattern of engaging with strangers at Hala Sultan Tekke and/or the material culture of surrounding and far away regions. Regardless of the exact nature of the personal interactions, the imported vessels were adapted to and used in local Cypriot customs.

7 Cypriot Imitations of Aegean Ceramics

The ancient Cypriots did not, however, stop at import. The potters of Cyprus enjoyed experimenting, borrowing, imitating and combining. The oldest known testimony of Cypriot production of Aegean-type ceramics has recently been the topic of a monograph by Giampaolo Graziadio (Graziadio 2017). The production is that of small three-handled jars, in Furumark's typology, FS 46 and FS 47. Remarkably Aegean in appearance, they have nonetheless been confirmed by petrography to be of local Cypriot production (Mommsen et al. 2003), made in imitation of northwestern Peloponnesian models dated to LH IIIA. This rare Cypriot production, of which 122 pieces have been recovered, is found in tombs of middle or high-ranking individuals dated to LC IIA-B. Notably absent in the Aegean, the production is found in the Levant and in Egypt. Rather importantly, the time frame in which it is placed predates the oldest Cypriot 'White Painted Wheel Made III' finds by several decades, which instead were mass-produced on Cyprus in the final phases of the Late Bronze Age.

Graziadio identifies two examples of small three-handled jars, both FS 47, from old excavations at Hala Sultan Tekke (Graziadio 2017, 143, cat. nos 63 and 64). To this, we can now add further possible examples found during the current excavations at the site, including one from Area A, Pit V (Fischer, Bürge 2017a, figs 12.4, 15.6). It may also be represented in a few sherds from the settlement, but here the examples are too fragmentary to securely identify this type. Considering the existence of a parallel from Tomb 24 from Hala Sultan Tekke (Åström, Nys 2007), dedicated workshops might have been located in the Larnaca area, once again demonstrating Hala Sultan Tekke's interest in engaging with Aegean models and cultural elements.

Moving further along chronologically to the latest phases of occupation at Hala Sultan Tekke (LC IIIA), it is well known that 'White Painted Wheelmade III' pottery imitates not only Aegean technology, but also certain shapes and motifs, to the extent that it can at times be difficult to distinguish from the imported vessels. At Hala Sultan Tekke, the inspiration can be seen especially in kraters with painted complex figural scenes, such as the so-called 'Creature Krater', 'Horned God Krater' and 'Bird krater' (Fischer 2019, fig. 7). The shape in these cases is related to but often different from the Aegean ring-based krater, and the inspiration is equally obvious in the decorative scheme. Another example is a stirrup jar found in CQ2 Stratum 1 (Fischer, Bürge 2018b, 403, fig. 2.124.3), which has the glossy paint that is so typical Aegean, but features such as the shape of the false spout and upside-down scale pattern divulge a local production.

Both deep and shallow bowls imitating Aegean shapes and decoration occur in the local production in large quantities. The deep bowls often have linear decoration combined with various types of spirals and lozenges.[24] The shallow bowls are sometimes carinated and can very closely resemble their Aegean counterparts. They are usually either unpainted or have linear bands on the exterior and linear bands combined with a geometric pattern on the interior.[25]

24 See examples e.g. in Fischer, Bürge 2018b, 285, fig. 3.43, 337, fig. 3.78.

25 For complete examples from Area A, see Fischer, Bürge 2017b, fig. 26.6-8.

8 Conclusions

In Late Bronze Age Hala Sultan Tekke, the imported Aegean ceramics played an important role in the expression of identity and in the display of social status among the community living in the city. The choices made in importing and imitating the Aegean pottery represent various dynamics of direct and indirect engagement with and between 'strangers' in Late Bronze Age Cyprus.

The presence in the settlement and in the funerary area of such a large amount of ceramic materials imported from the Aegean, mainly dated to the LH IIIA-B period, reflects complex processes of deliberate selection of imported shapes and types, adaptation of uses in the local Cypriot social context, and appropriation, hybridisation and imitation of a stranger ceramic tradition.

In terms of the range of imported Aegean shapes and types, it is clear that careful selection took place. Aegean vessels were imported both for their contents (closed vessels) and for their own sake, primarily as tableware (open vessels). Some shapes which are fairly common in the Aegean are very rare or completely absent at Hala Sultan Tekke. Only some specific ceramic shapes and types among the wide *corpus* of Aegean production were selected by the Cypriots for import to the island and in Hala Sultan Tekke. Those are mainly represented by kraters, shallow bowls, cups, stirrup jars and piriform jars; deep bowls and kylikes, commonly occurring on Aegean sites, were also imported but in significantly smaller quantities. In contrast to the shapes, there is no clear indication of deliberate selection in the range of motifs beyond a preference for painted vessels. Shape (and content) was more important than decorative types when the people of Hala Sultan Tekke chose which vessels to import.

Overall, the Aegean ceramic imports from the settlement area CQ1-4 are almost equally distributed between open and closed shapes. However, in CQ1 (the only area where substantial Stratum 3 material has been excavated so far), it has been possible to observe a preponderance of open vessels in Stratum 3, corresponding to an increasing preference for closed vessels in the later Stratum 2 and 1. This shift seems to be entirely consistent with the architectural and archaeological sequence, characterised by a substantial change in the use of space and building technique between Stratum 3 and Stratum 2 and 1. The trends observed for the Aegean pottery collected from CQ1 suggest that there might have been a change in the types of goods (ceramics and contents) that were imported from the Aegean between LC IIB and LC IIC-IIIA. Furthermore, the trend in the amount of Aegean ceramic imports observed in CQ1 shows a significant and progressive decrease of the imports from Stratum 3 to Stratum 1 (from LC IIB to LC IIC-IIIA), once again confirming changes in the relations between Cyprus and the Aegean during this time.

Describing the implications of the functional classifications, tableware of mostly open vessels (F1.1a, F1.1c and F1.2) make up about half the assemblage collected, while small vessels for precious substances (F2) and larger storage vessels (F3) cover the remaining; 'ritual' vessels (F4) only occur in small numbers. Once again CQ1 seems to present a special scenario, characterised by clear changes from Stratum 3 and Stratum 2 and 1. These trends are striking and reflect developing trading relations, social values and changes in the engagement with imported material culture in different periods of the life of the city. Among the City Quarters of the settlement, the pattern of distribution of tableware (F1), small closed shaped for precious commodities (F2), storage and transport containers (F3) and ritual vessels (F4) suggests the existence of different uses of the imported wares in different parts of the settlement.

Once distributed in the city of Hala Sultan Tekke, the Aegean ceramics were subject to adaptation for local use in the different contexts of the site, both in the settlement and in the cemetery. The popularity of tableware on the site suggests that Cypriot engagement with Aegean imported pottery was largely focused on consumption and very likely on a public display of this consumption. Cups, kylikes, shallow bowls and deep bowls were the most common vessels used for drinking and eating/drinking contents which may have been distributed from kraters and only to a much lesser extent from jugs. Kraters, with their large surface suitable for decoration in pictorial style, were vehicles of complex iconographic repertoires rich in social meanings particularly appreciated on occasions of public or communal display of consumption.

That such shapes and functions were particularly important to the people of Hala Sultan Tekke and Cyprus more broadly is also reflected in the preference for similar vessels in the locally produced 'White Painted Wheelmade III' ware, where kraters, shallow and deep bowls often mirror the Aegean counterparts.

The ceramic finds at Hala Sultan Tekke help identify some of the main active hubs in the complex web of long-distance interactions which link Cyprus with the Aegean (and the people of Cyprus with those from the Aegean), therefore giving us a chance to reconstruct possible intercultural trajectories and point of contact between the two areas. The typological analysis of the imported Aegean ceramics at Hala Sultan Tekke suggests three main Aegean areas linked with Hala Sultan Tekke during different stages of the Late Bronze Age: Crete, the Dodecanese and Mainland Greece. While almost all of the earliest Aegean vessels recovered in Cyprus in the early Late Bronze Age were imported from Crete, the most common evidence of interaction between Crete and the settlement of Hala Sultan Tekke is represented by numerous fragments the so-called Minoan transport stirrup jars, dated to LM IIIA-B.

On the other hand, Mainland Greece represents the most important area of provenience of the vast majority of the Aegean ceramics dated to the LH IIIA-B period so far collected in Cyprus and in the Levant. Some Peloponnesian ceramic production was likely specifically intended for export to Cyprus and the eastern Mediterranean, such as the amphoroid kraters with pictorial decoration, and were tailored to fulfil international demand, catering in particular to the tastes of Cypriot elites.

A third crucial node in this complex system of interaction as suggested by the Aegean material from the settlement of Hala Sultan Tekke is represented by the Dodecanese, especially by the islands of Karpathos and Rhodes. These acted as a connection between Mainland Greece and Crete at one end and Cyprus and the Levant at the other. This connection between the three islands of Cyprus, Rhodes and Karpathos is strongly suggested by affinities in the decorative repertoire visible on the Aegean ceramics found on all of them.

In terms of the dynamics of appropriation, hybridisation and imitation of the Aegean ceramic tradition in the community at Hala Sultan Tekke, the first and small-scale local production of Aegean-style pottery on the island is that of the three-handled small piriform jars, dated to LC IIA-B and imitating LH IIIA models from the northwestern Peloponnese. During the following LC IIC-IIIA period, specific shapes and motifs were massively produced in the local so-called 'White Painted Wheelmade III' tradition, in particular deep bowls decorated with spirals and triglyphs and kraters decorated in the 'Pastoral Style'.

The imported Aegean pottery at Hala Sultan Tekke thus not only demonstrates a complex network of interaction between various parts of the eastern Mediterranean, with Cyprus as one key meeting place, but also how a specific type of material culture can mediate encounters between the people living at the site and 'strangers' from other regions. In turn, this material culture was integrated into local traditions and used in the expression of status, identity and consumption, including as 'imitated' in local ceramic production. The relative abundance of Aegean-imported ceramics at Hala Sultan Tekke indicates that the material culture-people entanglements were particularly pronounced at this site.

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Classical Antiquity

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Inscribing Texts in Hellenistic Cyprus

Epigraphic Habit as a Tool for the Study of Social Interactions Under Ptolemaic Rule

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Abstract This paper aims to explore the role of epigraphic habit(s) in the definition of a mixed society in Cyprus during the Hellenistic period. Like many areas of the Hellenistic world, Cyprus has experienced great changes in the way of inscribing and erecting texts in civic and religious space from the late fourth century BC onwards. In this paper, we will try to answer questions related to the connection between social contacts of Cypriot communities with foreign agents and the development and use of inscribed texts in the context of Ptolemaic rule. In doing so, we will examine the changes occurring in the making and use of inscriptions in Cyprus from the fourth century BC until the last decades of the first century BC and explore the role of local traditions in the shaping of some hybrid epigraphic practices.

Keywords Epigraphic habit. Hellenistic History. Ptolemaic administration. Greek inscriptions. Cypriot society. History of literacy. Writing systems. Multilingual inscriptions. Materiality of texts. Cultural history. Intercultural contacts.

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1 Introduction

The concept of epigraphic habit was first applied to Greek epigraphic studies to describe and analyse the practice of inscribing texts in Classical Athens,[1] before arising in other – well documented – areas as well. The main theoretical goal of this concept is to explain why one community inscribed some information on stone, and therefore to investigate the evolution of engraving practices through time. Therefore, epigraphic habit is in a broader sense closely related to various questions covering the field of ancient literacy.

Given the specificities of the corpus, applying the questions linked to the concept of epigraphic habit to the inscriptions of Cyprus can be challenging. Even if one focuses on one specific period of the island's history, one may quickly feel discouraged by the heterogeneity of the texts, the state of publication of the inscriptions[2] and that of the related archaeological contexts. Moreover, among the 3,000 alphabetic inscriptions of Cyprus,[3] no information regarding the engraving process is preserved, which could shed direct light on the status of the letter-cutters, the costs, and on the administrative process of engraving inscriptions. The absence of information regarding the inscriptions' materiality also impedes a more comprehensive understanding of epigraphic practices. This is also the case in Hellenistic times. Hellenistic Cypriot inscriptions are brief, often fragmentary, and poorly documented in their archaeological and material aspects. These characteristics have certainly contributed to isolate them from the other epigraphic ensembles coming from different areas of the Hellenistic world, which could have shared a similar sort. Although the state of the corpus may prevent us from using the concept of epigraphic habit in all its dimensions, this paper aims to mobilise the problematics linked to epigraphic habit as a tool to analyse the ways of interactions between the foreign Ptolemaic agents and the populations of Cyprus.

In a major book published recently, Philippa M. Steele (2019) attempted to connect the development of the Cypriot writing systems with the social developments of the island. In her study, she outlines the relationship between epigraphic customs and social developments and contributes to establishing the act of writing as a matter of study *per se* for the Cypriot studies. Steele thoroughly discusses the

1 The concept first occurred in the field of Roman epigraphy. See MacMullen 1982. The first application to the field of Greek epigraphy can be found in Hedrick 1999.

2 This situation has been improving since the publication of the first volumes of the *Inscriptiones Graecae Cypri*. See Karnava, Perna 2020 and Kantirea, Summa 2020.

3 Approximative amount given by M. Kantirea (2015). The author evaluates that the full corpus of Cypriot inscriptions comes to about 5,000 texts, including syllabic inscriptions and inscriptions written in Phoenician alphabet.

question of the survival of syllabic writing and of Cypriot dialects down into the Hellenistic period, and by doing so draws powerful and inspiring conclusions on the evolution of writing culture on the island, which restore the balance with previous dominating readings of Cypriot history (Mitford 1953, 90 quoted in Steele 2019, 233). Within the imposed restrictions of this paper, we wish to extend the question beyond the linguistic aspects in order to examine different epigraphic practices of Hellenistic Cyprus.

The beginning of the Hellenistic period is traditionally associated with the loss of linguistic and epigraphic diversity that goes along with the fall of the city-kingdoms. This situation is intimately linked to the often-debated question of the survival of a Cypriot identity under Ptolemaic Rule. Indeed, we can observe that Ptolemaic rulers and Ptolemaic officials enjoy a very high visibility in the inscriptions from Cyprus, that, at first sight, can be considered to have been achieved at the expense of Cypriots (e.g. Roesch 1980, 250; Michaelidou-Nicolaou 1976, 24). Yet, it would be wrong to say that Cypriot epigraphy died with the Ptolemaic conquest. During the period of Ptolemaic administration of the island, different groups of populations, active in mixed contexts, are recorded in the inscriptions. Various traditions coming from different areas meet, while new ones emerge. Some social features undergo dramatic changes, while others remain unchanged until the advent of Roman administration (Michel 2020a). In such a mixed-up situation, what is the point in describing the epigraphic habit(s) of Hellenistic Cyprus? In fact, the Hellenistic period is key to the study of epigraphic customs and of their role in the definition of new social settings. Social transformations emerging with the end of the city-kingdom era will deeply affect the island and will be effective in the long-term. Moreover, Cypriot epigraphical evidence is strongly connected to phenomena appearing elsewhere, as the island entered into new political, economic, and cultural networks during the fourth century BC.

Keeping in mind the complexity of the questions addressed in this paper, and denying any claim of exhaustivity, we shall investigate epigraphic habits not only as the choices regarding writing and language uses, but also in a broader sense as the ways of formulating and displaying in the epigraphic landscape pieces of information intended to a mixed audience. This approach meets broader theoretical questions, many of them linked to the notion of adaptation and integration in intercultural contexts.

2 Inscriptions as Indicators of Contacts Between Cypriot Communities and Ptolemaic Agents

To begin with, we shall provide a glimpse of the evolutions and changes appearing in epigraphic practices during the three centuries of Ptolemaic Rule. These present an obvious correlation with political changes as inscriptions are a key witness of the political and administrative changes encountered from late fourth century BC onwards. Indeed, if the island was far from hermetic to external influences during the Archaic and Classical periods, the fall of the city-kingdom system and the installation of a foreign administration based outside Cyprus bring dramatic changes in the history, and therefore in the epigraphy of the island.[4] Inscribed texts play a major role in the study of Hellenistic Cyprus as they stand as the main indicators of the contacts between the Ptolemaic army and administration, and the populations of the island. Indeed, the epigraphic documentation of Ptolemaic Cyprus is one of the main sources to spot the presence of foreigners, some of whom can be undoubtedly related to the administrative and military occupation of the island.

Obviously, new voices emerge on stone with the Ptolemaic conquest, such as the one of foreign Ptolemaic soldiers and officials. These are recorded in different types of inscriptions. Among the numerous epitaphs of strangers dated to the Hellenistic period,[5] few funerary monuments clearly suggest that the deceased belonged to one of the foreign armies fighting in Cyprus during the Hellenistic period and even fewer are the ones that certainly belonged to Ptolemaic soldiers. Yet, this type of document can be found in an extraordinary funerary epigram discovered in Kition. The verse-written epitaph of Praxagoras[6] formally identifies the deceased as a high-ranked Ptolemaic official.

More generally, funerary texts are more diverse than we can think at first sight and may convey more information than historiography usually suggests. The many epitaphs of foreigners found in Cyprus (especially in Amathous and Kition) not only give us access to an exogenous prosopography but, in some cases, they also reveal a variety of practices related to the conservation of the memory of the

4 Kantirea 2015. For the study of Cypriot epigraphical sources before the dawn of the city-kingdoms, see Steele 2019.

5 Thirty-three texts are recorded in Michaelidou-Nicolaou 1967. The deceased come from regions as diverse as Macedonia, Thrace, Epirus, Illyria, Asia Minor, Phoenicia, Persia, Egypt, and Libya.

6 *IG* XV, 2, 1, no. 84 (*I. Kition* 2070; Michel 2020a, no. 9).

deceased and to the transmission of the information over time.[7] As one can observe in Cyprus and elsewhere, this information, as concise as it may be, is tightly linked to engraving traditions. The versified epitaph of Nikogenes of Kalymnos (Voskos et al. 1997, E20; Michel 2020a, no. 1), with its moulded and painted stele depicting a standing armed warrior (the deceased himself?), has an outstanding position in the funerary epigraphy of Hellenistic Cyprus. This document belongs to a small group of painted steles from Amathous, which suggests the existence of a local workshop in the early third century BC and its connections to Macedonian, Thessalian and Alexandrian models (Hermary 1987, 72-5). The evidence for such funerary markers in Amathous suggests the adoption of Mediterranean and Hellenistic epigraphic practices by a wealthy part of the people living there in the third century BC. However, Nikogenes' stele is the only one to bear an inscription and we cannot determine whether the unique painted steles from Amathous were basically intended to a foreign population looking for a distinctive visual marker or were valued more broadly by the city's population. Perhaps, the fact that the one and only preserved inscribed epitaph of the series belongs to a stranger may be interpreted as an extra strategy of distinction.

The presence of strangers in Cyprus during the Ptolemaic Rule led to the production of different categories of inscribed texts on stone. Leaving the field of the individual expression, we can move to inscriptions evidencing the structured military and administrative organisation of the Ptolemaic presence in Cyprus. Dedications of *koina* show in an explicit manner the organised character of the presence of mercenaries[8] staying in the garrisons of Cyprus. These groups have been explored in detail by historians (Dana 2011; Fischer-Bovet 2014, 290-5). A. Mehl (2018, 270) describes as "parallel societies" the precisely structured and powerful groups composed in Cyprus by Lycians, Achaeans, Thracians, Cretans, Ionians, Cilicians mercenaries. The dedication[9] of a statue of the *strategos* Seleukos son of Bithys to the Olympian Zeus in the mid-second century BC by the group of the Achaeans and the other Greeks offers evidence of the wealth and public visibility of the mercenaries stationed in Cyprus, although the word *koinon* does not appear in the text. In Cyprus, foreign *koina* decide the erection of many statues mainly dedicated to Ptolemaic high-ranked officials. Two inscriptions from

7 The prosopographic and geographic evidence has been collected by I. Nicolaou (Michaelidou-Nicolaou 1967; 1976).

8 *IG* XV, 2, 1, no. 26 (*I. Kition* 2023) offers clear evidence for the presence of high-ranked officials specialised in the recruitment of mercenaries. For a brief overview of the documentation and bibliography, see: Michel 2020a, 55-7.

9 *I. Olympia* 301.

Paphos may also evoke the daily life of these mercenaries in Cyprus. A very fragmentary text discovered in Nea Paphos, interpreted as a petition of soldiers,[10] documents, although imprecisely, the difficulties encountered by foreign soldiers stationed in Cyprus. This is the unique appearance of this category of texts in Cypriot epigraphy. Another inscription, discovered in Palaepaphos and dated to the last quarter of the third century BC presents a unique list of contributors for the provision of oil for the gymnasium.[11] All the mentioned contributors bear a foreign ethnic related to cities of Asia Minor. This indication suggests that the eight men were related to the Ptolemaic army. The Paphian list adds to the discussion an epigraphic practice otherwise unknown in Cypriot epigraphy.

Obviously, inscriptions also vividly attest the presence of the Ptolemaic administration in Cyprus. If the corpus of Ptolemaic laws found in Cyprus is very poor,[12] the repertoire of Ptolemaic administration affects more generally an important part of Cypriot epigraphy: the corpus is teeming with titles and functions of the Ptolemaic aulic hierarchy. The numerous statue bases for Ptolemaic officials found in Cyprus have been seen as a phenomenon *per se* and used as a "knockout argument" to prove the stifling character of the Ptolemaic domination over the island (Roesch 1980, 250), although the analysis of such monuments is far from complete. Be that as it may, Ptolemaic *strategoi* and other officials form one of the best documented groups in the epigraphy of Hellenistic Cyprus. The many statue bases dedicated to Ptolemaic officials reveal the existence of a dense hierarchised network of Ptolemaic agents active in Cyprus. The variety of the military or administrative positions recorded on Cypriot inscriptions, and the names of their holders, when preserved, are thought to have considerably improved our knowledge of the Ptolemaic court-system and the Ptolemaic prosopography.[13]

In parallel with the phenomena alluded to above, the traditional Cypriot identity markers consisting in the use of syllabic writing and of dialectal language are fading, arousing a general impression of imbalance between foreigners and Cypriots in the Hellenistic written documentation. Undoubtedly, the most striking consequence of the Ptolemaic conquest can be seen in the decline of the linguistic diversity visible on stone, in favour of the generalisation of Greek

10 *I. Paphos* 70; Michel 2020a, no. 23.

11 *I. Paphos* 66; Michel 2020a, no. 74. For the ἐλαιοχριστίον, see Fröhlich 2009, 61.

12 One of the few examples can be found in the copy of a Ptolemaic edict from 145/144 BC: *IG* XV, 2, 1, no. 1; *I. Kition* 2017; Lenger 1980 (Bielman 1994, no. 27; Michel 2020a, no. 25). See also the fragmentary law from Marion-Arsinoe mentioning the *apomoira*: Segre 1952, 319-30 (Michel 2020a, 131, no. 52).

13 Bagnall 1976, 38-79; Mooren 1977; Van't Dack 1990; Michel 2020a, 44-51.

alphabetic writing. Indeed, from the last decades of the fourth century BC onwards the use of the syllabic writing will be restricted to very limited contexts while the Phoenician texts will also decrease in numbers. If we remain cautious in drawing conclusions on the linguistic diversity in other forms of Cypriot literacy, we may certainly relate this new epigraphic configuration to the Ptolemaic domination and interpret it as a turn towards Hellenistic Mediterranean customs (Steele 2019).

However, the development of alphabetical Greek in Hellenistic times cannot, at any instance, be considered as a rupture in Cypriot literacy. P. Steele has shown that this evolution is related rather to a positive choice than to the supposed passive situation of Cypriots towards Ptolemaic domination. Moreover, she demonstrated that the idea of a fatal break in syllabic and Cypriot dialectal literacy results from several analytical biases, so that the traditional interpretation of the 'death' of Cypriot writing system and of Cypriot dialect may in fact be no more than a matter of perspective. That is the conclusion we can draw from the study of two well-known ensembles: Kafizin's inscribed pottery sherds and Nea Paphos' sealings (Nicolaou 1993). We do not intend to discuss this material in detail here; we shall limit ourselves to giving the readers a basic outline that will help them to understand the importance of the aforementioned inscriptions for our subject.

The first ensemble[14] owes its name to the conical hill of Kafizin, located in the Mesaoria plain around 7 km South-East of Nicosia,[15] and on the top of which a big amount of pottery sherds bearing incised dedications to the local Nymph was found. Most of the fragments came from a natural cave situated on the top of the hill to the West, from the Western slope of the hill and from a cistern dug on the South-West terrace outside the cave. No less than 310 dedications (most of which were made by Onesagoras son of Philounios) appear on Kafizin's vases. Thirty-five of these inscriptions are written using both writing systems and 32 using syllabic writing only. All the offerings were made in an interval of 6 years related to the regnal years of two successive kings, whom S. Lejeune identified with Epiphanes and Philometor.[16] Lejeune's meticulous argumentation leads to a dating of Kafizin's dedications between 183 and 177 BC. The Kafizin's dossier does not only record the continued use of syllabic writing in a religious context, but it also demonstrates the influence of Cypriot dialect on the local use of the *koine* dialect (Steele 2019, 237). This

14 Inscriptions incised in alphabetical Greek: *IG* XV 2,1, nos. 474-779. See also Lejeune 2014.

15 Today the hill is inaccessible, since it has been inside the *Bufferzone* since 1974.

16 *Contra IG* XV 2,1, 147.

later point is perhaps a more powerful indication of the vitality of the Cypriot dialect among the local populations.

The sealings coming from the archives of Nea Paphos date from the mid-second to the end of the first centuries BC and were found under the mosaic pavement of the House of Dionysos (Nicolaou 1993). They probably belonged to the public archives of the city destroyed by fire and abandoned before being reused by the end of the second century AD in the filling of the foundations of the mosaic. On some sealings we can see syllabic signs and abbreviated names. This ensemble offers the latest evidence of the use of syllabic writing in Cyprus.

Both ensembles have an obvious common feature: they are not inscribed on stone. Nevertheless, they belong to two distinct spheres (religious/private; administrative/official), and they offer significant evidence for the use of syllabic writing after the traditional breaking point of the end of fourth century BC. Kafizin's sherds and Paphos' sealings open a small window in our understanding of the way syllabic writing and Cypriot dialect survived their disappearance on stone. If we agree that both were still used and understood at least partly by the local population, who maintained them as markers of Cypriot identity but still preferred to use the Greek alphabet and the Hellenistic *koine* when it came to displaying monumental texts, then the probability of a segregate use of Cypriot dialect and syllabic writing on perishable material becomes very high and may explain the general epigraphic layout. From this point of view, the " restriction" observed in the use of the syllabic writing may be deceptive and its decline should be rather interpreted as a reminder of how our understanding of literacy in Antiquity is limited.

The analysis of the impact of political transition on epigraphic habit may lead to a reserved conclusion. The installation of foreign corps and administration undoubtedly modifies the layout of Cypriot epigraphy. Nevertheless, Cypriot identity markers do not perish with the end of Cypriot autonomous polities, and case-studies from the margins of epigraphy (as sealings, and in another way, inscribed pottery are) attest the continued use of Cypriot writing and Cypriot Greek dialect until the first century BC. The situation described above requires introducing the study of functional range into the analysis of epigraphic habit in Hellenistic Cyprus and suggests taking into account social and cultural factors for the study of epigraphic practices in ancient Cyprus.

3 Inscriptions as Indicators of Social Evolutions and Changes

But to what extent can we read Cypriot Hellenistic inscriptions as indicators of social evolutions and changes? Given the configuration of the preserved documentation, this question requires to turn our attention towards the documentation written on stone with an obvious purpose of display. Generally, Cypriot Hellenistic inscriptions on stone have a quite striking position in Greek epigraphy – as it is usually understood in reference to Greek *polis*-centred standards. No accounts or inventories, no public lists, or official records from any civic institution can be found in the preserved documentation. This statement, together with the scarce evidence regarding Cypriot magistratures and institutions, has reinforced the suspicion towards the civic character (in the sense of the Greek democratic *polis* system) of the internal organisation of Cypriot towns before the installation of Roman administration on the island.[17]

Cypriot Hellenistic epigraphy on stone is dominated by religious, honorific, and funerary texts. During the Hellenistic period, honorific epigraphy flourished on the island according to a general tendency that can be observed through the Mediterranean. Statue bases bearing dedications to individuals have a major position in Cypriot epigraphy. When found in sanctuaries, these bases fully evidence the interconnection between religious and honorific intentions which are embodied in the act of dedication (Biard 2017, 95-7). This kind of dedications is well known in the previous periods of Cyprus' history and is particularly important in the late Classical period. Therefore, honorific epigraphy cannot be seen as a Hellenistic innovation. However, the development of this sphere in Hellenistic Cyprus is remarkable. Two major phenomena arise in the wake of the Ptolemaic occupation of the island: the emergence of two distinct categories of recipients of public honours belonging to two distinct hierarchies, and the social broadening of the honours, which seems to begin during the Hellenistic period.

Hellenistic documentation from Cyprus evidences two categories of recipients. The first and better documented group includes representatives of the Ptolemaic administration, while some local figures seem to emerge on the public stage. As we have already said above (see § 2), Ptolemaic *strategoi* and their subordinates have a prominent position in the honours bestowed upon individuals in Cyprus. Around fifty dedications to individuals of this group are preserved, most of them originating from the sanctuary of Aphrodite in Palaepaphos (twenty-eight texts), or from the city of Salamis (eleven texts).

17 *I. Paphos*, 100-1, 219. For a slightly different approach, see Michel 2020a, 70-2.

However, the presence of numerous inscribed statue-bases of foreign officials should not be regarded as an isolated epigraphic phenomenon. On the contrary, the nature of the monuments argues for a more global approach, taking into consideration the spatial and architectural aspects of these dedications. This method suggests reconnecting the honorific dedications to their local environment, which is usually provided with religious and historical aura. In Cyprus, this statement is very vivid, especially in Paphos where the religious complex dedicated to Aphrodite holds an important position in the display of Ptolemaic power.

Obviously, dedicating statues in sanctuaries is not a prerogative of foreigners in Hellenistic Cyprus. In Cyprus, the custom to combine the dedication of a statue to the deity with an inscribed text goes back to the Cypro-Archaic II period (600-480). Moreover, the use of alphabetical Greek as a conveyor of public information accessible to a wider Mediterranean-oriented audience must be attributed to the Cypriot kings of the fourth century BC.[18] The many dedications of Cypriots known in Hellenistic Cyprus show the adoption of new epigraphic habits by a wider, yet wealthy, part of the local population. In the new framework of Ptolemaic Cyprus, these inscriptions help us to discern different groups structuring the local society.

The study of the honorific dedications shows that the priests and priestesses enjoy a privileged position in the context of the Ptolemaic Rule. To limit ourselves to the dedications inscribed on statue-bases, we see local priests and priestesses receiving honorific statues (such as Diodoros, the former priest of Apollo in Kourion, honoured by his sons)[19] and others offering honorific statues (such as Phanion, dedicating a statue of her son Boiskos in Palaepaphos[20] or Diagoras honouring his father in Kourion).[21] Some priests also seem to maintain a close relationship with the Ptolemaic administration of the island. The college of the priests of Aphrodite *Paphia* offers at least one statue to the *strategos* Seleukos[22]and two to Helenos,[23] in gratitude for their *euergesia* towards them. For the same reason they honour Ptolemy IX Soter II between 105 and 81 BC.

Other Cypriots are known to have been related to civic instances, although their precise development and functioning during the

18 Steele 2019, 223-31. See for example the recent publication of the alphabetic dedication of Pnytagoras' son and Nicocreon's brother Nicocles: Christophi, Kantirea 2021.

19 *I. Kourion* 52 (Michel 2020a, no. 68).

20 *I. Paphos* 80 (Michel 2020a, no. 65).

21 Nicolaou 1996, 177 no. 5.

22 *I. Paphos* 42 (Michel 2020a, no. 28).

23 *I. Paphos* 55-6.

Hellenistic period is poorly documented. One area of public life is largely invested by local figures: the gymnasium and its administration. Many inscriptions attest the activity of Cypriots in the management of this important centre of public life in the Hellenistic period. As *gymnasiarch* of Salamis, Themias son of Aristagoras is known to have offered a statue of Ptolemy Epiphanes,[24] while in the gymnasium of Salamis a statue of the same king has been dedicated by Philokrates son of Naukrates, former *agonothet*.[25] Both men are mentioned on the statue-bases without ethnic, a fact that suggests their local origin. More impressive is the dedication by the *gymnasiarch* of Amathous, Onesikrates son of Onesikrates, of the door and thirteen columns of a stoa, located in the lower part of the city and probably belonging to the gymnasium complex (Prête et al. 2002, 567), in honour of Ptolemy Philometor and Cleopatra II (163-145 BC). This case certainly represents one of the most explicit pieces of evidence of the involvement and the visibility of a local figure in the public life of a Cypriot city during Hellenistic times. In the very late period of Ptolemaic administration of Cyprus, some Cypriots emerged on the civic stage with more precise institutional functions. This is for example the case for Kallippos son of Kallippos, honoured by the Paphians as the former secretary of the *boule* and *demos*, former *archon* of the city, member of the association of the *technitai* of Dionysos, current secretary of the city and former *gymnasiarch*.[26]

Few Cypriots are also known to have entered Ptolemaic aulic circles. Among them, Onesandros son of Nausikrates is the most famous. He is honoured between 88 and 80 BC by the city of Paphos[27] and his destiny is intimately connected to the Ptolemaic dynastic history in the beginning of the first century BC. Evoked as *syngenes*, kinsman, of the King, Onesandros probably entered the highest circle of aulic hierarchy during Soter's sole reign in Cyprus (106/5-88). The Paphian dedication is dated to the second part of Soter's reign, at a time when Cyprus and Egypt were reunited after the death of his brother Alexander (88-80) and attests to Onesandros' successful career both in Alexandria's and in Paphos' Ptolemaic courts, since he is recorded as priest for life of the royal cult, founder of the *Ptolemaion* (of Paphos?), secretary of the city and, last but not least, director of the Great Library of Alexandria. So far, the prestige of this Paphian citizen bears no comparison with any other Cypriot in the Hellenistic period. The dedications of statues for Cypriots quickly mentioned here appear to be solid evidence of the evolution of the honorific

24 *I. Salamine* 65 (Michel 2020a, no. 75).

25 *I. Salamine* 66 (Michel 2020a, no. 77).

26 *I. Paphos* 94 (Michel 2020a, no. 71).

27 *I. Paphos* 89(Michel 2020a, no. 70); now see Kantirea 2023.

practices in Cyprus during the Hellenistic period. This evolution, clearly reflecting new social settings, is also intimately linked to the epigraphic one, as the dedications adopt the standardised form of the Greek honorific rhetoric.

Many other private individuals, who cannot be related to any precise administrative or religious position, are recorded in Cypriot texts as donors or recipients of dedications. The bilingual Greek-Phoenician dedication from Lapethos to Athena *Soteira Nike* and a king Ptolemy (Fourrier 2015, 44; Bonnet, Bianco 2018, 44 no. 2 and 52-6; Michel 2020a, no. 101) tends to show that Cypriots from different linguistic and religious backgrounds acknowledged in the beginning of the third century BC both the prominent position of alphabetical Greek for the display of public inscriptions[28] and the authority of the Ptolemaic rulers. In Idalion, the dedication by Batshilem of the statues of her grandchildren[29] stands as an obvious sign of the vitality of the Phoenician nobility in the first half of the third century BC. Unlike the dedication of Praxidemos son of Sesmas, the inscription from Idalion is not bilingual: the Phoenician language is the one and only choice of Batshilem. However, the calendar reference, besides the civic era of Kition, to the Ptolemaic regnal years and to the priesthood of Amatosiris, the *canephoros* of Arsinoe Philadelphus strongly suggests that Batshilem and her family belong to a multicultural milieu, able to use various cultural repertoires.

Women and children appear also more often on statue-bases, showing the growing importance of familial dedications in Hellenistic Cyprus (Michel 2021) visible in other parts of the Hellenistic Mediterranean as well. This suggests that a new Cypriot nobility was born, further confirmed by another category of inscriptions, closely related to honorific issues: the funerary epigrams. If this category of inscriptions cannot be considered as an innovation in Cyprus (Voskos et al. 1997, 52-62), its development during the Hellenistic period seemingly reveals the influence of a new rhetoric inspired by Mediterranean and Alexandrian models. A notable example is the funerary stele adorned with pediment and acroters of the eight-year-old Aphrodisie in Amathous (Voskos et al. 1997, E28; Michel 2020a, no. 69). Here the elegiac tone of the Hellenistic epigram blends with an explicit will of displaying literary mastery, testifying to the Cypriot nobilities' claim to the prestige of engraving Greek epigrams.

28 Even if the dedicant appears to be more familiar with the Phoenician language, the disposition of the inscription highlights the Greek text. See Steele 2019, 188-9, 234.

29 *I. Kition* 82 (Michel 2020a, no. 106); Fourrier 2015, 38-9.

4 Inscriptions as Indicators of Adaptation and Hybridity Processes

Hopefully, the brief panorama of Hellenistic epigraphy drawn in the previous sections has also demonstrated the heterogeneity of the Hellenistic society of the island. The examination of the epigraphic documentation preserved shows: 1) the overwhelming use of Greek alphabet and *koine* dialect for monumental inscriptions, whereas Cypriot dialects and syllabic writing do survive in other contexts; 2) the significant presence of foreigners and their high visibility in inscriptions on stone; 3) the coexistence of two distinct categories of aristocracies, and the specialisation of their prerogatives; 4) the prevalence of honorific texts in public epigraphy and the diversification of the honorands; 5) the adaptability of the Cypriots in the use of Hellenistic-wide epigraphic habits. This statement leads us to examine the role of inscriptions as hybridity markers. Besides the adoption of language and shared writing strategies, can we identify local features and trace intercultural processes in Cypriot epigraphy?

Onomastics are a useful tool to detect intercultural contacts. Even if written in the Greek language and script of the Hellenistic *koine*, the choice of a name and the way to display it in the epigraphic landscape can be meaningful. That said, any conclusion about the significance of these choices for the study of identities is based on speculations. The dedication by Echetime of the statues of her son Agapenor and her daughter Evagoratis in Palaepaphos,[30] for example, proves to be significant. Indeed, the dedicant bears a feminine version of the name of the king of Paphos, Echetimos, while her son's name recalls without doubt the hero supposed to have founded the city[31] and Evagoratis should be read in reference to the king of Salamis, Evagoras. In this case we can assume that such onomastic choices belong to a conscious strategy of evocation of the glorious past of the island. Echetime and her children are not mentioned elsewhere and the connection of their family to the Paphian nobility cannot be proved. Another dedication inscribed on a Paphian statue base may show the adoption of Alexandrian onomastics by local nobles. The *archos* of the *Kinyrads*, probably a religious association related to an ancient local tradition, consecrating to the Paphian Aphrodite the statue of his daughter Aristion together with his wife Eunike, bears the name Demokrates son of Ptolemaios.[32] In the second part of the third century BC, this name could hardly be read without recalling any reference to the royal Ptolemaic family.

30 *I. Paphos* 189. See also: Masson 1963, 5-6.

31 Pausanias 8.5.2-3.

32 *I. Paphos* 81 (Michel 2020a, no. 66).

On a more structural level, one category of public inscriptions holds particular relevance to our question: the Cypriot decrees. The corpus of the Cypriot decrees presents a very specific configuration and may be considered as a key witness of the epigraphic habits and their evolution during the Hellenistic period. Civic decrees – here to be intended as the official orders expressing the resolutions of the decision-taking bodies of the civic community (the *boule* and *demos* in most cities provided with a democratic constitution) – appear in the corpus in a strikingly low proportion in comparison with other areas of the Hellenistic Mediterranean. Different reasons can be found to explain this situation, starting with the chance underlying archaeological finds. Indeed, the few civic decrees discovered in Cyprus are preserved in a very fragmentary state of conservation, which as a result may lead to an inaccurate analysis of the documentation. However, some general features emerge, helping us to discern more accurately the originality of the Cypriot decrees. Having a closer look at the documentation, we can observe that the city of Kourion differs from the other cities of the island by its relatively high number of civic decisions written on stone. Unfortunately, most of them are very poorly preserved and their reading should remain cautious. A small number of texts from Chytroi, Kourion and Salamis offer some pieces of information on the prerogatives of the cities and their internal life.[33] These are the most obvious proof of the activity of civic institutions during the Hellenistic period. According to the preserved inscriptions, these Cypriot cities were at least able to bestow expensive honours upon their benefactors, to collect taxes and/or to control parts of their own territory. This statement sharply balances the generally admitted vision of the political death of the Cypriot cities under Ptolemaic Rule.

Another different category of inscriptions may show more precisely the process of adaptation of the decrees' rhetoric in other areas of public life. Some inscriptions can indeed be read as hybrid texts, as they make use of the formulary shape of Greek civic decrees to promote decisions taken in slightly different frames. We find several

33 Michel 2020a, no. 42 (fragmentary text from Kourion mentioning the siege of the city), no. 45 (fragmentary decree from Chytroi evoking a political crisis), no. 47 (honorary decree from Kourion for a man from Sidon), no. 51 (fragmentary honorary decree from Kourion for a civic magistrate), no. 53 (honorary decree from Kourion bestowing financial privileges to Pasikrates), no. 55 (fragmentary law or decree from Salamis with economical content).

decrees of associations in Cyprus,[34] most of them of religious nature. Three inscriptions coming from religious associations of Lapethos, Amathous and Kourion appear to be of special importance for our discussion. The inscription engraved on the statue base of Noumenios son of Noumenios in Lapethos presents the honours bestowed upon him by the high-priest Praxi*demos* and the priests of Poseidon Narnakios.[35] The shape of the inscription is somehow unusual. Despite its position on a statue-base, where most Cypriot examples hold a simple dedication, Lapethos' text displays the formulary of the honorary decree with its specific terminology: the adverb ἐπειδή introduces the list of the good actions rewarded by the authorities, the verb διατελῶ followed by a participle describes Noumenios' actions, the set phrase λόγωι καὶ ἔργωι underlines his consistency, the aorist ἔδοξεν introduces the identity of the granting authorities in the dative form, finally the invocation to the Good Fortune closes the decisions list. Moreover, we do not find the mention of a statue in the list of the honours bestowed upon Noumenios. This fact can be attributed to an irregularity in the honorific process itself or in the engraving process, or even to a conscious selection of the text intended to be written on stone. The link of this text with the original text of the decree for Noumenios, if it does exist, cannot be further investigated, but it may be interesting to note that the beneficence towards the city coincides, on the statue-base of Noumenios, with the beneficence towards the high-priest and the priests.

The inscription recording the decisions of the *hegetor* Ariston son of Euphranor in Amathous tends to define the text as a ἱερὸν δόγμα (Fourrier, Hermary 2006, 7-8; Michel 2020a, no. 62, 74-5). Dated by the mention of the local priest of Aphrodite, the interpretation of this inscription remains hypothetical. Nevertheless, it reveals, with the Greek participles τῶν ἐστρατηγηκότων, γεγυμνασιαρχηκότων and ἀρξάντων in the lines 3-5 and 8-10, that priests hold the main public functions in Hellenistic Amathous and that the traditional religious repertoire seems to blend with the rhetoric of civic offices.

Finally, the honorary decree for Andronikos found in the city of Kourion stands as the longest and the best-preserved decree of

34 The dedication by the *thiasos* of Artemis in Soanta (*IG* XV, 2, 1 no. 22; *I. Kition* 2019; Michel 2020a, no. 86), the honorary decree of the association of the *technitai* of Dionysos for Isidoros in Paphos (*I. Paphos* 91; Michel 2020a, no. 92) and, most importantly, the remarkable decree for a Ptolemaic official from Patara found in Paphos (*I. Paphos* 75; Michel 2020a, no. 21), reveal the influence of the institutional practices of Greek cities on the organisation and the epigraphic practices of these associations. This last document is usually attributed to a military *koinon* (Robert 1963, 187 no. 300), suggesting that the decision to display a statue in the sanctuary of Palaepaphos as well as the erection of a marble stele in the *epiphanestatos topos* of the sanctuary most probably depended on the Ptolemaic administration.

35 *LBW*, no. 2779; Fourrier 2015, 44-5 (Michel 2020a, no. 61).

Hellenistic Cyprus (Thonemann 2008; Michel 2020a, no. 63, 73-5). Dating from the end of Cleopatra's VII reign, the text recalls in detail the irreproachable attitude of Andronikos son of Poseidonios in the achievement of his many civic tasks both as priest of the royal cult and as member of the association of the *Epilykoi*. He is sumptuously honoured by the *Epilykoi* and *Parepilykoi* (ἔδοξεν τοῖς Ἐπιλύκοις καὶ τοῖς Παρεπιλύκοις, l. 34) with a golden crown, a bronze statue, a portrait painted on a golden shield and the engraved stele recording the list of his privileges. Again, this inscription confirms the status of priests and religious associations in the public life of the Cypriot cities in the Hellenistic period. Moreover, the inscription from Kourion adds explicitly a new component to the discussion, demonstrating the intrusion of Ptolemaic administration into the religious and institutional life of the city. Indeed, Andronikos is mentioned as priest of the Kings (probably Cleopatra and her son Caesarion), in the name of which he also carries out the public religious rites of the city (l. 16).

These three inscriptions, although belonging to distinct contexts, present some common features both in the shape of the texts and in their content. Formally, they all hint at the influence of the democratic-style rhetoric of decision-taking, proper to the Hellenistic decrees, on the institutional practices of the Cypriot cities. The epigraphic reflex of this phenomenon reveals, however, the combination of foreign components and local traditions. The invocation to the Good Fortune (l. 10 of the text engraved on the statue-base of Noumenios, l. 1 of the ἱερὸν δόγμα from Amathous, l. 33 in the honorary decree for Andronikos) may, for example, parallel a traditional Cypriot formula used at the end of religious dedications (Steele 2019, 189), while the use of the emblematic sentence built on the aorist ἔδοξεν + dative seems restricted to decisions of priests and religious associations. This statement appears to be significant, especially in the absence of decrees of the *demos* and the *boule* in most Cypriot cities.

The prominent position of the religious authorities in the corpus of the Cypriot decrees underlines indeed the lack of evidence regarding honours awarded by the cities to Ptolemaic officials, although this category of honours is well documented by the dedications engraved on the statue-bases. Can this situation be connected to differentiation practices of the functional range assigned to the inscriptions on stone? Following this hypothesis, we could assume that these dedications on stone are the visible reflection of an institutional process recorded on another type of material, maybe written in another language and/or in another writing system. From the study of such a limited ensemble, it would certainly be risky to draw conclusions on the epigraphic habit related to the institutional process of decision-taking in Hellenistic Cyprus. Still, we can assume that the monumental display of decrees resulted from a restrictive selection, the criteria of which remain obscure.

We will close this discussion on epigraphic habits and their connection to broader social and cultural phenomena with an evocation of cultic practices related to the development of the royal Ptolemaic cult in Cyprus. If the origins and development of royal Ptolemaic cult are deeply rooted in Egyptian traditions, its broad diffusion in the Mediterranean may find an explanation in its great capacity of adaptation to local traditions. In Cyprus – one of the main stages in the shaping of Ptolemaic propaganda – this process of adaptation appears through archaeological and epigraphic evidence. Many Cypriot inscriptions document the establishment of the Ptolemaic royal cult and the presence of a local organisation devoted to it throughout the Hellenistic period. If some other sovereigns seem to enjoy peculiar popularity on the island, the reign of Philadelphus reaches an indisputable peak mainly due to the personality of Queen Arsinoe II. Alongside the copious series of altars bearing the name of the goddess Philadelphus in the Genitive form (Michel 2020b), some inscriptions convey more information shedding light on the causes of the successful implantation of the Ptolemaic royal cult in the society of Hellenistic Cyprus. The polymorphic nature of Goddess Arsinoe seems to have played a decisive role in this implantation, allowing the assimilation of the Queen Goddess with Cypriot deities, and mainly with Aphrodite. I discussed elsewhere the role of Cypriot components in the development of Ptolemaic propaganda (Michel 2020a, 135-44; 2020b). Here I limit myself to briefly pointing out the evidence suggesting that the development of the Ptolemaic royal cult in Cyprus, largely attested in the inscriptions, rests on the use of bilingual repertoires (Stephens 2003) as well as on the heritage of local traditions, and that it can be therefore interpreted as part of a larger sociocultural phenomenon.

The inscription engraved on a fragment of a pediment belonging to a *naiskos* from Idalion[36] bears the most explicit evidence of the activity of at least one *Arsinoeion* in Cyprus. Its location inside the sanctuary of Apollo-Resheph suggests that the goddess enjoyed common features with the Cypriot goddess, traditionally depicted as a consort deity of a male god. The bilingual dedication of Sesmas (see above §3) connects in a unique way King Ptolemy with the goddess Anat-Athena. This remarkable association hints at the idea of a shared competence of the sovereign and the goddess as providers of safety and victory to their people. This idea may be interpreted as a common feature of Cypriot and Ptolemaic ideologies. Finally, the epithet of Queen-Goddess Arsinoe associated to the Nymph on a pottery sherd

36 *IG* XV, 2, 1, no. 378 (Michel 2020a, no. 105).

coming from the already mentioned ensemble of Kafizin's sanctuary[37] shows the deep integration of components belonging to the royal propaganda into the religious life of Cypriots and, in return, their ability to assimilate and to use these components to carry on and promote their own traditions.

5 Conclusions

Closing this brief discussion on Cypriot epigraphy in Hellenistic times, we shall assume that epigraphic habit is a useful tool to describe the evolutions and changes occurring in the island's society during the three centuries of Ptolemaic Rule. As inscriptions remain the main source for writing Cyprus' Hellenistic history, the study of epigraphic practices is inextricably linked to the understanding of Cypriot cultural and social landscape in Hellenistic times. Inscriptions stand as a key witness of the cultural, political, and administrative changes encountered from late fourth century BC onwards. Nevertheless, Hellenistic inscriptions document also in a vivid way the active participation of Cypriots in the development of new epigraphic practices, revealing phenomena of social evolutions and changes. The role of Cypriots in the honorific *agon* taking place in the religious and civic centres is not negligible and epigraphic evidence tends to display flexible nobilities, willing to remain visible (and readable) and quick to make foreign components fit in their own repertoire and *vice versa*.

The connection between epigraphic habit and royal cult in Cyprus is particularly indicative of the mutual influences observed in intercultural contexts and can be used as a reminder of the strategic functions assigned to the acts of writing and displaying inscriptions on stone. More generally, the study of Cypriot inscriptions reveals an effort to stimulate intercultural contacts and to take part in wider Hellenistic and Mediterranean tendencies – a fact that is also visible in the external documentation evidencing Cypriots living abroad, which remained beyond the scope of this paper. At this stage, we can assume that Cypriot society tends to be involved in similar evolutions as the rest of the Hellenistic Mediterranean. Besides this statement, the study of inscriptions coming from non-monumental contexts, like the Kafizin's sanctuary inscribed sherds, warns us against functionally biased interpretations and encourages us to remain cautious concerning the indicative character of stone inscriptions in Hellenistic Cyprus for the reading of broader sociocultural phenomena.

37 The text reads as follows: Νύμφῃ [τ]ῇ ἐν τῷ στρ<ό>φιγγι Φιλαδέλφ[ῳ ἀ]νήθηκε Καλλικλῆς (*IG* XV, 2, 1, no. 752).

Abbreviations

IG XV, 2, 1 = Kantirea, M.; Summa, D. (2020). *Inscriptiones Graecae. Inscriptiones Cypri*. Pars II, *Inscriptiones Cypri Alphabeticae*. Fasciculus I, *Inscriptiones Cypri Orientalis. Citium. Pyla. Golgi. Tremithus. Idalium. Tamassus. Kafizin. Ledra*. Berlin; Boston: De Gruyter.

I. Kition = Yon, M. (2004). *Kition-Bamboula V. Kition dans les textes. Testimonia littéraires et épigraphiques et corpus des inscriptions*. Paris: Editions Recherche sur les civilisations.

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Early Modern and Modern Times

A Land for Strangers
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'Venetian *Reaya*' Greek Orthodox Zantiots in Cyprus in the Eighteenth Century

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Abstract This paper aims to study the 'Zantiots', Greek Orthodox Venetian subjects from the Ionian Islands, who settled in the port of Larnaca around the middle of the eighteenth century. Based on Italian, Greek and Ottoman sources from the State Archives of Venice, it explores the ways in which this group formed a distinct identity, straddling the limits between the *reaya* and the protégés. The paper also discusses other topics, such as Venetian and Ottoman perceptions of the Zantiots as a troublesome community, their assimilation into local society, as well as their role as social and cultural intermediaries.

Keywords Cyprus. Ionian Islands. Intermediaries. Larnaca. Levantines. Ottoman Empire. Venetian Consuls. Zantiots.

1 Introduction

In 1757, the privateer ship of Captain Franco Janni, based at Port Mahon of Minorca and sailing under the British flag, arrived in Larnaca. One of the passengers who disembarked in the Cypriot port was Evangelista Peristiani, a native of the island of Cephalonia. Within a few months, Peristiani had managed to blend into local society by marrying Mariou, the daughter of the Cypriot Dragoman of Sweden Zacharias Gabriel, becoming the founder of one of the

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most prominent Greek Orthodox families on the island.[1] Peristiani's migration to Cyprus was not an isolated incident, but formed part of a more general trend.

2 The Zantiot Diaspora

In the eighteenth century, people from the Ionian Islands, often collectively called 'Zantiots' – a term literally denoting the natives of the island of Zante, settled in major port cities of the Ottoman Empire, constituting an important yet little studied element of Levantine society. Their tendency for emigration was probably related to a combination of local factors, such as frequent natural disasters, agricultural decline, and heavy taxation. These hardships drove many daring and enterprising islanders to seek their fortune outside the Venetian domains.[2] As Venetian subjects, the Zantiots profited from the Capitulations and enjoyed favourable conditions for trade, as well as privileged fiscal and legal status in the Ottoman lands. (Stavrides 2012, 157; Seymour 2014, 78-9).

These factors led to the creation of trading networks of Zantiot merchants in Italy and in port-cities of the Levant. We meet several members of Zantiot families active in Venice, as well as in other Italian ports, where in the mid-eighteenth century they accounted for a sizeable part of the local Greek Orthodox communities.[3] In the Ottoman lands the presence of the Zantiots was just as prominent. For example, a list of Venetian subjects residing in Thessaloniki in 1748 reveals 30 Zantiots, most of whom had only settled in the city within the previous year (Mertzios 1947, 338-9).

The Zantiot communities that settled in Ottoman ports in the eighteenth century stood at the limits between the Europeans and the local Greek Orthodox community. On the one hand, as Venetian subjects they were protected by the Capitulations, and were therefore legally indistinct from other European subjects living in the Ottoman lands. On the other hand, as many Zantiots had a Greek Orthodox identity, they were often regarded by Ottoman officials as an entity distinct from the other European merchants. Because they were assimilated to a larger degree with the local population and usually married into local families, the authorities regarded them as

1 ASV (Archivio di Stato di Venezia), ACVC (Archivio del Consolato Veneto a Cipro), b. (busta) 1: "Nota dei Nazionali Veneti". See Stavrides 1999, 216.

2 On conditions in the Ionian Islands during the eighteenth century, see Sphyroeras 1980, 212-18. See for example the reports of the *Provveditori* of Zante for the years 1738 and 1745 in Arvanitakis 2000, 413-18, 423-6.

3 See for example the cases of Livorno (Vlami 2000) and Trieste (Katsiardi-Hering 1986, 51-3).

indistinguishable from the Sultan's subjects and sought to associate them with the *reaya*. In one case, when a Venetian and a Zantiot were accused of fomenting disorder in İzmir in the eighteenth century, an Ottoman document distinguished between the two, describing the former as *derya Venediklü* (sea Venetian) and the latter as *Venediklü reayası* (Venetian reaya). In fact, even today scholars ponder over the actual juridical status of the Zantiots. Erica Ianiro writes that "by ancient statutes they were Venetian subjects, although their position was on the borderline with that of Ottoman subjects" and asks the question whether we could define the Venetian subjects from the Ionian Islands as "the most occidental Levantines" (Ianiro 2014, 233).

The practical consequences of this attitude can be seen in a 1752 ordinance (*ferman*) of Sultan Mahmud I (1730-54), in which he instructed the authorities of Cyprus to treat the Zantiots as regular Venetian subjects, suggesting that they were often not treated as such. According to the ordinance,

> when some Venetian subjects resident in Zante and Cephalonia and other islands from the Venetian lands came to the island of Cyprus for trade and ordinary business, the cizye collectors did not trust the observed patent letters in their possession that they were Venetian subjects, and they did not refrain from threatening and imprisoning them and infringing their rights with demands for cizye.[4]

Although there were Zantiot communities in major port-cities like İzmir or Thessaloniki, which were more prominent from the point of view of Istanbul, in another Levantine commercial centre, such as Cyprus, they played a more vital social and cultural role, due to the island's size and relative isolation, as well as the presence of a sizeable and dominant Greek Orthodox community. Besides sporadic appearances of men from the Ionian Islands in the early seventeen hundreds, it appears that the main wave of Zantiot migration to Cyprus took place in the third quarter of the eighteenth century (Stavrides 2012, 152-4).

A 1765 document gives extensive prosopographical information on the nine Venetian subjects who maintained commercial houses in Larnaca at that time, six of whom were directly related to the Ionian Islands. Two of those, Niccolò Fottio, who originated from Ioannina but acquired Venetian citizenship by living for several years in Zante, and Emanuele Vassalo, an eminent member of the community also from Zante, who later served as Consul, arrived in the first half of the eighteenth century. Four Zantiots, Evangelista Peristiani, Elia

4 ASV, ACVC, b. 24, no. 43. See Stavrides 2016, 241. *Cizye* tax: capitation tax collected from non-Muslim Ottoman subjects.

Valsamachi, Paolo Vondiziano, and Zorzi Coedan (Choidas), all from the island of Cephalonia, were Greek Orthodox, who had arrived and settled on the island between 1757 and 1760, marrying local women and becoming prominent members of local society.[5]

These men were just the most distinguished of the Zantiots settled on the island at that time. In fact, the wave of Zantiot migration to Cyprus was a much more complex phenomenon that was not limited to a handful of families. A register, compiled by the Venetian Consulate in the 1760s, contains 59 names of Zantiot males living on the island. Very few of those names belong to prominent families, while the rest indicate people of less distinguished origins, like a gunsmith, a barber, and a carpenter, underlining the extent and variety of Zantiot migration.[6]

3 Troublesome Subjects

In several cases, the settlement of the Zantiots provoked the reaction of the local population in cities of the Ottoman Empire. Throughout the eighteenth century, Zantiots provoked or were in the epicentre of disturbances in the multicultural environment of İzmir. Already in the 1730s, following a series of riots initiated by Zantiots, the English, French, and Dutch Ambassadors successfully pleaded with their Venetian counterpart to deport their unruly subjects from the city (See Frangakis-Syrett 1992, 58). The disturbances in the great commercial port culminated in the great 'rebellion' of 1797, during which the Zantiots became targets of Janissary attacks. These riots caused the issuing of an imperial edict pronouncing the Zantiots and other Venetian subjects guilty of provocation and riotous behaviour:

> being people of a savage rebellious description, habitually addicted to heinous practices which disturb the tranquillity of the natural Subjects and other Inhabitants wherever they may be, to the infringement of social order, and never failing to create much injury to the public by their quarrels and disturbances. (Clogg 1982, 120)

The Kadı 'judge' of İzmir also wrote:

> Zantiots, Eskilavens,[7] Cephalonians, Croatians, Corfians – Venetian subjects – had already been killing and injuring the Muslims (*ehl-i*

5 ASV, ACVC, b. 1: "Nota dei Nazionali Veneti". For the text of this source, see also Stavrides 1999, 215-18. On Emanuele Vassalo, see also Stavrides 2023, 9-11.

6 ASV, ACVC, b. 22, no. 147. See Stavrides 2012, 170-1.

7 By *Eskilavens* the judge denotes the Dalmatians (Slavonians), an equally if not more troublesome group of Venetian subjects (Tansuğ 2020, 403-4).

> *Islam*) and the reaya in recent years, and they were always causing mischief (*fesad*) in the city. (Tansuğ 2020, 409)

In Cyprus, as in other Levantine ports, the Zantiots were regarded with suspicion, often presenting a convenient target for local discontent against Westerners. In August 1755, after a bloody brawl involving Venetian sailors, Ottoman officials in Larnaca managed to divert the rage of a local mob, from the Consulate, which was its original target, to the houses of the Zantiots.[8]

On 11 February 1757, a group of respectable Muslims of Larnaca, consisting of merchants and officials, visited the local Kadı to express their complaints concerning the recent settlement of a group of approximately seventy *Zandalı kefereleri* 'infidel Zantiots' in the island, something they considered a novelty. The group indicated that a large part of the Zantiot community were not merchants, and demanded their expulsion, claiming that they had founded their own separate quarter and married daughters of local reaya, while they aided corsairs, providing them with supplies and information.[9]

Echoing these complaints, at around the same time, the Venetian Vice-Consul Zuanne Bizzaro wrote in a report that the Zantiots were at the root of all the Consulate's troubles and that he was the recipient of daily complaints about their behaviour. The Vice-Consul warned the *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia*, the five 'wise men' that formed Venice's Trade Board, that if measures were not taken, sooner or later this group would involve the community in a great disturbance. Bizzaro's report also echoed the complaints of the Muslims by writing that the Venetian community in Cyprus was not restricted only to merchants, suggesting that the problems arose from the sheer quantity of the Zantiots settled on the island.[10]

But what disturbances did the Zantiots cause? Vice-Consul Bizzaro reports that their habit of walking in the streets at night without a lamp led to the arrest and imprisonment of two of them, whom he had to bail

8 ASV, CSM (Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia), b. 647: "Relazione individua" (20 August 1755). Stavrides 2015, 106; 2016, 67 ("et divertone l'aggressione dispersa in seguito verso le case de Zantiotti").

9 ASV, ACVC, b. 27, no. 54. Stavrides 2016, 274-6; 2012, 151-2.

10 ASV, CSM, b. 647: no. 20, ff. 1*v*-2*r*. "L'origine dei disturbi che soffre questo Consolato, e la Nazione proviene dalla quantità de sudditi delle isole, che si trovano qui stabiliti, e per la vita loro facinorosa, che non mancano giornallieri richiami al Consolato contro di loro; essendo baldanzosi à maggior segno non incurandosi à qualunque avvenimento … onde spero che la EE.VV. si degnarono di benignamente ponderare le circostanze stesse, e compassionare il mio povero stato, ponendovi qualche regollamento per l'avvenire, perche se questi sudditi continuarano sopra la Scala, temo che qualche giorno non produchino un gran scompiglio alla Nazione; perché se fosse la nazione ristretta nei soli mercanti delle case stabilite, sarebbe il consolato più quieto di tutti i altri, che qui s'attrovano". See also Ianiro 2014, 232.

out with his own money.[11] Even Bizzaro's successor, Consul Bernardo Caprara, asked the Cinque Savi not to issue permits to the ships of the Zantiots who were living on the island and had formed families with local women, in order to limit the number of "vagabond Venetian subjects", who were flooding the area, giving rise to daily unrest.[12]

These accusations suggest illicit activities by the community. In fact, around this time, as the complaint of the Muslims cited above also indicated, the Zantiots were among the most formidable corsairs in the Eastern Mediterranean (Seymour 2014, 77), offering important services to Venice, but also to Britain, as privateers at the time of the Seven Years' War (1756-63). There is mention of several Zantiot privateers in the area, like Luca Valsamachi, probably related to Captain Elia Valsamachi, who settled in Cyprus at around the same time.[13] It seems that Greek Orthodox corsairs were often supported by their local coreligionists, as in the case of corsair Nicholas Palaiologos who, being pursued by a French frigate, sought help from the people of the port of Larnaca, in 1757.[14] As we have seen above, it was also in that same year, during the course of the Seven Years' War, that Evangelista Peristiani landed in Larnaca from a privateer ship, sailing under the British flag and originating from Port Mahon of Minorca, a base of Greek Orthodox privateers.[15]

Zantiots were also seen as responsible for the spreading of epidemics, since they often sought to avoid the sanitary controls of the ports and were reluctant to show the necessary health certificates to the authorities who required them. According to a 1794 report of Consul Angelo Rosalem, a captain from Cephalonia coming from Thessaloniki appeared in his Consulate to present his credentials, but when asked about his health certificate, he said that he had forgotten it on the ship. When the captain appeared again on the following day without his certificate, admitting that he did not have one and claiming that he was not obliged to present such a document, Consul Rosalem, worried that his visitor may have been infected, asked him

11 ASV, CSM, b. 647, no. 20, ff. 1*v*-2*r*. "Caminano di note senza fanale, onde la Patuglia ha fin'ora incontrato due de medemi, che li messe il Commandante in prigione nei ferri, e mi ha convenuto liberarli, e pagar del mio circa piastre vinticinque, perche con li Turchi nulla si ottiene senza dennaro".

12 ASV, CSM, b. 648, no. 14, Consul Bernardo Caprara to the Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia, 20 December 1765.

13 See Ioannou 2002, 123. He may be identified with privateer 'Lucas', who sailed under British flag and whose activity is described by Svoronos (see Svoronos 1996, 160). On Elia Valsamachi, cf. ASV, ACVC, b. 1: "Nota dei Nazionali Veneti". Stavrides 1999, 216; 2012, 195. On the Valsamachi family, see Koudounaris 1997, 73-80.

14 ASV, ACVC, b. 17, no. 137*r-v*. Ioannou 2002, 124.

15 ASV, ACVC, b. 1: "Nota dei Nazionali Veneti". Stavrides 1999, 216. On the use of Port Mahon as a base for Greek privateers, see Svoronos 1956, 335-8; 1996, 158, 160 fn. 265.

to leave the Consulate. The latter's refusal to comply obliged the Consul to resort to the aid of his Janissary to remove him. This was certainly an isolated event, however, Rosalem tied it to an earlier instance, when another captain from Cephalonia was responsible for infecting the entire coast of Karaman, Syria, and Cyprus, resulting in the loss of his status as a Venetian subject.[16]

As is suggested by this episode, the Venetians were sensitive about the illicit behaviour of some of their subjects and attempted to dissociate from them. The Consulate tried to keep its distance from unruly subjects, and after an incident in İzmir in 1751, it claimed that the Zantiot perpetrators were not true Venetian subjects, but simple Ottoman reaya, who were using the name of Venice in order not to pay their *cizye* taxes (Ianiro 2014, 231).

Problems also arose with the Zantiots' coreligionists. According to Vice-Consul Bizzaro's 1757 report, at the church of St. Lazarus in Scala, a group of Zantiots verbally abused the priests and a group of local Greeks, and the Consul had to humiliate himself before the Bishop of Kition to prevent him from reporting the incident to the authorities.[17] Apparently, the behaviour of certain Zantiots was deemed provocative by many local Greeks, who complained to the Consul.[18] The Cephalonian doctor Zorzi Coedan, for example, provoked local sensibilities by associating with two Maronite widows of "scandalous behaviour", eventually leading to his excommunication by the Archbishop of Cyprus.[19] When Evangelista Peristiani attempted to help his two brothers become established in Cyprus, one being a seller of victuals and the other a captain, Consul Bernardo Caprara expressed his reservations, saying that *this behaviour is making the locals jealous, and especially these Greeks who fomented all the past against the said Islanders*.[20] The subsequent fortune of Peristiani's brothers is indicative of the fact that emigration from the Ionian Islands to the Levant often resulted in financial failure. According to Consul Caprara, the Peristiani brothers, who had come from

16 ASV, CSM, b. 653, Consul Count Angelo Rosalem to the Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia, 4 October 1794. Ianiro 2014, 233.

17 ASV, CSM, b. 647, no. 20, ff. 1*v*-2*r*. "La Domenica dietro alla medema, si raddunorono tutti li sudditi nella Chiesa Grecca della Marina, et ivi si attaccarono in parole con li Papà, e Greci della contrada, che fui costretto umiliarmi al Vescovo, e supplicarlo, che non facesse alcun riccorso al Governo, per proddurmi nuovi imbarazzi".

18 See for example, ASV, ACVC, b. 20, no. 113 and Stavrides 1999, 214-15.

19 ASV, ACVC, b. 1: "Nota dei Nazionali Veneti". Stavrides 1999, 212-13, 217.

20 ASV, CSM, b. 650, no. 225, Consul Bernardo Caprara to the Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia, 18 August 1777 ("lo che dà gelosia alla gente del paese, e massime questi Greci fomentatori di tutto il passato contro detti isolani").

Cephalonia with their "numerous families" in order "to procure their maintenance" were in a "deplorable state".[21]

It is an open question why the Zantiots appear to be such an unruly group in the Levantine ports during this period. One possible explanation may be the precarious financial position of Venetian Consuls in the Ottoman dominions (Ianiro 2014, 78-81) which may have diminished their power, rendering them incapable to control their subjects. This went hand in hand with the ebbing fortunes of the Republic of Venice during the same period, however, it does not appear to be a credible explanation. Despite the Republic's diminished international stature in the eighteenth century, the Venetian Consul in Cyprus enjoyed prestige in local society and influence with the Ottoman authorities, as evidenced by his frequent exchanges with the island's officials and with the Governor himself, who often went out of his way to satisfy his demands by protecting his subjects and punishing abusive officials.[22]

The sheer numbers of the Zantiots seem to provide a more plausible explanation for the discontent of local society, the high levels of criminal activity associated with them, and the inability of the Venetian Consulate to control them. This meant that they included not only affluent merchants, but also people from all walks of life that were more likely to resort to violent crime, while their numbers rendered them unmanageable from the point of view of the Consulate.

After the 1797 riots in İzmir, the British Ambassador expressed a more general sentiment about this group, highlighting the fact that the problems they caused arose from their great numbers, as they formed the main body of Europeans living in the Ottoman lands:

> The Levant, in almost every part, is thronged by a very disproportionate quantity of refugee Venetian subjects of the most discreditable description: Slavonians, Zantiotes, Kefaloniots, & c. which forms in a manner the groundwork of the Frank colonization of the different ports; and earn a precarious livelihood by very equivocal means. While their number and disposition render them almost unmanageable [...] and an object of jealousy and awe to the indigenous inhabitants. This nuisance has been calculated to approach at least 10,000 in the three cities of Constantinople, Salonica, and Smyrna, or their environs.[23] (Clogg 1982, 90)

21 ASV, CSM, b. 650, no. 241, Consul Bernardo Caprara to the Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia, 6 October 1778.

22 See for example the dismissal of the *Ağa* of Scala in 1768, following the complaints of Venetian Consul Bernardo Caprara, cf. ASV, ACVC, b. 21, no. 23. Stavrides 2023, 129-31.

23 On the disturbances, see also Frangakis-Syrett 1992, 61-5; Ianiro 2014, 229-31; Tansuğ 2020, 401-25.

Even the more powerful British Consuls, at the zenith of the power of the British Empire in the nineteenth century, could not *easily legislate for that other group of Ionians, the flotsam and jetsam of Ionian society: the pedlars and petty traders, the thieves and vagabonds, the pimps, tarts, tavern-keepers and bagmen. For they, too, were scattered throughout the ports and townships of the Levant* (Seymour 2014, 80). In fact, out of the 2,776 subjects registered in the British Consulate of İzmir in 1836, 2,369 were Zantiots, with similar percentages in other Levantine ports (81).

All these, however, did not mean that all Zantiots were marginal within the local Venetian community. The lists of Venetian Consuls in Larnaca in the eighteenth century include at least three Zantiots, Liberal Calogerà from Corfu (Ianiro 2014, 154), Bernardo Caprara from Cephalonia, and Emanuele Vassalo from Zante, while Zantiots also served as Consuls in other ports, like Demetrio Coidan, a Cephalonian nobleman, who served as Venetian Consul in Thessaloniki in the mid-eighteenth century (262), and Giovanni Panesi of Corfu, who served as Vice Consul on the island of Skopelos (264). Their activity often went beyond the limits of the Venetian community, as they sometimes established contacts with other European powers, as in the case of Zantiot Giorgio Canale, a man whose name appeared on a 1751 arrest warrant issued in Venice, which Consul Girolamo Brigadi failed to enact, since Canale was working as a Chancellor of the Consulate of the Two Sicilies (232).

4 Levantinisation

One of the main preoccupations of the Consuls was the 'levantinisation' of many merchants through marriage (Ianiro 2014, 133). Before the arrival of the Zantiots, European merchants residing on the island had financial dealings with the reaya but did not easily form close family ties with them. Catholic merchants sometimes married local reaya women usually coming from the Maronite community. However, particularly the French, who were more centralised in the control over their merchants, took extra care to avoid the permanent settlement and assimilation of their subjects into local society, with a series of ordinances, limiting even the duration of their residence in the Levant (Stavrides 2012, 168).

Marriages of foreign subjects with local reaya were frowned upon by the Ottoman authorities, as they contributed to the growing number of people protected by the Capitulations and to the decrease of cizye paying reaya families. Thus, even though there was no direct reference to the problem in the Capitulations, the Ottomans repeatedly attempted to limit this practice, by declaring that all Franks who married subjects of the Sultan would become

reaya themselves (Stavrides 2012, 161). This was explicitly stated in a sultanic order dated 1 Safer AH 1176 (21 August 1762), which commanded that *all the Zantiots and other islanders who are Venetian subjects are regarded like all the other reaya, and are subject to the* harac. In a report from December 1765, Consul Bernardo Caprara indicated that there were several Zantiots bearing patents by the Cinque Savi that fell under that category, the most prominent among them being Niccolò Fottio, Evangelista Peristiani, Elia Valsamachi, and Evangelista Angelato. The latter three were natives of Cephalonia who kept shops at Scala and were married to reaya women.[24]

This meant that many Zantiots, who had been established in Cyprus and married local women but did not carry a patent of the Cinque Savi, were left unprotected. In November 1765, several of them sent a petition to the Venetian Consul, claiming that they had always been protected by the Venetian Consuls and Ambassadors "come veri sudditi" (like real subjects). However, in the past four years had begun "the insatiable avarice of the Turks", who attempted to impose on them the payment of the cizye tax.[25] The "sinister agitations and insults" the Zantiots suffered from the Ottoman authorities were forcing them to relocate back to their homeland, and they were imploring the Consul to grant them "the mercy merited by true subjects", so that their children would not remain "a prey to the Barbarians", but would become his faithful subjects, ready to offer their services to the Doge.[26] With these entreaties, they offered the Consul the sum of three hundred piastres to distribute to Ottoman officials so that they would leave them in peace. The petition was signed by twenty-five Zantiots, twenty of whom were living in Larnaca or Scala, four in Limassol, and one in the village of Kalavasos. Their signatures were classified by place of origin, indicating that twelve of them were from Cephalonia, five from Zante, four from Santa Maura, three from Paxoi (*Paxò*), and one from Corfu.[27] The tone of the petition reveals that these Zantiots felt that they were regarded as a distinct entity by the Consulate itself, which did not afford them the protection expected by "true Venetian subjects".

In fact, it appears that often Venetian Consuls may have treated with contempt most of the Zantiots established on the island, regarding them as socially inferior. In a letter from 20 December 1781,

24 ASV, CSM, b. 648, no. 14, Consul Bernardo Caprara to the Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia, 20 December 1765.

25 ASV, CSM, b. 648, no. 14, Petition of Zantiots to Consul Bernardo Caprara, 13 November 1765.

26 ASV, CSM, b. 648, no. 14, Petition of Zantiots to Consul Bernardo Caprara, 13 November 1765.

27 ASV, CSM, b. 648, no. 14, Petition of Zantiots to Consul Bernardo Caprara, 13 November 1765.

for example, Consul Emanuele Vassalo indicated that Evangelista Angelato from Cephalonia did not have an established commercial house, referring to him disdainfully as "semplice bazzariotto" (simple bazar merchant), suggesting that he was not worthy of the Consulate's protection. He informed the Cinque Savi that throughout the island, in addition to Angelato, there were 72 more Zantiots that were regarded by the Ottomans as reaya and were subjected to the cizye tax, most of them being married to local women, implying that their large numbers made it impossible for him to protect them from the arbitrary behaviour of Ottoman officials.[28]

It should be made clear that levantinisation was not a problem associated exclusively with the Zantiots. In June 1777, Governor Haci Baki Ağa wrote to the Venetian Consul, claiming that the marriage of Venetian subject Carlo Mantovani with a reaya deprived him of the privileges granted by the Capitulations and placed him in the ranks of the subjects of the Sultan. Therefore, Mantovani had to choose between becoming a reaya or divorcing his wife. Consul Bernardo Caprara reacted to this by replying that there was no such provision in the Capitulations, and that, moreover, the friendly relations between the Doge and the Sultan would not justify such an action.[29] As a favour, the *Muhassıl* Haci Baki, no doubt also prompted by his own debt towards Mantovani, finally pardoned the Venetian merchant, warning the Consul that he should take care to avoid similar situations in the future.[30]

The somewhat flimsy loyalty of many Zantiots may be seen in the final affront to their Venetian identity, occurring just a few months after the dissolution of the Republic, in a period of political transition for Venice (Panciera 2014, 140-5). On September 23, 1797, the new Venetian Consul Giacomo Caprara wrote to the Cinque Savi that a group of eleven subjects, ten of whom originated from the Ionian Islands, whose names included such prominent Zantiots as Costantino Peristiani and Panagin Angelato, had solemnly renounced their Venetian allegiance, receiving French citizenship, a move that he regarded as ungrateful and insulting to Venice as they

> destroyed the decorum and honour of their nation, immersing it in dejection and degradation, and with scandalous example exposed

28 ASV, CSM, b. 650, no. 33, Consul Emanuele Vassalo to the Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia, 20 December 1781.

29 ASV, ACVC, b. 22, no. 30. Stavrides 2023, 206-8.

30 ASV, ACVC, b. 22, no. 24. Stavrides 2023, 211-12.

> the motherland to the derision of other nations, to the scorn of the ill-intentioned, and to the contempt of these Turkish people.[31]

This was certainly a prescient and self-serving move, as within a month, with the Treaty of Campo Formio, the Ionian Islands would come officially under French rule, if only for a short time. It is indicative, however, of the solidity of the Venetian allegiance of many Greek Orthodox Zantiots.

The problems arising in the eighteenth century from the presence in the Ottoman Empire of a sizeable Greek Orthodox community claiming that they were not subjects of the Sultan seem to prefigure one of the major mid-nineteenth century issues of international relations. After the establishment of the Kingdom of Greece, many citizens of the newly founded state, mostly former Ottoman subjects who had managed to obtain Greek passports, flooded the island, claiming that they were not reaya. This provoked the reaction of the Ottoman authorities and proved to be a perennial thorn in Greek-Ottoman relations, especially in the 1830s and 1840s (Georgis 1996, 133-71).

5 The Case of Evangelista Peristiani

An exemplary case of the ambiguous status of Zantiots, often resulting from their own activities, was that of Evangelista Peristiani, a merchant from Cephalonia who married a Cypriot reaya woman. A 1765 document listing Venetian subjects notes that Peristiani was residing with his mother-in-law and his sisters-in-law, having become a *Rajà del Gran Signore*.[32] The reference itself is puzzling and contradictory, since it describes Peristiani as a subject of the Sultan, even while including him in a list of Venetian subjects who held permission by the Cinque Savi to open a commercial house, highlighting the ambivalent position of the Zantiots, even in the eyes of their own Consuls.

"Being of a restless nature and mingling everywhere", throughout the 1760s and 1770s, Peristiani became the cause of several complaints by locals towards the Venetian Consul who, by way of punishment, prohibited his appearance in the Consulate until he would moderate his behaviour. As a result of this, in 1774, Peristiani

31 ASV, CSM, b. 653, Consul Giacomo Caprara to the Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia, 23 September 1797. "Svenarono […] il decoro, e l'onore della propria nazione, immergendola nella deiezione e nell'avvilimento, e con scandaloso esempio, esponendo la Patria alla derisione delle altre nazioni, allo scorno de mal' intenzionati, ed al disprezzo di questa Turca Gente".

32 ASV, ACVC, b. 1: "Nota dei Nazionali Veneti". Stavrides 1999, 216.

accused Bernardo Caprara to the Cinque Savi for withholding his protection from him, while the Consul argued that he had already renounced that protection voluntarily sixteen years previously.[33]

To resolve this controversy and to defend his position, Peristiani decided to go to Venice and present his case in person to the Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia. Since he did not enjoy the support of the Venetian Consul, he resorted to French Consul Benoit Astier, who wrote a letter of recommendation on his behalf, indicating that Peristiani had to go to Venice to clear his honour and reputation of the false accusations against him. Astier certified that, according to his information, since the time of his establishment in Cyprus, Peristiani enjoyed the reputation of a man of honour and probity and that he was a victim of envious people of his nation, while the French and foreign merchants, and even a few honourable Venetian ones, regarded him with esteem and friendship.[34] The Bishop of Kition Makarios I (1737-76) also wrote letters of recommendation on Peristiani's behalf, acknowledging that in the past he had erroneously attributed to him scandalous behaviour and had reported him to the Consul, recanting his previous statements.[35]

In 1776, the Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia informed Consul Caprara that Peristiani had appeared personally before them and filed a complaint that, although he resided in Larnaca for several years, exercised "un onorato commercio" (an honourable trade), and was in possession of all the required documents, he was deprived of the protection of the Venetian Consulate. In an official letter they issued, they gave instructions to the Consul to restore Peristiani to Venetian protection and to provide him with a document certifying his innocence, in order "to dissolve any ambiguity that might have stained his reputation and honour and to remove those sinister and unfavourable impressions".[36]

In his reply to the Cinque Savi, Consul Caprara indicated that this was a result of the voluntary actions of Peristiani himself, who had renounced his status as a Venetian subject to obtain a greater portion of the inheritance of his father-in-law Zacharias Gabriel. According to Caprara, instead of applying to the Consulate,

33 ASV, CSM, b. 649, no. 177, Consul Bernardo Caprara to the Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia, 6 December 1774.

34 ASV, ACVC, b. 1: "Miscellanea di Atti provenienti da Magistrature Venete con oggetti specifici", no. 86, 20 September 1775.

35 ASV, ACVC, b. 1: "Miscellanea di Atti provenienti da Magistrature Venete con oggetti specifici", no. 88, 9 September 1775.

36 ASV, ACVC, b. 1: "Miscellanea di Atti provenienti da Magistrature Venete con oggetti specifici", no. 7 ("per sciogliere qualunque ambiguità che potesse avesse machiata la di lui riputazione ad onore e per togliere quelle impressioni sinistre e sfavorevoli").

Peristiani, together with his reaya *cognato* 'brother-in-law' Antoni, applied to the Ottoman authorities, obtaining an order of the *Mufti* of Nicosia to the Kadı of Larnaca "di proteggere li due riccorrenti come sudditi ottomani" (to protect the two applicants as Ottoman subjects), and to take Gabriel's property from the hands of the Franks and divide it according to Ottoman inheritance laws. This resulted in the Kadı appearing publicly in Peristiani's house, an action that caused consternation to the Venetian Consul, who considered it an insult to the Venetian *nazione*. Thus, Caprara indicated that Peristiani had voluntarily renounced his Venetian citizenship, declaring himself a reaya of the Sultan when it was convenient for him to avoid being subjected to Venetian laws.[37]

Although Caprara's account is probably a heavily biased version of the story, as there was an ongoing enmity between him and Peristiani, we may assume that it reveals a fundamental truth about this liminal group: Zantiots often took advantage of their ambivalent position, attempting to have it both ways, chameleon-like changing flags and allegiances according to their interests. That is, their position at the limits between the Europeans and the reaya, far from being an unmitigated liability, could also prove to be an advantage in certain cases, allowing them a certain degree of flexibility, as they had the opportunity to move between two worlds.

With the support of the Cinque Savi and Archbishop Chrysanthos (1767-1810), Peristiani was readmitted into the Consulate's protection in 1778. In July of that year, the Chancellor of the Venetian Consulate Salessio Rizzini issued a document confirming that Peristiani was a Venetian subject, warning any friendly vessels not to confiscate a quantity of cotton he was sending to Saida.[38] A posthumous inventory of his property (1781) refers to him as a "suddito Veneto" (Venetian subject), indicating that he had kept this status until the end of his life (Rizopoulou-Egoumenidou 1998, 11). The fact that this inventory survives in two copies, one in a codex in the Greek Orthodox Archbishopric and another in the Venetian archives, is telling of Peristiani's ambiguous status, as both an Orthodox Greek and a Venetian subject.

In a letter of February 1st, 1781, written shortly after Peristiani's death, Archbishop Chrysanthos wrote to Consul Emanuele Vassalo

37 ASV, CSM, b. 650, Relazione del Console Veneto in Cipro fedel Bernardo Caprara, Cipro 1777 (February 1778) ("dalla qual sudditanza egli da se solo erasi abdicato, dichiarandosi raià del Gran Signore allorche si trattò di non voler essere soggetto alle leggi di questa Serenissima Repubblica rapporto all'eredità Gabrielli sudetta").

38 ASV, CSM, b. 650, Estratto dal Libro Bollato Lettera B della Veneta Cancelleria in Cipro a carte 272, 20 July 1778.

that "the late Peristiani carried some vain and harmful opinions".[39] Here Chrysanthos probably refers to the various scandals, in which the Zantiot merchant was involved, and commends Consul Vassalo for taking under his protection Peristiani's orphan son and daughter, *heeding the Apostle's command not to return the evil done to oneself*,[40] suggesting that Vassalo himself may have had cause for dissatisfaction with Peristiani's behaviour.

After Evangelista's death, his son Costantino, even though born in Cyprus to a reaya woman, continued to lay claim to Venetian citizenship and in 1781 the Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia asked Consul Emanuele Vassalo to assist and protect him "come suddito Veneto" (as a Venetian subject). The Consul assured the Cinque Savi that he would furnish him with all the assistance and protection possible, although Peristiani *has been born here to a reaya woman, and he holds a shop in the bazaar, in which he daily sells at retail personally, like the other reaya shopkeepers*.[41] This was another case indicative of the ambiguity between Ottoman and Venetian citizenship, as well as of the stance of Venetian Consulates in the Levant, which tended to treat Venetians who became reaya as regular subjects, that is, as persons bureaucratically dependent on the Consulate.

6 Social and Cultural Intermediaries

Despite their 'levantinisation', the Zantiots of Cyprus remained socially and culturally European, retaining an essentially western outlook and continuing to live as though in Western Europe, albeit in a Levantine environment. This is evident in their housing, their costumes, their intellectual world and even, perhaps, towards the end of the eighteenth century, their political ideology, sharing to a large extent many similarities with that other locally grown variety of displaced Westerners, the Levantines.

A glimpse of an affluent Zantiot household is provided by the inventory of the furniture and equipment of Evangelista Peristiani's residence, compiled posthumously in 1781. The house consisted of several rooms, including a 'grand hall', containing eight statues,

39 ASV, ACVC, b. 20, no. 145, 1-12 February 1781 ("ὁ ἀποθανῶν ἔφερε μεθ'ἑαυτοῦ τινὰς γνώμας ἀνωφελεῖς καὶ ματαίας ὡς ἔσται τοῦτο δῆλον τοῖς πᾶσι"). See also Louizos 1972, 310.

40 ASV, ACVC, b. 20, no. 145, 1-12 February 1781 ("μὴ ἀπόδωτε τινὶ κακὸν ἀντὶ κακοῦ").

41 ASV, ACVC, b. 15, Copia lettere pubbliche del Consolato Veneto di Cipro che principia al dì 8 Feb. 1776, no. 35, 4 May 1782. Also, ASV, CSM, b. 651, no. 35, Consul Emanuele Vassalo to the Cinque Savi, 6 May 1782 ("sia nato qui da donna raina, et tenghi bottega in Basaro, nella quale in persona giornalmente vende a minuto, come gli altri bottegaj Rajà").

and a 'small hall', as well as the private quarters of the owner's son. The large number of chairs and armchairs, tables and wardrobes gives an idea about the size and character of the house (Rizopoulou-Egoumenidou 1998, 23-4). Certain items reflect the family's quality of life, which differed from that of most Cypriots.[42] Mirrors, paintings, and statues, as well as silverware, ivory cutlery, china plates, crystal bottles, and cups for hot chocolate were items to be found only in the most affluent households and reveal a way of life resembling that of the bourgeois class of Western Europe, while the presence of portraits of ancestors indicates a consciousness of family continuity (12-32).

The same may be said about the costume of the Zantiots. Pictorial, as well as documentary evidence, points to the fact that the costume of the members of this group was indistinguishable from that of contemporary Europeans. On two icons from the church of Chrysopolitissa in Larnaca, apparently donated by Zantiots, we can see men wearing European costumes in the classic eighteenth century style, with full-skirted knee-length coats, silk stockings, and powdered wigs, one of whom is, in fact, wearing a sword on his waist, indicating a member of an affluent westernised social class (Michaelides 2005, 90, 197). The fact that the men depicted are Greek Orthodox is clear by both the style of the icons and the church in which they are to be found. Inventories of the personal belongings of Venetian subjects also indicate that they possessed a clearly European wardrobe, although at this time, as in most Levantine ports, European women used to dress *alla turca* (Hadjikyriakos 2016, 153-63).

The inventory of the merchandise of Peristiani's shop is also indicative of the social and cultural impact of the Zantiots on local society. The various goods sold there included luxury items, textiles, lace, mirrors, furniture, as well as crystal salad-bowls, liqueur glasses, silver clocks, eyeglasses, snuffboxes, pens, paper, paintings, and books. All these were European products, mostly from Venice, made available to the local Ottoman subjects by Peristiani, whose shop served as a meeting-point between the local reaya and European culture (Rizopoulou-Egoumenidou 1998, 39-41).

We may get glimpses of the intellectual world of the Zantiots through the inventory of books that Peristiani imported to Cyprus, among which we find dictionaries, grammars, historical works, and even popular literature in Greek. Given the high percentage of illiteracy at the time, Peristiani's books were probably addressed to the higher clergy and the nascent bourgeoisie of the island (Rizopoulou-Egoumenidou 1998, 41-3). The lists of subscribers of

42 See for example the testimony of Alexander Drummond, who wrote that "the inhabitants are kept so wretchedly poor, that they cannot indulge their taste for luxury and extravagance" (Cobham 1908, 282).

several secular works of the time, like the *History* of Archimandrite Kyprianos, printed in Venice in 1788, include the names of Zantiots of Larnaca, such as Costantino Peristiani and the Dragoman of the Venetian Consulate Pierachi Corella (Kyprianos 1788, 405). Although in the nineteenth century many Zantiots showed a clear nationalist orientation,[43] in the absence of relevant writings, their eighteenth-century political ideology is much harder to fathom. The portrait of Empress Catherine of Russia, found among the possessions of Evangelista Peristiani, is of particular importance, since after the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca (1774), the Tsarina assumed the protection of the Greek Orthodox subjects of the Sultan, thus becoming for them a symbol of liberation. Peristiani's Russophile political orientation may have contributed to his son's subsequent appointment as Consul of Russia, but we do not know to what extent it was shared by other Zantiots at the time (Stavrides 2012, 191, 193).

7 Zantiots in Cyprus in the Nineteenth Century

The marriages of Zantiots into local families created a separate class, which dominated the island socially and economically, side by side with the corresponding class of European merchants (Katsiaounis 1997, 241-4). Excepting the centralised French, by the beginning of the nineteenth century European Consuls often came from Zantiot families, like the Consul of Britain Antonio Vondiziano and the Consul of Sweden, Norway, and Russia Costantino Peristiani, two of the most influential personalities in early nineteenth-century Cyprus. Zantiots gradually blended into local society, and their unions with local women provided the core of the Greek Orthodox bourgeoisie, and the social, economic, and cultural leadership of the community in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

After the Napoleonic Wars, the Ionian Islands became a British protectorate and therefore the burden of supervising and protecting the Zantiots in the Ottoman lands was passed on to the British Consuls. In 1852, the British Consulate of Larnaca found that 143 out of its 150 registered protégés were Zantiots (Seymour 2014, 82). Two registers of the Greek Consulate drafted at the time of the transfer of the Ionian Islands from British to Greek sovereignty in 1864 record 207 names of Zantiots then living in Cyprus divided into 59 families, that included people of all social strata, from merchants

43 See for example the case of Dr. Pavlos Valsamachi (1802-1889) from Cephalonia, who was one of the members of an embassy to the Governor of Greece Ioannis Capodistria (1828-31) in August 1828, bearing a petition asking for his aid in the liberation of Cyprus (Protopsaltis 1971, 91-7).

and doctors to peasants and beggars (Koudounaris 1976, 87-106). These mid-nineteenth century consular registers testify to the continuing presence of a group of people originating from the Ionian Islands, who retained a distinct character and status due to their extraterritoriality, while becoming an integral part of local society.

The first Zantiots arriving in Cyprus in the mid-eighteenth century sparked far-reaching social, economic, and cultural changes on the island. Common language and religion helped them integrate with the local Greek Orthodox community, not only through commercial dealings and cooperation, but also through social contacts and marriages. The members of the Zantiot bourgeoisie transplanted to Cyprus brought with them western cultural and social characteristics, which, through close relations and intermarriage, were appropriated and assimilated by the higher class of the local Greek Orthodox community, affecting the social, economic, and cultural history of the island. The systematic arrival of Zantiots in the middle of the eighteenth century marks the beginning of the formation of a local Greek Orthodox bourgeoisie in Larnaca, a development that would profoundly influence the island's society and culture in the subsequent two centuries.

Abbreviations

ACVC = Archivio del Consolato Veneto a Cipro
ASV = Archivio di Stato di Venezia
b. = busta
CSM = Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia

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A Land for Strangers
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French Consuls in Cyprus, 1840-70
Their Roles and Impact, with Archival Evidence

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Abstract The archives of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs recorded actions taken by the consuls, and those remain a principal source of the history of Cyprus. Since the French Consulate was the most important in the nineteenth century, at least until the 1870s, the role of its consuls was of great consequence. The study of the correspondence of several of these between 1840 and 1870 (Fourcade, Goepp, Tastu, Doazan, Saintine, Darasse, Du Tour, Maricourt or Colonna Ceccaldi) shows that they were very active, because they had to face numerous situations in areas of trade, agriculture, taxes and customs duty – which they managed to resolve successfully in favour of the French colony, the protégés and also all of the Christians and the Maronites in particular. The consuls had real power and even obtained the replacement of some Ottoman officials whom they denounced, even if it was at the request of the Greek population. Furthermore, many showed deep humanity and also played an active role in works of public interest, such as the organisation of the Larnaca quarantine and water supply, etc. Finally, the role of the consuls in the discovery of Cyprus' archaeology can be underlined due to the fact that some of them were interested in collecting objects either for themselves or for the Louvre Museum.

Keywords Ottoman Cyprus. Larnaca. French consuls. Protection of France. Archaeology of Cyprus.

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1 Introduction

In the middle of the nineteenth century, Cyprus was surviving in wretched conditions under the yoke of the Ottoman Empire. The island suffered above all from an inefficient administration and a particularly oppressive taxation system. Peasant farmers were subjected to very heavy taxes due to the methods of collection, under a system of tenant farming with annual adjudication to the highest bidder that aimed to collect taxes to be paid to the Porte; and at the same time, those farmers were also seeking to become wealthier by any means. But there was also taxation due to the needs the Empire had to face because of insurrections, especially in Montenegro (1857-62) and Crete (1866-69), not to mention the cost of the Crimean War (1853-56). Under pressure from its allies, Turkey had undertaken reforms leading to modernisation based on the Western model in order to struggle against the decline of the Empire (the Tanzimat period).[1] The imperial charter, *Khatt-i-cherif of Gülkhâne*, in 1839 enumerated the reforms to be undertaken, among them the abolition of farming taxes; the introduction of a new tax system; the freedom to dispose of land assets; improvements to the judiciary system; and also, higher salaries for civil servants and officials. Paul Dumont (1989, 459) summarised the reforms by saying:[2]

> Centralisation administrative, modernisation de l'appareil étatique, occidentalisation de la société, sécularisation – avec bien des restrictions – du droit et de l'enseignement.

In 1856, the *Hatt-i-humayun* amplified reforms by guaranteeing equality for all Ottoman citizens without distinction of religion or nationality, with large concessions allowing minorities freedom of worship and the right to enjoy traditional immunities.

Between 1840 and 1870, the main Cypriot port of Larnaca saw a succession of eleven consuls and acting consuls: Dagobert Fourcade (May 1840-July 1845); Théodore Goepp (1845-February 1849); Eugène Tastu (1849-September 1852); Félix Hélouis (acting from March to

1 Tanzimat means reorganisation. The period ended in 1876, the year when the first Constitution of the Empire was promulgated. For the chronological definition of the Tanzimat period (1839-76), cf. Aymes 2010, 4-9. The period we intend to study in France's consular archives does not cover these dates entirely, but the object here is not to seek how reforms were applied in Cyprus. Furthermore, after the Franco-Prussian War of 1870 which led to the end of the Second Empire, France's position in Cyprus notably declined to England's benefit.

2 "Centralised administration, modernisation of the apparatus of State, westernisation of society, and secularisation – with many restrictions – in law and education". If not otherwise specified, all translations are by the Author.

October 1852); Jules Doazan (1852-July 1856); P. Gérardy-Saintine (acting from 1856-March 1857); Paul Darasse (1857-November 1860); Édouard Du Tour (1860-March 1862); Louis Dumesnil de Maricourt (1862-August 1865); Charles de Vienne (acting from 1865 to February 1866); and Tiburce Colonna Ceccaldi (1866-December 1869). What role did those French officials play in the history of the island? What influence did they have? And in what domains? Did they succeed in their mission? An examination of consular correspondence[3] provides answers to those questions.

If the traditional vocation of the consul was limited to economic and commercial activities until the Revolution, one has only to study the correspondence exchanged between Larnaca, Paris and Constantinople for understanding how their prerogatives evolved after the decree dated 14 February 1793 that attached the consuls to France's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. During their residency they represented French sovereignty and spoke freely with local authorities, with other officials in the Consular Corps, and with representatives of the Latin and Orthodox churches. Their role was gradually enhanced with diplomatic functions that were supportive yet different: they undertook negotiations, ensured respect for personal security and safeguard of interests, and also took the defence of French subjects in the event of conflicts[4] whether the nationals (then known as 'the Franks') were settled inside the consular circumscription or merely in transit.

3 Letters exchanged with the Ministry in Paris are kept in the Centre des Archives diplomatiques du ministère des Affaires étrangères at La Courneuve, and divided between Correspondance Commerciale et Consulaire, Larnaca (abbreviated in the notes as CCC L) and Correspondance Politique du Consul, Turquie, Larnaca (abbreviated in the notes as CPC TL). Letters exchanged with the Embassy in Constantinople are kept at the Centre des Archives diplomatiques de Nantes under the reference Fond Constantinople, series D, Larnaca (abbreviated as the notes FCDL). The 'shelf-mark' reference of the reserve being 166PO/D/43, we have merely added the box number. Because the archives kept in Nantes since 1862 are not folioed, the number of the missive is indicated. Embassy letter drafts carry an indication according to where they were written (Pera or Therapia).

4 French nationals permitted to live in the Empire had numerous advantages, among them exemption from taxes payable by Muslims and minorities, the possibility of a ruling by a consular court, liberty of travel, trade, and freedom of worship. All French nationals settled in the Levant could claim consular protection once registered at the chancellery. The act of registry obliged French nationals to accept the authority of the Consul in police matters. France's representatives were also the colony's administrators, acting as the notary public, marine administrator and registrar, delivering passports and visas, and also serving as the tax collector dealing with revenue corresponding to acts of a fiscal nature, and also as the treasurer or payer in their constituency of all budgetary outlays by the State (Dislere, de Mouy 1893).

The Capitulations regulating the status of foreigners in the Ottoman Empire[5] had given France the possibility to extend its protection[6] not only to certain foreigners without representation, like the Swiss, the Hellenes[7] or else the Persians,[8] but also to Ottoman subjects who were employed for the utility of the nation. Called *barataires*, the latter included dragomans, *kavas* (guards) and sometimes household servants, and they held a patent, the *bérat* which gave them their collective name. They were considered as *protégés* and shared the same police immunity and commercial privileges as the Franks. They also had other advantages, both fiscal (in particular, they were exempt from certain fees as the capitation tax) and judicial (in civil and commercial affairs it became possible to obtain a ruling in a consular court). The status of the *barataires* was strictly controlled and this protection was periodically reassessed by the governors, who did not take kindly to subjects of the Porte escaping their jurisdiction: governors repeatedly made requests for certain *protégés* to be struck off the register kept by the consul.[9]

Apart from that legal protection, the Sultan had granted France religious protection for the Catholics of the Ottoman Empire, ensuring freedom of worship, security for pilgrims and the safeguard of holy places.[10] Sometimes that protection was not so straightforward, as was notably the case with the affair known as the flag of Jerusalem,

5 After the Republic of Genoa (in 1352), France was the first to be granted these privileges by the Sultan.

6 This protection was "un lien juridique qui rattache une personne à un État et la fait jouir de certains droits et privilèges dérivés de la qualité de national de cet État, sans lui conférer la qualité de national ni le statut personnel qui en dépend" (a judicial link that attached a person to a State and caused that person to enjoy certain rights and privileges derived from the quality of a national of that State, without conferring on the person the quality of a national or the personal status that depends on this. Arminjon 1903, 262).

7 That is to say, the subjects of the new Greek State recognised as independent by the Conference of London dated 3 February 1830. On the Hellenes and France's protection in Cyprus: Bonato 2006, 145-8.

8 The Minister of Persia in Constantinople lobbied the Embassy of France in 1860 and in 1863 so that Persian nationals settled in Cyprus or in transit there could come under French Protection (FCDL 29, Therapia, 24 July 1860, ff. 96-7; Darasse, 20 August 1860, ff. 117-18 and Maricourt, 1 March 1863, no. 40).

9 The number of *protégés* was determined by consular ruling and depended on the importance of the representation (Rey 1899, 288). The archives keep a list drawn up in July 1865 by Louis Dumesnil de Maricourt: France employed and protected around twenty-five subjects of the Sultan, Greeks and Turks, as dragomans, *kawas* or prosecutors (FCDL 30, 18 July 1865, no. 144).

10 In 1673, by the sixth Capitulations, Louis XIV obtained that the Catholic religion would be protected by France throughout Ottoman territory. The privilege was confirmed in 1740 by the seventh Capitulations which additionally authorised repairs to Christian sanctuaries.

which on numerous occasions led to protests from the Porte.[11] In September 1860, Darasse advised the Embassy that the Pasha had received orders from Constantinople to refuse entrance into the island's ports to captains of vessels flying the flag of Jerusalem. The Embassy informed him that their search for documents had been unsuccessful, and none had been found that established those rights, and so it was worth waiting for the Embassy and the Porte to reach agreement on the matter before any action was taken against the vessels. Darasse exposed the arguments to the governor, who yielded to his objections.[12]

There was one unofficial protection that the consuls sometimes applied, that of the orthodox Greeks, but when a consul intervened he would do so only with the greatest caution.[13] The Greeks repeatedly made applications to the Consulate of France, to the point where Darasse would report that he was continually importuned and obliged to forbid their entry into his Consulate:[14]

> Si je devais intervenir pour exiger le redressement de toutes les infamies et injustices commises par l'administration locale et toutes les fois que les chrétiens me le demandent, je n'aurais plus le loisir de m'occuper des intérêts de nos nationaux.

When he deemed it necessary, the consul would restrict himself to informing the Ambassador while sending a formal letter to the Pasha. In 1860, for example, he informed the Marquis de La Valette that Isham Bey had been sent from Constantinople to conduct an inquiry into the condition of the Christians in Cyprus.[15] Under penalty, Christians had to sign declarations that were drafted in advance by

11 Until 1847 and the restoration of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem by Pius IX, the *Custodia Terræ Sanctæ* delivered navigation patents and vessels flew the flag of Jerusalem, i.e. the red St. George's Cross of the Crusades against a white background. The Porte consented to the Order of Friars Minor putting vessels to sea that transported friars, pilgrims and fresh supplies for the missions, and the vessels navigated under the protection of France's consular agents. The Friars, however, would deliver patents to Catholic ship owners claiming to be under France's protection whatever their nations. It was only after 1847 that patents were granted more parsimoniously (Blanchard 1938, 553-4).

12 FCDL 29, 8 September 1860, ff. 124-5 and 128 (without date).

13 Article 9 of the *Treaty of Paris* dated 30 March 1856 stipulated that the Powers in no case had the right to interfere, either collectively or separately, in the Sultan's relationships with his subjects, nor in the interior administration of his Empire.

14 "If I were to intervene to demand redress for all the infamies and injustices committed by local administration, and do so every time that the Christians ask me to, I would no longer have time to care for the interests of our own nationals" (FCDL 29, 1st September 1859, f. 47).

15 FCDL 29, 20 August 1860, ff. 117-18.

the *mudir* (chef of a district), and which stated that everything was for the best. One civil servant, wilier than his colleagues first collected the signatures before he drafted the declaration above the names!

Consuls based in Larnaca were assisted by agents from Nicosia, where the governor was in residence, and from Limassol.[16] They reigned over the French colony, which in July 1863 comprised 55 adults and 23 children.[17] In their majority, the French nationals were merchants, landowners, clerks, artisans and craftsmen, and also doctors. Even if Larnaca was a place of little importance, compared to Beirut, or Smyrna for instance, the Consul de France held a rather remarkable position in that he has the largest European community. Darasse would declare in 1859 that his influence was dominant and that:[18]

> Ce consulat pourrait, le cas échéant, assumer un rôle décisif. Tout ce qui est grec à Chypre (les trois cinquièmes de la population au moins) est dévoué à la France et n'espère aujourd'hui qu'en elle.

2 French Protection

2.1 Security of Persons

Guaranteeing personal security could simply be a matter of placing a Consulate guard at the disposal of a prelate visiting the island,[19] but the consuls quite often had closer involvement and intervened directly if the live of French nationals or *protégés* came under threat. While calm usually reigned in Cyprus, a few sporadic incidents are mentioned however. This was notably the case after the signature of the *Khatt-i-cherîf of Gülkhâne*. In 1841, the first 'reformist' Governor Talat Effendi[20] attempted to apply reforms particularly in taxation,[21]

16 The Nicosia agency was created in 1845 at the request of Fourcade (CCC L 20, 28 August 1845, f. 19). Discontinued for a time, the Limassol agency was reinstated in 1856 and its agent was Hyacinthe Mantovani, an Italian doctor (FCDL 28, Doazan, 25 June 1856, f. 389 and Pera, 13 October 1856, f. 432). The Famagusta agency created in 1865 was only short-lived.

17 Maricourt, CCC L 22, 20 July 1863, ff. 133-4.

18 "This consulate could if necessary take on a decisive role. Everything that is Greek in Cyprus (three fifths of the population at least) is devoted to France and today their hopes lie in her alone" (FCDL 29, 14 July 1859, f. 20).

19 The Guardian of The Holy Land was accompanied by a Consulate guard during his tour in 1840 (CCC L 20, Fourcade, 19 June 1840, f. 152).

20 On the first years of the Tanzimat reforms in Cyprus, see Michael 2013.

21 Apart from personal taxes there was tax on agricultural products, animal herds, contributions in kind in time of war and multiple levies instituted legally or not by the governors. The *rayas* had also taxes payable to the Orthodox Church.

but without great success because he had no financial means at his disposal to put the new laws into effect as intended, and he was confronted by a great deal of inertia among dignitaries anxious to preserve their privileges and interests. In March, much "fermentation" (agitation) was manifested in Paphos without any certain identifiable cause, and then it was the turn of the Turks in Larnaca and Nicosia to purchase all the powder and lead to be found in the bazaars so that they might defend themselves against the Greeks, whom they suspected of wanting an uprising. Fourcade thought this was no doubt a *manœuvre* by the Primates, sowing the seeds of trouble among the people to urge the latter into demonstrating what they would later explain as refusals of the new administrative and financial systems.[22] In June Fourcade reported that the administration was without strength; that old punishments had been abolished without replacement; that "le bâton ne fait plus son office" (the stick no longer does what is expected of it) especially with regard to the Turks,[23] and that thefts and murders were committed with impunity. So, there was a general malaise on the island, and the consul made it his duty to keep an attentive watch over the security of the French colony.

Events in the Empire had affected Cyprus more than once, whether it was the assassination of the English and French consuls in Jeddah (June 1858), the Druze massacre of the Maronites in Lebanon (between March and July 1860), or the Muslim massacre of Christians in Damascus (9-18 July 1860). Those events, and the arrival of senior civil servants placed in residence in Cyprus after the killings in Syria, had kindled tension between Greeks and Turks, especially in Nicosia (Bonato 2004, 133-9). On 4 July, a Turkish corvette arrived from Beirut transporting several dozen Druze as well as Tahir Pasha, the former *Ferik* (the lieutenant-general or general of a military unit) of Damascus, who had been sentenced to exile in Cyprus. Further exiles arrived on 10 August (64 Druze and Turks from Damascus and Saïda).[24] A year later, Du Tour reported that Nicosia had been transformed into a city of fanatics where the Turks were grouped around Tahir Pasha and his house was used for daily meetings. On 31 August 1861 he wrote:[25]

22 CCC L 19, 22 March 1841, f. 201.

23 CCC L 19, 26 June 1841, ff. 213-16.

24 CPC TL 1, Du Tour, 10 August 1861, f. 241.

25 "Every day at any moment, on all corners of the streets, Christians are insulted and beaten in the most atrocious manner; besides, impunity is certain for the perpetrators, as the Christians are so frightened they dare not testify on behalf of their coreligionists" (CPC TL 1, 31 August 1861, ff. 248-50 and FCDL 29, 6 September 1861, ff. 221-8).

> Tous les jours à chaque instant à chaque coin de rue les Chrétiens sont injuriés & bâtonnés de la manière la plus atroce l'impunité est d'ailleurs assurée à ces sicaires car les Chrétiens sont tellement effrayés qu'ils n'osent pas aller témoigner en faveur de leurs coreligionnaires.

According to Du Tour, the only solution to restore calm was to depose the *Tombrouk agassi*, (Chief of Police), and dissipate the troublemakers, meaning from eighty to one hundred people; he suggested they be transferred to Famagusta so that their stay would be not a reward but a real punishment. As for Tahir Pasha, he proposed Larnaca or Limassol as the latter's place of residence. His recommendations were the subject of a joint missive from the French and English Consulates sent to their respective Embassies.[26] Tahir Pasha was transferred to Chios on 3 December 1862 and the *Tombrouk agassi* was removed.[27]

Displaced populations, especially Circassians, were another worry for the consuls. Russian expansion towards the Mediterranean, which had begun in the eighteenth century, had always been resisted by the people of the Caucasus. After a series of uprisings they had to accept it, and the date of 21 May 1864 traditionally marks the end of the great Caucasian War that began in 1816 and led to huge emigration: between four and seven hundred thousand Caucasians were forced into exile in the Ottoman Empire, where they were dispersed throughout. In November 1860, between one thousand and fifteen hundred Circassians were sent in the island at the request of the Nicosia's *Mejlis* (Great Council) to make up for the lack of manpower that followed Greeks fleeing harassment by the Turks. The Circassian community had a wide reputation for making trouble and the Christians hoped the French Embassy would take steps. But the Embassy refused to intervene due to the considerable number of Circassian *émigrés*; nor did it wish to hinder another point in the Empire if surveillance was going to be more difficult.[28] A new influx of Circassians in October 1864 was the object of a detailed report from Maricourt.[29] Larnaca's inhabitants were alarmed by the Circassians' notorious reputation and also believed they suffered from contagious diseases, and they crowded outside consular residences in the hope the *mudir* would refuse entry to the vessels. Foreign agents, and a few

26 CPC TL 1, 29 September 1861, f. 251.

27 CPC TL 1, 20 January 1862, f. 265 and CCC L 22, 9 March 1862, f. 027.

28 FCDL 29, Darasse, 27 August 1860, f. 119 and Therapia, 3 September 1860, ff. 123-4.

29 FCDL 30, 14 October 1864, no. 120 and 28 October 1864, no. 122. See also Bonato, Emery 2010c, 129-33, and Bonato 2015, 195.

inhabitants armed with rifles, kept watch to prevent the immigrants from disembarking, but the Circassians were in such a miserable state that they were allowed to set foot ashore and then quarantined in a heap. In the days that followed, confusion reigned. Armed Turks roamed through the European quarter, and Maricourt appealed to the naval forces stationed in Beirut, as he was authorised. On 13 October the frigate *L'Impétueuse* appeared in the bay at Larnaca to bring calm. Five hundred Circassians were led to Nicosia – of whom merely two hundred were reported to have survived. Others were dispersed across the island. One small group founded a village on the Akrotiri peninsula in the district of Limassol. Many succumbed to an onslaught of malaria due to the proximity of outlying marshes. By the end of the century its inhabitants numbered eighty, and today only the name of the village, Cerkez (Cherkess: other name of the Circassians) recalls those painful events.

The Cretan Revolt (1866-69) had repercussions in Cyprus. The Porte instructed the Hellenes to leave Imperial land within two weeks, and then granted a new delay. In May 1866, Governor Saïd Pasha acted as if nothing had changed, and either hastened the Hellenes' departure from the island or had them imprisoned by Larnaca's *mudir*. The Greek consul, Margaritis, who could obtain nothing at all from the governor, requested the assistance of Colonna Ceccaldi.[30] Some consuls also intervened by drawing the governor's attention to the fact that his attitude was contrary to the Sultan's orders. In the end, Saïd Pasha cancelled his directives and "l'affaire en resta là" (there the matter ended).

There were other, more personal matters that led to consuls becoming involved in some occasions. On 15 August 1841, a Muslim named Mehmet Kirimli entered the home of a French national, Thomas Péry, in an attempt to assassinate him.[31] According to law, the residence of a foreigner or *protégé* was inviolable, and so there was cause to punish the attacker in order to ensure that the security of all Europeans would be respected by the Turks. The governor would satisfy Fourcade's request: Mehmet Kirimli was sentenced to a caning of 50 blows, increased to 200, for having violated the home of a Frenchman. The affair was perhaps someone simply settling a score, but another in 1856 involved the French State through its Nicosia representative Vice-Consul Adolphe Laffon, who had to take refuge with his family in Larnaca after the consular agency had been set ablaze on several occasions. Saintine refused his return to Nicosia, for Laffon's family was still under threat, with fires started in Larnaca itself, close to their home, in November and December.

30 FCDL 30, 10 May 1867, no. 22.

31 CCC L 19, 27 August 1841, ff. 225-7. See Bonato 2006, 149-51.

Finally, it was not until April 1857 that Darasse authorised Laffon to return to his house with all assurances from the governor as to his security.[32] In February 1861, Du Tour had occasion to report an attempted poisoning, this time concerning a Swiss national who was a French *protégé*, a mechanic named Jacques Horlacher. A Hungarian *émigré* named Mohamed Ali was suspected, a man whose expulsion had been decided by the governor on the findings of the consul.[33] All the above incidents illustrate decisive intervention by the French consuls.

2.2 Safeguard of Interests

2.2.1 Property and Land Tax

Most French nationals settled in Cyprus were merchants and some were considered landowners.[34] In the period under consideration, private ownership of land did not exist, since under religious law the land belonged to the Sultan, and this situation presented two obstacles: there were no rights of succession, disposal or donation (no legal transmission of property to family other than one's own children), no more than there was the right to mortgage property; only what was constructed or planted on those properties could be disposed of (tenant farmers could not mortgage their land to borrow capital, and loans were made at exorbitant rates, which prevented progress in agriculture.)

As for foreigners, no acquisition of land was possible, yet there were still certain European residents in Cyprus considered as landowners. With the assistance of a system of subtleties enabled by Turkish law, those Europeans had acquired properties either confiscated during the persecutions of 1821,[35] or repossessed from debtors, or else through marriage, since Turkish law could grant property to women. Foreigners marrying female subjects of the Sultan who were Christians benefited from the nationality of their

32 FCDL 28, Saintine, 20 September 1856, ff. 411-29; 6 October 1856, ff. 430-1; 3 November 1856, f. 433; 14 November 1856, ff. 436-7; 3 December 1856, ff. 451-2 and Darasse 15 April 1857, ff. 495-8.

33 FCDL 29, 20 March 1861, ff. 178-9.

34 FCDL 26, Maxime Raybaud (Consul from May 1836 to March 1839), 14 October 1837, ff. 436-7.

35 After the Greek uprising to obtain independence, the Governor of Cyprus, Kuchuck Mehmet, in the belief that events would be precipitated on the island, requested that the Sultan send reinforcements and, to avoid any potential revolt, he proceeded to arrest and execute over 450 persons, Greek dignitaries and prelates, including the island's Archbishop.

spouses – the women remained Ottomans – and could purchase lands and houses which could be handed down by the same artifices (Arminjon 1903, 94). It would seem that existing tolerances on the part of the authorities dated back a long time, but beginning in around 1830 the *kadis* (Muslim judges) had no longer wished to deliver titles bearing the names of Europeans. The law had been circumvented, and land had been purchased in the names of Ottoman subjects (*prête-noms*, i.e. nominees): the latter then issued retractions, and the letters they drafted indicated the real owners' names; the letters were then registered at the chancery of the Consulate of the country of the real purchaser. This use of nominees was often a source of conflict, as the *rayas* (non-Muslim subjects of the Sultan) rented out the lands they cultivated and claimed as their own. In addition, those property acquisitions still remained subject to Turkish law.

Landed property was a matter that provided the administration of the Porte with food for thought, because property tax (tithe) was paid by everyone, and in 1832-33 a land census had already been undertaken in Cyprus (Aymes 2004, 142-4). At the end of September 1840, Fourcade received a despatch from the Embassy alerting him that the Porte was complaining about French nationals refusing to allow the land registry have details of property they possessed in the names of their wives or mothers-in-law, with the result that they were not paying the corresponding taxes.[36] Fourcade gathered the 'five or six' French landowners concerned, and recommended that they should not oppose the land registry except if they had observed that the latter was abusing its powers. It does seem, however, that the European landowners showed little inclination to reply favourably to requests from the local authorities, and in June 1841 the Porte was obliged to send an official memorandum to the Ambassadors in Constantinople.[37]

On 18 February 1856, the *Hatt-i-Humayun* was the prelude to a relaxation in landed property legislation. There was a necessity for precise regulation[38] to facilitate transactions, but also to develop the country's prosperity, i.e. to promote activity that added value to the agricultural sector, and to encourage trade and so increase fiscal revenue in support of the constantly increasing expenditure of the Empire. There was also the matter of putting an end to the growing number of frauds.

In 1859, with 'property rights' of Europeans contested by the governor, the French sent a petition to Napoleon III to request the

36 FCDL 27, Constantinople, 27 September 1840, f. 176.

37 FCDL 27, translation, 11 June 1841, f. 218.

38 There was a first step in 1858 with the adoption of a land tax code (Aristarchi Bey 1873, 7-64, Young 1906, 45).

execution of the *Hatt-i-humayun*. While the Embassy upheld their initiative in theory, it made it known that it was "inopportun" (inconvenient) to raise a matter whose principle was an already-acquired right.[39] The fundamental reform was acted in 1867 when three laws were promulgated. The new legislation conformed more or less to the codes of Europe, definitively establishing «indigenous» property rights and at the same time recognising foreigners' rights to landed property, leaving it to each country to approve the protocol appended to the law. For French subjects it took effect on 9 June 1868. In the same way as the Sultan's subjects, French nationals would have property rights. In return, they were obliged to abide by the laws of the Empire, duly pay contributions and, finally, accept the arbitration of Ottoman civil tribunals in the event of dispute.

A few landed property matters called for Embassy assistance in order to be settled. In 1857, Saintine reported that the farmers of Georges Lapierre, the most important French landowner on the island, were not paying their rents.[40] He appealed to the governor, who refused to intervene because the law did not permit Europeans to possess land in the Ottoman Empire. A letter from the Vizier was sent to the governor to draw his attention to the fact that he could not abolish a traditional custom of the country that had force of law, and was also about to pass into Ottoman law.

There was also the Santi Mattei affair, which mobilised the efforts of Darasse for over one year.[41] This family, originally from Genoa or Corsica, had been on the island for several generations and its surviving members, three brothers and sisters, requested naturalisation at the French Consulate because the governor had taken steps to strip them of their assets and auction off their property, given that certain deeds were in their grandfather's name and, according to the law, could not be inherited, and other title deeds had been lost. Several letters from the Vizier were necessary, notably concerning the lost deeds, for which public testimony would have to be admitted as sufficient evidence by the *Mejlis* of Nicosia. In this way the Santi Mattei family was able to keep its property, which reassured other European landowners worried about the legality of their own title deeds.

As for Colonna Ceccaldi, it fell to him to defend "un Français des plus honorables, agriculteur distingué" (a most honourable Frenchman and distinguished farmer) namely Georges Bernard, to guarantee

39 FCDL 29, Darasse 25 April 1859, ff. 6-8 and Therapia (illegible date), f. 15.

40 FCDL 28, 9 February 1857, ff. 459-64 and 31 May 1857, ff. 525-6.

41 FCDL 29, 28 August 1859 ff. 28-33; 5 October 1859, ff. 51-5; 17 October 1859, ff. 58-9; 4 November 1859, ff. 63-4; 30 May 1860, ff. 83-6; 27 August 1860, f. 120; 2 September 1860, f. 122; 19 October 1860, ff. 141-4; 17 November 1860, f. 147.

his right to his 'property'.[42] In 1855 Bernard had bought lands (near the Turkish village of Sinda) from the government designating two nominees, Kristofi and Janco Pieridi (for Pierides) who were subjects of the Porte. And then in 1862, Bernard had rented this land to four of the village's inhabitants. Three years later, Bernard wanted to sell the property to farmers from the neighbouring village of Lissi, but the people from Sinda lodged a complaint with the *Mejlis* of the province, deeming that Bernard had wrongly acquired the property in 1855. Their case was thrown out and a *mazbata* (minutes of meeting session) recognised Bernard as the legitimate owner.

All landowners were required to pay the landed property taxes – the tithe – and these received the full attention of the Consuls, who also intervened in the island's administration. We should recall that since the conquest of Cyprus, taxes raised in the island were extremely varied, as elsewhere in the Ottoman Empire; their distribution was very inequitable, and they were collected through a farming system which gave way to all kinds of profligacy. The Consuls continually denounced the fiscal system and its glaring inequalities, condemning the manner of tax collection which often showed unheard-of cruelty. Implementing this great fiscal upheaval engendered by reforms, as indeed it was, would take several decades.

In Cyprus the first step was the abolition of tax-farming in 1839. That reform, however, met with resistance from Greek and Turkish Primates, who would lose their tax exemptions and the power they wielded over the population, so much so that the tithe was still subject to a leasing in 1869. In 1855, Darasse sent the Embassy a report on schemes conceived by a Greek Primate to the detriment of the Empire's Treasury during the adjudication of the tithe on the island. The Pasha was furious that the Consul would intervene in this kind of affair, even though his participation resulted in new judgements to the benefit of the Treasury, to the tune of 800,000 piastres. Darasse would congratulate himself for thwarting the farmers' manoeuvres just when the Porte was going to take out a new loan to pay war costs.[43]

For as long as the tithe was paid by all landowners, no dissent was possible, and the Consuls had little freedom of action. At the beginning of 1842, Fourcade was solicited by the governor on the question of instigating a new tax on property detained by the French. The Consul could not refuse to collaborate, but he wanted this tax to replace the tithe, and ascertain that French property was taxed at its correct value. He therefore queried the governor as to the methods of taxation but was met with 'complete silence'. It seems

42 The affair was described in CPC TL 2, 25 May 1866, ff. 80-4 and in more detail with documentary evidence in FCDL 30, 25 May 1866, no. 10.

43 FCDL 28, 14 July 1855, f. 344 and 20 August 1855, ff. 347-52.

that the governor did not follow the orders of the Porte but rather the opinions of his Greek advisors, who wished the Europeans to bear the financial costs that were the *rayas*' affair. In August 1864, Khalet Bey discussed property tax with Maricourt:[44]

> Il s'agissait de faire payer aux Européens et aux employés des Consulats sur une note de leurs biens et de leurs revenus, fournie par eux-mêmes, un impôt foncier de 3%.

Having received no instructions, Maricourt turned to the Ambassador who gave a pragmatic answer: only pay this tax if the *rayas* pay it. He then turned to the Minister who requested that he maintain the *status quo*, since the regulation of foreigners' rights to acquire property was under negotiation. Whatever the circumstances, since Khalet Bey had just been replaced the measures were abandoned, at least temporarily, like all the others.

Concerning the *protégés*, Darasse intervened in favour of the two employees of the Limassol agency in 1857 after the Porte had presented to the Ambassadors a project that entailed payment, under the name "impôt foncier" (land tax therefore payable by all) the taxes that existed previously: wealth tax, often arbitrary, the national debt (variable depending on the year), aid to Candia (special circumstances tax), employees' wages, and capitation tax. But the Consular Corps rebelled, stating that in Cyprus only the tithe existed as property tax, and they refused to comply. The governor, however, asked Darasse to have the two Consular agency employees in Limassol settle this 'land tax' whereas those under French protection had never paid anything other than the tithe. Finally, the Embassy informed the Consul he should only agree to them paying this if the other employees of all the Consulates did so, to which no-one consented.[45] And so this attempt to introduce a new tax went unheeded.

Acting most often unofficially since negotiations were ongoing, the Consuls therefore followed Embassy directives with some success in their vigilant observation of matters concerning the interests of nationals and their *protégés* who owned property on the island of Cyprus.

44 "It was a matter of making the Europeans and Consulate employees, on the basis of a note, supplied by themselves, of their assets and incomes, a landed property tax of 3%" (FCDL 30, 3 August 1864, no. 109; 17 August 1864, no. 111).

45 FCDL 28, 12 May 1857, ff. 512-20; 5 September 1857, f. 545; 17 October 1857, ff. 553-7 and Therapia, 30 July 1857, f. 542; 3 October 1857, f. 548; 17 November 1857, f. 569.

2.2.2 Commerce: Agriculture, Navigation, Customs, and the Monetary System

A large part of the consuls' attributions consisted in assisting French merchants. In the mid-nineteenth century, exportation was the principal Cypriot commerce, while imports represented much less: the island was too poor, too sparsely populated for any great consumption of articles coming from Europe. Exports were closely linked to agricultural products,[46] the facilities offered by navigation,[47] and relationships with Customs.

2.2.2.1 Agriculture

Ever since ancient times the island of Cyprus had been famous for its fertile soil. Under the yoke of the Ottoman Empire however, its cultivation had been deteriorating and by the nineteenth century only a small area of land was cultivated. Despite sometimes abundant harvests, agricultural machines and techniques were still rudimentary, and farming had to face several evils: chronic droughts, like those in 1845 and 1847, destruction by locusts,[48] and a lack of manpower.[49] To all of that, one could add the negligence of short-sighted Turkish governors because they allowed peasants to cultivate the land without any directives; at most, their involvement was limited to banning exports of cereals in the event of penury, or commandeering produce during the conflicts with which the

46 Manufactured items' share of industry was marginal, and embroidery, Indienne textiles, cotton fabric, pottery and distilleries made only a small contribution to exports.

47 The role of the consul in matters of damage during shipping or in the event of a shipwreck is not examined in this study. We can simply observe that the consul systematically intervened in a legal role in representing the interests of proprietors, shipowners, and insurers. As the magistrate who was custodian of the rights of those absent, the consul received the ship captain's recourse demanding compensation for damage, mandated experts who would list the damage and losses, and authorised and verified repairs. The consul could authorise sale of the goods, and in the case of jettison the chancellor verified the remaining cargo. Consuls had to deal with numerous stranded vessels and wrecks. Cf. For example the interventions of Maricourt in Bonato, Emery 2010c, 178-84.

48 See below.

49 Peasants were in a catastrophic situation. In years of famine, they had to take on more debts to pay taxes and when crops were good, they were taxed more heavily. Although the *rayas* were forbidden to leave the island, many of them were forced to flee.

Empire had to cope.[50] Cereals – wheat, barley and vetches – were agriculture's primary crops, and these were exported principally to Syria when harvests were sufficient to cater to domestic needs. The island's other resources were essentially wines – the most famous, Commandaria, was exported to Europe – with Muscat, raki and red table wines despatched to the Levant. Cotton enjoyed considerable although temporary expansion in the American Civil War (1861-65), because the crops were almost entirely exported. Silk represented the majority of Cyprus' exports to Marseille; olive oil was sold only in the Levant due to its lack of refinement; carob, used to distil spirits but also serving as animal fodder, was exported mainly to Russia; madder, or alizarin, used in compounds for dyeing, was being increasingly cultivated in this period (Fourcade, Bonato 2000, 168-79).

2.2.2.2 Navigation

Cyprus is situated only a short distance from the coasts of Turkey, Egypt, and Syria, and so lies at the heart of a network of maritime routes with Malta and the islands of the archipelago. The island has several ports: Larnaca, through which most trade passed, but also Limassol, Kyrenia, the closest point to Karamania, and Paphos and Famagusta, where activity was marginal. Since time immemorial, Cyprus afforded safe anchorage for navigators, whether to shelter from the area's frequent storms or to find protection against pirates; and the island also made replenishments possible at reasonable cost, so trade had always flourished. For a long time, there was no regular link with the island, but Cypriots enjoyed close relations with Marseille, Genoa, Trieste, and Livorno. And then came a revolution with the arrival of steam vessels and a return to safety in the Mediterranean after pirates had for a decade been hunted down without pity by French and English squadrons. Suddenly, trade between Europe and the mainland trading ports called *Échelles* – there were established European businesses to be found in Beirut, Jaffa, Tartus, Tripoli and Alexandretta – was conducted directly, which precipitated the decline of Cypriot commerce. The downturn increased again after 1845.[51]

50 In 1862, the island provided supplies of barley that were taken aboard four chartered vessels in Constantinople bound for Montenegro. It must be noted that the events taking place in France could affect Cypriot trade: when the Revolution in February 1848 instituted the Second Republic (putting an end to the July Monarchy), shipments destined for France and Italy were almost totally paralysed (CCC L 20, Goepp, 24 June 1848, f. 150).

51 CCC L 20, Goepp, 28 mai 1846, f. 48.

In 1840, the *Österreichischer Lloyd* in Trieste introduced a Constantinople-Beirut route via Smyrna, Rhodes and Cyprus. Although irregular and relatively costly, this sea-link was particularly convenient. In 1843, the *Messageries Maritimes* company based in Marseille had thoughts of establishing a line between Alexandria and the Syrian ports,[52] but the *Peninsular and Oriental Company* would be the first (in 1847) to open a competitive sea-route between Constantinople and Beirut that called on Smyrna, Rhodes and Larnaca.[53] Its existence, however, was short-lived (it was abandoned only two years later). Other countries attempted a liaison with Cyprus, but without success: in 1862 the Russians and the Italians, in 1866 the Egyptians, and the Spanish in 1867.[54]

So, imports from, and exports to, France transited under an Austrian flag, most often via warehouses in Alexandria, Beirut and Smyrna, and then via small Turkish, Arab or Greek vessels whose navigation, without charts or compasses, inspired no confidence at all.[55] The consuls had arguments for alerting the Ministry because France's trading position in Cyprus was weakening. In addition, the reputation of the *Lloyd* company was not enough to guarantee trade for Cyprus: for one, the company had no competition and set high prices; nor did it take much care over the merchandise it transported, and vessels foundered several times. The *Messageries* twice refused to establish a line serving Cyprus (1859 and 1865),[56] stating that the elements of freight to be collected in Larnaca seemed insufficient. In April 1867, Colonna Ceccaldi in turn requested further examination of the matter but, unfortunately, he went unheeded.[57] Several private shipping companies nevertheless showed a desire to open a direct route from Marseille to Larnaca, such as *Régis Ainé*, *Bazin* or *Touache*.[58] Their efforts turned out to be short-lived also, however, ceasing quickly because of a price-war with the *Messageries* over Levant destinations. The situation certainly affected the destiny of French citizens settled in the country, because the means of communication were of the utmost importance.

52 CCC L 19, Fourcade, 18 November 1843, f. 307.

53 CCC L 20, Goepp, 9 December 1847, f. 114.

54 Respectively: FCDL 29, Du Tour, 22 January 1862, f. 272; 11 February 1862, f. 278 and CCC L 22, Colonna Ceccaldi, 18 February 1866, f. 266; 21 July 1867, ff. 326-7.

55 CCC L 22, Colonna Ceccaldi, 1st June 1869, ff. 426-9.

56 Correspondence from the Ministry to Darasse, CCC L 21, 6 August 1859, ff. 220-1; to Maricourt, CCC L 22, 14 June 1865, f. 230.

57 FCDL 30, 16 April 1867, no. 20.

58 CCC L 22, Maricourt, 23 March 1863, ff. 73-4 and Vienne, 19 December 1865, ff. 258-60.

2.2.2.3 Customs

The consuls found themselves dealing most often with the Customs administration, not only to ensure that tariffs were respected, but consequently the freedom of trade itself: customs agents had nothing against foodstuffs being taken on board on the pretext of a shortage on the island.[59] Moreover, the right of customs officials to examine manifests had always been a source of conflict, and the consuls had to keep a close watch on everything that went on.

In the Ottoman Empire, customs duty was regulated by trade conventions signed between the Porte and western nations, and these were renewed periodically. Sometimes the Ministry appealed to the consuls when tariffs were due to expire: the tariff drawn up on 5 December 1850 was valid until the date of 1 March 1855, and Doazan was requested to convey improvements to be made for a satisfactory conclusion.[60]

When Fourcade took up his posting, the convention then in effect, signed in 1838, stipulated among other things that before they left the island, goods intended for export were liable to a 9% tax to be applied in replacement of all the taxes previously raised inside the country for sales permits, tolls etc. Since inland taxes had never existed in Cyprus, this 9% tax was contested by the merchants. Russia, moreover, was bound by an older treaty and had not signed the 1838 convention, which meant that Russian traders and their *protégés* were exempt from duty on goods leaving the country. The first article of the 1838 convention guaranteed all nations the advantages from which the most favoured would benefit, and so Fourcade authorised French merchants to refuse to pay this tax. The consequence was smuggling on such a scale that customs officers were unable to stop it and preferred to negotiate with traders and settle for smaller but assured profits (3% to 4%). When the Russo-Turkish treaty expired in July 1844, the consul took steps to restore equality between merchants, and in October the Porte ordered that Russian merchants should pay the same duties as the others.[61] Later, all the consuls would have trouble with Customs and obtain satisfaction after letters from the Vizier: Goepp regarding prices for cotton, wool and the Commandaria wines; Maricourt for the wool tariff that Customs wished to impose, but based on the duty that was

59 In 1840, by order of the Council of Nicosia, Customs, on the pretext of famine in the island, opposed the loading of flour, wheat and barley sent by French merchants. In the eyes of Fourcade, this was a violation of the Trade Treaty between France and the Porte (CCC L 19, 29 August 1840, f. 160).

60 CCC L 20, 15 December 1854, f. 308.

61 CCC L 19, 28 July 1841, f. 222; 10 April 1842, f. 249; 1st October 1843, f. 295; 21 August 1844, f. 327 and 1st October 1844, f. 333.

most advantageous for the officials themselves; Colonna Ceccaldi for a matter of *teskere* (document) certifying that excise taxes had been paid and then annulled for having been too generously distributed.[62]

Nor should we forget that, since Customs taxes were farmed out and there were many cases of abuse that obliged the consuls to intervene. Saintine reported in 1856 that the Customs had been attributed against payment of a sum of 1,800,000 piastres, or 600,000 piastres more than the previous year. So, the Customs officer had to increase prices to reimburse the sum he had advanced. Darasse also intervened in 1857: Kiani Pasha had authorised the Customs officer to modify (to his advantage) the domestic trade taxes and the Europeans had to pay in the same way as subjects of the Porte. A letter from the Vizier was sent to the governor, who took no notice of it. In February 1863, Maricourt openly accused the Customs Director Şevket Bey of delivering false *teskere* to merchants, to smuggle goods, to use money collected by Customs to purchase goods that were resold for profit, without any trace of them in the registry (although the profits were shared with the accountant's son-in-law!) The result was that the European consuls had to complain to the Pasha and alert their Embassies.[63]

And finally, the consuls had to guarantee free trade with the Lazaret administration, and establish quarantines which, although they were efficient, were sometimes organised in haphazardly.[64] For example, in 1845, a year after the plague had disappeared from the Empire, vessels arriving from ports in Syria and Caramania – where most trade was conducted – were immobilised for two weeks in Larnaca while Smyrna and Constantinople freely went about their business. Goepp underlined the incoherence of the situation and also the prejudiced suffered, because ships no longer halted at Larnaca and thereby avoided two weeks of inactivity as well as public health taxes.[65] Not only was the circulation of merchandise hindered, but the health taxes made prices higher, and only the Lazaret's receipts increased. Where the Ottoman government was concerned, the interests of the island came second.

62 Respectively: CCC L 20, Goepp, 6 September 1845, ff. 20-3; FCDL 29, Maricourt, 16 May 1862, no. 12; FCDL 30, Colonna Ceccaldi, 30 September, no. 12.

63 FCDL 28, Saintine, 16 November 1856, ff. 440-7; Darasse, 1st May 1857, ff. 507-9 and FCDL 29, Maricourt, 19 June 1863, no. 62.

64 The creation of the Lazaret and the consuls' action are mentioned below.

65 CCC L 20, 4 September 1846, f. 62.

2.2.2.4 The Monetary System

We can refer briefly here to the monetary system[66] and *kaime*, i.e. the paper currency whose impact on the price of foodstuffs was particularly important. In the course of its history, the Ottoman Empire had seen numerous wars whose expense could not be covered by taxes alone. To counter the poor state of its Treasury, the Empire had recourse to two mechanisms that had their dangers: alteration of its currency, and, beginning in 1839, the emission of *kaime* that consisted of interest-bearing treasury bonds redeemable at a fixed date. In principle it was guaranteed by the coins collected, but that had no real result and, since the bond was handwritten, it had a great disadvantage: it was easy to counterfeit. So *kaime* quickly declined greatly in value against coin currency when citizens lost all confidence in the former as a means of payment. As early as 1844, a reform was decided to withdraw unseemly coins and depreciated paper currency from circulation, and new gold and silver coins were introduced. But no withdrawals could be made, and so, in the Empire, not only the newly emitted coins circulated but also *kaime* and foreign money like the French Napoléon, sovereigns, or the thaler of Maria Theresa of Austria. Exchange operations in the hands of local bankers went through a period of extraordinary fluctuation.

In a context of costs incurred by war and revolt that the Empire had to face from 1853 onwards, the introduction of *kaime*, plus short-term, high-rate borrowings from local banks, and foreign loans, came one after the other. In 1862, at last a genuine plan for recovery was drawn up with a budget that provided for a decrease in public spending, a new loan from London for the withdrawal of *kaime*, and the creation of a central bank. Yet the Porte's finances were so strained that other loans followed, and in 1876 the Ottoman Empire had to declare itself bankrupt.

Transformations in monetary systems are not put into effect without crises in the price of foodstuffs, and repercussions were felt heavily in Cyprus: for one thing, there were sizeable price increases at the same time as efforts to restore balance between currency value and food prices remained sterile; another factor was forced borrowing, and consequently great difficulties in the raising.[67] In 1860, Darasse alerted the Embassy that the new tariff for currency was causing widespread discontent, since the imposed decrease generated a loss

66 See for example: Thobie, Kançal 1995 and Kuneralp 2002.

67 In 1861 the island received approximately 2,000,000 piastres in *kaime* that were to be for trade and taxes (FCDL 29, Du Tour 20 October 1861, f. 246). According to Maricourt the sum was around 1,500,000. In addition, he announced that the inhabitants had been asked for 2,400,000 piastres for another forced loan taken out in 1859 (CCC L 22, 2 April 1862, f. 032).

of some 10% to 40% and the markets were totally unsettled. He had to ask the Pasha for a three-month delay so that merchants might have the time to clear their old accounts.[68] In 1861, a mixed Commission to fix the legal rate for currencies was set up by Du Tour and the other members of the Consular Corps at the request of the governor.[69] When Maricourt took up his appointment, the situation was total anarchy, and exchange operations between the different means of payment left the field wide open to speculators, and consequently prices increased as dizzily as the cost of living. In March 1863, Governor Tevfik Pasha informed the consuls of the legal provisions desired by the Porte and the value of the currencies in circulation in Cyprus, and demanded this measure's application to foreigners. As some coins were highly overpriced when compared with their real value, Maricourt informed the governor that he could not accept his demands except on several conditions, and that in particular the price of foodstuffs should remain fixed and stable. Tevfik Pasha had no time to give his reply because he was replaced in April by Khalet Bey, who was much more active: by July 1863 he was already having talks with Maricourt, who inspired him to form the mixed Commission for foods and supplies charged with establishing a fair tariff, i.e. to determine prices for foodstuffs in accordance with those for currencies, and to ensure their application. Each foreign consulate, as well as the *rayas*, had sent a delegate, and the Commission was presided by the *mudir*. It was difficult putting the body to work, and in August already, the mixed Commission was showing its limitations. Its directives were not followed, prices continued to increase, and the public was showing its disapproval. But the reason above all was that the authorities continued to preoccupy themselves solely with maintaining currencies at their reduced values without acting on the price of foodstuffs, especially those of primary necessity whose prices were their main responsibility. And so Maricourt continued to refuse to obey requests for the French and their *protégés* to conform to government measures. Finally, after several meetings, the governor admitted that in return, the price of foodstuffs and manpower should be lowered, the mixed Commission would have to meet again to draw up a new tariff, *zapties* (policeman) would be made available to ensure it was respected, and at last the Customs Director would be formally instructed to forbid exportation of first necessities designated by the Commission. On 30 August Maricourt asked nationals to obey the government's decree and alert him to abuse.

68 FCDL 29, 20 April 1860 ff. 78-9.

69 But the *kaime* 'invasion' had annihilated all the measures that this commission was able to take (FCDL 29, 20 October 1861, f. 246).

Any control that the mixed body exercised over pricing did not last long, for in December 1863 Maricourt informed the Ambassador that the Commission had stopped functioning, that markets had been deserted, and that nothing remained to put an end to increasing prices. Heeding the people's complaints and believing he was acting together with the authorities and for the good of the population, Maricourt thought of another system that would earn him the fury of his superior, because he would galvanise all his colleagues into action against the former. With the *mudir*, Maricourt decided it would be more efficient to transfer the powers of the Commission into the hands of a single responsible person – who could only be the *mudir* – and he took the initiative to write to the governor to that effect. It provoked a general outcry. The members of the Commission, of course, found this interference in their prerogatives to be unacceptable. In mid-February 1864, Maricourt was obliged to alert the Ambassador of this incident, which produced a scathing reply: he had meddled with the administration of domestic matters that went completely beyond him. From now on the hectic increase in prices would go unchecked, with nothing to prevent devaluation of the currency or the enrichment of speculators.[70]

2.2.3 Assistance in Matters of Justice

In the event of dispute, it was the status of the plaintiffs and defendants that determined the appropriate tribunal. In disputes between French nationals, the jurisdiction of the Consular Court, France's instrument of justice in the Ottoman Empire was unarguable. It was presided by the consul, who at the same time was the intermediary and arbiter for all kinds of litigation or infraction (under both civil and commercial law), and the person who adjudicated in the name of the sovereign.[71] In civil and trade or commercial conflicts that could arise between foreigners of different nationalities, a convention drawn up in 1820 between France, England, Russia and Austria, and to which the other powers adhered tacitly, established mixed judicial commissions to pronounce judgements at first instance – with the exception of

70 Voluminous correspondence from Maricourt: CCC L 22, 2 April 1862, f. 32; 4 August 1862, ff. 49-56; 2 July 1863, ff. 125-31; 21 August 1863, ff. 138-44; 17 February 1864, ff. 167-70; FCDL 29, 15 September 1863, no. 69; 4 January 1864, unnumbered.

71 All judgements rendered by the Consular Court could be appealed before the Royal Court of Aix. The penalties applied were those provided for by the law in France.

criminal affairs.[72] Finally, in the case of litigation between an Ottoman subject and a French national, Article no. 26 of the Capitulations in 1740 had recognised, with only a few exceptions, the jurisdiction of the *Mekeme* (judicial tribunal), i.e. the official seat of the *kadi* in each *kaza* (district) which dispensed justice at first instance, whatever the causes, according to Muslim laws. The most serious infractions and crimes, and also appeals, were brought before the *Mejlis-i Kebir* (Superior Council or Grand Council) of the island in Nicosia, and its President was the governor.[73] The reputation of the local tribunals, however, which Westerners unhesitatingly qualified as fanatical and prejudiced, caused French nationals to accept only the jurisdiction of their consul. The *protégés* as well preferred the consular court, even in certain affairs where their adversaries were *rayas*. It goes without saying that affairs opposing *barataires* who were *protégés* of two different nations would turn out to be particularly inextricable, and it is easy to understand that at times there were discussions showing the disadvantages there could be when France intervened in disputes that involved subjects of the Ottoman Empire.[74]

Gradually, the Ottoman authorities attempted to unify the law so that their subjects, whether Muslim or not, and foreigners settled in the Empire, would be heard according to the same law. One of the first measures was to modify the attributions of the courts by separating the causes, with the creation of two specific tribunals, the Court of Commerce and the Criminal Court. They were the first two steps taken towards secular justice. The consuls were encouraged by their superiors to refer all affairs implicating subjects of the Sultan to those newly created Ottoman courts. In addition, different codes were adopted: the Penal Code as early as 1840, – revised in 1851 and replaced in 1858 by a new text founded on the laws of France – then the Code of Commerce in 1850 (revised in 1861), the Code of Commercial Procedure in 1861, and Maritime Commerce in 1863. Many difficulties arose after Consular Courts were involved, and in dispensing justice the consuls devoted their time in several domains, among them testimony from Christians, or else the constitution of the Court of Commerce and the Criminal Court.

72 These commissions, accepted by custom, were above all exceptional tribunals and, in the event a plaintiff's appeals were rejected, the commissions were powerless to pronounce sentences if the plaintiff had not given a prior undertaking to accept the decision and given securities.

73 The composition of this Supreme Court varied. In 1863 it was made up of twelve members: eight Muslims, three Greeks and one Armenian (CPC TL 1, Maricourt, 6 June 1863, f. 369).

74 The case of Adrien Santi Mattei, a French *protégé*, versus the Russian *protégé* Antonio Jannaki was an example of this (CCC L 22, Maricourt, 20 February 1865, ff. 210-15 and Bonato, Emery 2010c, 192-3).

2.2.3.1 Christian Testimony

Beginning in 1856, Christians would be admitted as witnesses in civil litigation against Turks.[75] However, the governors refused to accept Christian testimony because in their opinion it was not clearly explained in the *Hatt-i-humayun*.[76] In 1858, the Greeks appealed to Darasse for the principle to be applied. A letter from the Vizier was sent to the governor so that he would order the *mudirs* of each *kaza* to accept testimony given by Christians. The *kadis*, however, refused to accept this, and the Pasha decided that in all hearings where a Christian testified, the instance would be considered in front of the *Mejlis* of each *kaza*.[77]

The above is illustrated by an affair that took place in 1860.[78] A *raya* shepherd from the village of Lissi named Philippi sold his mule at the Saint George's fair to another *raya* from Limassol. A Turk saw the animal and claimed it belonged to him, relying on false witnesses. The aggrieved buyer turned against the shepherd who sold the animal. The affair was raised in Nicosia in front of the Pasha. The Turk arrived with the perjurers, all Muslims, and they were heard. The shepherd Philippi invoked the testimony of every inhabitant in his village, but no-one listened to them because they were Christians. The Pasha then had the idea of hearing testimony from the animals! He had the Turk's female mule brought in, and also the shepherd's male animal, on the theory that if the male went towards the female mule, then the animal was indeed his! In fact, the male mule had travelled for four or five days with the female mule to reach Nicosia, and naturally turned towards the female. And the case was judged: the shepherd was sentenced to repay the price of the sale, together with court costs, and sent to prison. Philippi then appealed to the French consul. Written testimony was demanded from the inhabitants, and it was unanimously in favour of the shepherd. The Pasha released Philippi, waived the payment of costs, and wrote to Darasse that he will re-examine the case. A few days later the governor died and was replaced by Kairullah Pasha, who submitted the affair to the *Mejlis*, but all revision of the case was refused. Finally, a letter was sent from the Vizier to conclude the affair in a manner that amounted to justice. Later, in April 1867, English vice-consul T.B. Sandwith was questioned by his superiors on the condition of the island's Christians and mentioned: "their evidence is refused in all the tribunals when

75 According to Fourcade, in the case of litigation between *rayas*, Christian testimony is accepted. But not when one of the adversaries is Turk (Fourcade, Bonato 2000, 157-8).

76 FCDL 28, Darasse, 11 May 1857 f. 510; 3 September 1857, f. 544.

77 FCDL 28, Darasse, 19 September 1858 f. 634; 2 November 1858 f. 640.

78 FCDL 29, Darasse, 27 September 1860 ff. 138-9; Pera, 23 November 1860, f. 148.

given against Mussulmans" (Luke 1989, 217). In Cyprus, finally, there was no guarantee that justice would be done.

2.2.3.2 The Mixed Court of Commerce (*Mejlis-i Tijaret*)

The consuls of France played a part in the constitution of this body in particular, and this tribunal was entrusted with affairs opposing Ottoman subjects and foreigners, and made up of government employees and European merchants nominated by the former. In 1841, Fourcade reported that Governor Talat Effendi had taken measures for the creation of a trade tribunal, but without giving any particularities, and so the Minister indicated that it would not be possible for France to defend a jurisdiction where there was no clear definition of its attributions. The creation of the institution was finally abandoned, at least temporarily.[79] Fragments of information scattered among the consular correspondence allow a reconstitution of the chaotic existence of that tribunal in the course of the decades that followed.

On 1 September 1853, Jules Doazan announced that a mixed tribunal had been created in Larnaca.[80] It seems that it was only at the end of 1854 that this tribunal was effectively established by the governor. Djemal Pasha wished its seat to be in Nicosia, but it was impossible to find a sufficient number of competent members and he was obliged to organise the tribunal in Larnaca, where it operated like a European court, but presided by the *mudir*, with a delegate sent by each Consulate to constitute a body of representatives, half of them Muslims and the other half Christians.[81] A few months later, Djemal Pasha left Cyprus and, while waiting for the new governor to arrive, the *Mejlis* of Nicosia suspended the Court of Commerce in Larnaca, with the result that the Embassy had to obtain a letter from the Vizier urging Governor Osman Pasha to take all necessary measures for the Court to immediately re-open its sessions.[82]

In 1857, Darasse advised the Embassy that the Consular Corps, at the request of Governor Kiani Pasha, had appointed six foreign merchants to sit as judges in the mixed Court of Commerce at Larnaca, alongside six merchants who were subjects of the Porte. Kiani Pasha, however, had the intention of having appeals sent to be heard by the *Mejlis* of Nicosia, which was contrary to custom since they were usually heard before the mixed tribunal in Constantinople;

79 CCC L 19, 28 February 1841, f. 195; 8 May 1841, f. 208 and 27 May 1841, f. 209.

80 CPC TL 1, 1st September 1853, f. 156.

81 FCDL 28, Doazan, 24 January 1855, f. 308; 2 April 1856, f. 379.

82 FCDL 28, Doazan, 11 June 1855, f. 336; Therapia, 10 July 1855, f. 340.

the matter should therefore be sanctioned in justice, since the Code of Commerce due for promulgation contained special dispositions in this respect.[83]

There was question of reorganising the tribunal in February 1861, but when faced with the difficulties, the *Mejlis* in Nicosia renounced.[84] A few months later, in October, Édouard Du Tour bragged of reshuffling the institution; Governor Mehmed Khairullah Pasha lost interest in its affairs.[85]

In 1863, Louis de Maricourt explained that this tribunal was only operational for a time, and that commercial suits between Europeans and *rayas* were brought before the *mudir*.[86] The following year, in August 1864, the consul had talks with Governor Khalet Bey on the subject of this Court of Commerce whose reorganisation had been mooted again, with plans to house it in Nicosia and, above all, the governor had the 'pretension' to compose a new tribunal of exclusively Muslim elements. This was inadmissible for the Ambassador, who asked Maricourt to insist for the new Court to be organised in a satisfactory manner. Finally, Khalet Bey surrendered to Maricourt's arguments and agreed to the organisation of the Court in Larnaca.[87]

In that rapid exposé there is evidence that, for foreigners, the Court of Commerce was not the instrument that should allow arbitration of their differences with Ottoman subjects, and that it was still preferable to appeal to the Consular Court to settle their affairs. In 1873, the Court was transferred to Nicosia by the then governor, Veis Pasha, much to the chagrin merchants from the West. It was definitively reinstalled in Larnaca in February 1874 (Hill 1952, 210 fn. 19). While mixed Courts of Commerce instituted by the Ottoman government in the major cities – particularly Constantinople, Beirut, Smyrna and Alexandria – seem to have operated in a regular manner, this was far from the case in Cyprus, for they were presided necessarily by Turks, and "little improvement could be expected from change" (Lang 1878, 275).

2.2.3.3 The Criminal Court (*Tahkik Mejlisi*)

The creation of this tribunal, which escaped the jurisdiction of religious authorities, was belatedly announced by Constantinople on 14 September 1861. Exactly two years later, in a despatch dated 14

83 FCDL 28, 3 April 1857, ff. 492-3 and Pera, 24 April 1857, f. 500.

84 FCDL 29, 7 February 1861, ff. 172-3 and Pera, 16 March 1861, f. 176.

85 CCC L 21, 15 October 1861, f. 329.

86 CPC TL 1, 6 June 1863, f. 368.

87 CPC TL 2, 12 August 1864, f. 18; 19 August 1864, ff. 24-5.

September 1863, the Ambassador advised Maricourt that the Porte had informed him of a tribunal, devoted to criminal affairs between foreigners and Ottoman subjects, and with the *mudir* at its head, that had just been set up in Larnaca. And since that Court "pourrait être utile" (might be of use) Maricourt was invited to favour it.[88] All the consuls adhered to this measure and agreed to cooperate; and Maricourt would repeatedly send French subjects or their *protégés* there. Very rapidly, as early as the beginning of 1864, it turned out that the practice of this tribunal was discriminatory, and that justice was done more rapidly when the plaintiffs were Turks.[89] While the creation of an impartial criminal court had raised great hopes, it was obvious that the successful operation of such a court would take some time; and so Westerners were disappointed and their initial reactions were negative.

Reforms in the judiciary domain undeniably encountered difficulties when they were applied in Cyprus: neither of the two new tribunals (the Court of Commerce and the Criminal Court) functioned correctly, despite the goodwill manifested by certain governors, particularly Zia Pasha who, in 1862, demanded – unsuccessfully – that civil and religious causes be judged separately.[90] Ottoman courts, which were hostile to European interests, had a very bad reputation. It was no surprise that claims between European and Ottoman subjects continued to be brought before their respective consuls, as had been the tradition. One must add that judges sitting on the *Mejlis* of Nicosia were not remunerated and purchased their office from Constantinople, which left their moral principles open to doubt. That organisation – one tribunal per district, with a Court of Appeal in Nicosia, and tribunals in Larnaca for judging commercial and criminal affairs – would last until the arrival of the English in 1878. The consular judiciary system that operated in parallel was abandoned on 7 January 1879, unilaterally, by means of a decree from the English High Commissioner. On 17 January the High Court of Justice was created. None of the powers protested against this English decision even though the Sultan could not transfer the sovereignty of consular justice.[91]

Correspondence shows the consuls had mainly recourse to the Department or the Embassy for affairs of a commercial nature, and only disputes implicating *protégés* were delicate to handle. Even if some of the cases could be settled directly with the Pasha, the most

88 FCDL 29, 25 September 1863, no. 71.

89 FCDL 30, 2 January 1864, no. 81.

90 FCDL 29, Maricourt, 24 July 1862, no. 22.

91 It made Paul Dislere comment that the occupation of Cyprus was indeed a true annexation (Dislere, de Mouy, 1893, 114).

complicated issues made it necessary to exchange despatches that today allow us to grasp some affairs that were particularly complex, but also to understand the relationships existing between plaintiff, defender and arbiter. As a general rule, the Department recommended "la plus grande circonspection" (the greatest circumspection).[92] The affairs that did not necessitate the sole intervention of the consuls were systematically referred to the Turkish courts: one had only to "veiller à ce que bonne justice soit faite" (take care that good justice be done).[93]

Some affairs found themselves suspended for decades: perpetual changes in governorship, plus ill-will on the part of some of the latter, or else that of some Greek prelates, would prevent their timely conclusion.[94] At this point we can examine an affair that began in 1821 and reached its conclusion in 1858. It demanded the joint efforts of all the consuls in what is known as the "créance Bernard" (Bernard letter of credit).

In 1821, in order to face the needs of the country, Archbishop Kiprianos took out a loan, borrowed from several European merchants.[95] The loan was never paid back because the Archbishop was executed by the Turks in the month of July. Ever afterwards, the creditors continuously requested succeeding governments to reimburse the advance, and a trial was held in Nicosia in 1839, when Clairambault occupied the post of consul.[96] The Greek clergy refused to recognise the debts and declared them to be false, because the amounts were so high that any reimbursement would have weighed too heavily on the island's finances.

Among the creditors were several French merchants including one Gabriel Bernard. He had advanced six hundred *Talaris* (the 'thaler' of Maria Theresa of Austria) and the sum was guaranteed by the tax on the island's cotton. To recover what he was due, after the death of his father, his son Georges continued the claims and requested Fourcade's intervention in February 1845. And so Fourcade asked the Ambassador to have the Vizier send him a letter, as the local authorities had up until then rejected all debt obligations of the kind. It was only in October that year that Goepp received the

92 CCC L 19, Pera, 25 August 1840, f. 158.

93 CCC L 19, Fourcade, 25 October 1840, f. 172.

94 This was the case with the 'Georges Diab affairs' (1839-57) which whose complexity and the personality of the character exhausted the patience of a number of consuls (Bonato 2008, 170-93).

95 Until 1821, the Archbishop was the only person to manage Church finances and those of the Greek community. He also had the right to raise taxes.

96 Bernard Louis Bienvenue de Clairambault was consul from 1839 to 1840 (FCDL 28, Doazan, 3 May 1853, f. 178).

document that urged the governor to examine Georges Bernard's claim.[97] For his part, the English consul Niven Kerr (in post 1843-49) had also taken some action with the governors to have the debts recognised, in particular the sum owed to the English vice-consul of the period, Antonio Vondiziano. After intervening several times with the governor and his Embassy, Kerr finally saw his perseverance rewarded when in 1848 he obtained a *firman* (written order from the Sultan that commanded obedience by the whole world) attributing the creditor with the reimbursement of 87,492 piastres. Georges Bernard, of course, lodged a new claim with Goepp who, in turn, alerted the Ambassador.[98] The consul left his posting without seeing the result of the actions he had undertaken, and in January 1849 his successor Eugène Tastu asked for a *firman* drafted in exactly the same terms as the one that had permitted the settlement of the debt to Vondiziano. He only obtained a letter from the Vizier (in June) to which the Archbishop opposed new arguments to the governor, effectively saying that if the note was recognised as genuine, then there was something odd about it.[99]

Other attempts were made later, by Doazan in May 1853 and June 1856, by Saintine in February 1857, by Darasse in March 1857… which came after the Porte had recognised the claim as valid.[100] It would take several letters from the Vizier for the affair to be examined further after the Archbishop had refused to appear before the *Mejlis*.[101] Finally, there is a letter from another creditor, Alexandre Lapierre, that confirms he had obtained satisfaction also.[102] To settle these debts, the Christian community was asked to contribute, since the various sums had been divided up among the inhabitants in the form of taxes.

It has to be admitted that foreign powers' preservation of their jurisdiction rights in settling disputes, and in ruling on offences and crimes committed by their subjects inside the Ottoman Empire, was perhaps the most important privilege that the Sultan granted.

97 FCDL 27, Fourcade, 27 February 1845, ff. 368-9; 30 April 1845, f. 366; Constantinople, 27 October 1845, f. 385.

98 FCDL 28, 10 February 1848, ff. 5-6.

99 FCDL 28, 14 January 1849, ff. 26-7 and Constantinople, 18 June 1849, f. 78.

100 FCDL 28, Doazan, 3 May 1853 (this letter went back over the entire dossier), ff. 178-83; 20 June 1856, f. 388; Saintine, 9 February 1857, f. 459; Darasse, 28 March 1857, ff. 488-9; Pera, 12 March 1857, f. 483.

101 FCDL 28, Therapia, 18 May 1857, f. 523; Darasse, 15 June 1857, ff. 531-6.

102 FCDL 28, 14 November 1857, ff. 584-5.

3 Religious Protection

Like the protection of national subjects and *protégés*, religious protection covered persons at the same time as their interests and edifices, and especially the freedom of worship for Latins, Maronites and also, much more unofficially, those whose religion was Orthodox (Bonato 2006, 170-94).

3.1 Protection of the Latin Patriarchy

France had five "public establishments" under its protection: the convents of the Franciscans in Nicosia and Larnaca, the Capuchin convent in Larnaca, the Maronite convent in Saint Elias[103] and as from 1848, the convent of the Sisters of Saint Joseph of the Apparition in Larnaca (Béraud 1986-87; 1989).

3.1.1 Reconstruction of the Terra Santa Church of the Convent in Larnaca[104]

When Fourcade took up his post, the Catholic church dedicated to Notre-Dame-des-Grâces was in danger of collapse, and the Franciscan fathers feared the building could not be saved. They thought it preferable to construct a new edifice half-way between Larnaca town and Marina. They even thought of using materials from Larnaca's Capuchin convent (abandoned and gradually destroyed after the death of the last priest in 1791), but this was refused by the Ministry.[105] The Bishop of Fez, a Papal legate in Egypt and Custodian of the Holy Land then on a visit to Cyprus, asked for the aid of the consul in obtaining the *firman* required to carry out the project. But the situation of Christian edifices in Muslim territories was closely watched by the authorities. In principle, restorations had to be identical and built with the same materials. The Ambassador had little optimism, having obtained merely a letter from the Vizier requesting favourable recommendation from the local authorities and ordering

103 CCC L 18, Antoine Vasse de Saint-Ouen (in post 1834-36), 17 September 1835, f. 379. The Maronite convent of Saint-Élie (Prophitis Elias) is situated above the village of Ayia Marina, north-west of Nicosia. Consul Alphonse Bottu wrote that it offered the image of misery (FCDL 26, undated (probably 1833), f. 96).

104 The church and convent were founded in 1596, principally as shelter for Latin pilgrims visiting the Holy Land. In 1724 they were replaced by more spacious buildings (Béraud 1990, 118).

105 Pouradier Duteil-Loizidou 1991, 217 and CCC L 20, 11 July 1842, ff. 257-8; 18 January 1843, f. 274.

an enquiry as to the state of the building and the urgency of the work to be done.[106] But the Catholic community had already acquired the land, and foreign governments participated financially, and as a result Fourcade's approaches, after a year of efforts, were finally crowned with success: the Porte delivered the *firman* that authorised construction of the edifice. To thank the consul, the friars invited him to lay the first stone of the new church, Sainte-Marie Regina Pacis, on 10 July 1842.[107] In 1844 Fourcade stepped in again on behalf of the Terra Santa fathers and made his own modest contribution towards the cost of laying the path that led to the church, [108] which was completed in 1848.

3.1.2 The Convent of the Sisters of Saint Joseph of the Apparition

Fourcade also worked on the founding of this new religious establishment. Placed under the protection of France, it had to contain a French school devoted to the education of young girls – for whom no system of education existed on the island – and a dispensary.[109] The conception of the project involved Paolo Brunoni, an Italian pontifical missionary who would obtain (from the *Association de la Propagation de la foi* in Lyon) the financial and tactical resources necessary to launch an enterprise of this kind (Béraud 1983). On 2 December 1844, four nuns landed in Larnaca, but it was only in May 1845 that Fourcade announced the Convent's creation.[110] Difficulties rapidly arose, however, since Governor Darbaz Aga interrupted work at the insistence of a few Muslim and Greek 'fanatics' upset by the arrival of new Latin priests and clerics who pre-empted some of their prerogatives.[111] Authorisation was again granted a few months later by the newly arrived Governor Hassan Pasha, on condition that Goepp produced a *firman* permitting the construction of the new edifice. The Embassy sent the document a month later.[112] The Sisters took

106 CCC L 20, 19 June 1840, f. 152 and FCDL 27, Constantinople, 16 August 1840, f. 112.

107 CCC L 20, 11 July 1842, f. 257.

108 CCC L 20, 30 June 1844, f. 324.

109 This creation falls into the context of French missionary activity which was very significant in the nineteenth century. The congregation of Saint Joseph of the Apparition was established in 1832 by Émilie de Vialar.

110 CPC LC 1, 4 January 1844, ff. 174-5. The countries that contributed benevolently to this foundation were Austria, Russia, for an unknown sum, France 9,000 Francs, Louis-Napoléon 10,000 Francs (Béraud 1990, 113 and CPC LC 1, 15 May 1845, f. 194).

111 FCDL 27, Goepp, 6 March 1846, ff. 405-7.

112 FCDL 27, 6 March 1846, f. 409 and Constantinople, 6 May 1846, f. 414.

possession of their building in 1848, and five years later a chapel and a dispensary completed the institution. The enterprise was no doubt the first cultural action that France had encouraged in Cyprus in the nineteenth century and this like what happened in the Ottoman Empire, where a great many institutions were created, then managed, by religious orders and sometimes by individuals.

3.1.3 Freedom of Worship

The Terra Santa friars made few appeals to the consuls regarding their freedom to practise their religion. In 1943, the Terra Santa convent in Nicosia made its bells peal, much to the annoyance of the Turks.[113] The Custodian of the convent thought he was threatened and, fearing an assault on the convent, he appealed to Fourcade to intervene. The chancellor sent to the convent reported that matters had been greatly exaggerated, as only one individual had expressed words that could be construed as a menace. So, "l'affaire du clocher" (the bell tower affair) concluded with the governor reprimanding the disruptive element in front of the Custodian Father and the Consulate Chancellor.[114]

Also in Nicosia, this time in 1857, Darasse was summoned to help the Terra Santa priests when the shots fired on Holy Saturday were forbidden by the governor. He had to intervene with the latter to explain that this was an old tradition that was part of the religious service, and that the Capitulations did not allow for its prohibition. In the end, the governor authorised the custom.[115]

3.2 The Protection of Maronites

Cyprus had seen Maronites settle on its territory as early as the eighth century after they had suffered persecution in Syria. While emigration continued until the island was conquered in 1571, it totally ceased afterwards, and under the Venetians the population did not exceed between seven and eight thousand. They survived under Muslim rule but their numbers gradually declined; no doubt one could also mention exile to Mount Lebanon, conversion to Islam, and assimilation by Orthodox Greeks as factors (Papadopoullos 1965, 86-7). In 1847, the community numbered merely 649 souls, living

113 In Cyprus, a peal of bells was "contrary to custom" (Hill 1952, 397). However, a few monasteries and churches possessed one or more bells.

114 FCDL 27, 4 August 1843, ff. 322-3 and CCC L 20, 1st October 1843, f. 294.

115 FCDL 28, 15 April 1857, ff. 495-8.

mainly in five entirely Maronite villages, namely Kormakitis (227), Asomatos (90), Karpasia (56), Ayia Marina (42) and Kambyli (34), with the others being in Larnaca and Marina (100), Nicosia (80) and Limassol (20).[116] The Maronites were the most wretched population on the island, as the Greek bishops had sovereignty over them which had been granted by *firmans* they solicited in the decade 1810-20. Marriages, baptisms, and burials of Maronite Catholics were subject to payments that had to be made to Greek ecclesiastical authorities, otherwise the Maronites' churches were closed. So Maronites were paying twice for the most important acts of their lives – since they were also paying their own ministers – and they were also heavily taxed by the Greeks, who were responsible for allocating the taxes that the Porte collected.

The Maronites would regularly lodge complaints with the consuls of France. In 1840, then again in 1842, Fourcade turned to the Embassy which, while awaiting the result of its approach to the Porte, asked him to permit the population to refuse the Greek prelates' demands for 1842, an authorisation that was renewed for the year 1843.[117] In July the Embassy obtained a *firman* from the Porte that asked the governor for information on the financial burdens imposed on the Maronites. At the end of November, Fourcade received the response given by the Porte: it was not a tax but an appeal for donations, and so it was easy for the Maronites to refuse it.[118] And so Fourcade, with the aid of the French Embassy, succeeded in putting an end to the Greek clergy's pretensions and, in a way, restored the independence of the Maronite Church. Fourcade would pursue his efforts, obtaining the principle of a Maronite seat on the *Mejlis* of Nicosia.[119] After Fourcade left, Théodore Goepp continued to act on behalf of the Maronites thanks to the quality of his relationship with the Pashas.

In 1863, Maricourt visited the Maronite villages, making particular efforts to encourage the inhabitants, for whom he felt great compassion. At Ayia Marina he ordered the rehabilitation of a church, and then lodged an official protest with the governor: the inhabitants of Kormakitis had been requested to pay a coal tax for the troops, whereas the Greeks, who also dealt in coal, were

116 This very precise census reported by Goepp was carried out by abbot Michele Cirilli (the Maronite Vicar-General) in an inquiry requested by the *Propaganda Fide* in Rome. The aim was an exact survey of Roman and Maronite Catholics settled in Cyprus (CCC L 20, 28 June 1847, ff. 94-6).

117 FCDL 27, 1st July 1842, f. 285. The Embassy's despatch dated 15 August 1842 is not in the archive. We learned of it from a reference in a later letter (FCDL 27, Constantinople, 20 February 1843, f. 303).

118 FCDL 27, Constantinople, 24 July 1843, f. 317 and 24 November 1843, f. 326.

119 CPC LC 1, 15 May 1845, f. 195.

not liable to pay the tax at all.[120] As for Colonna Ceccaldi, after a journey in January 1868 he drew the governor's attention to unfair tax allocations with differences between Greek and Maronite villages of the same district.[121]

3.3 The Protection of Orthodox Greeks

By the Küçük Kaynarca Treaty of 1774 Russia had proclaimed itself the protector of Orthodox Christians, but had to abandon its pretensions when the Treaty of Paris was signed in 1856. The consuls of France therefore endorsed the Orthodox Greeks, although unofficially. For example, in 1858 the Greeks in Nicosia approached Darasse as they wished to add a bell to the Phaneromeni church despite the Pasha's opposition. Darasse obtained a letter from the Vizier stating that they could add a bell to all their churches. The Pasha would in fact allow only one, in the Metropolitan church of Nicosia.[122]

3.3.1 The Case of the *Linobambaki*

After Cyprus was conquered in 1571, Christians were treated so badly by the Turks that some had no alternative but to convert to Islam. These 'Turkish' converts secretly professed their Christian religion and were known popularly as *linobambaki*, meaning 'neither linen nor cotton'. A new wave of apostasy took place after the Greek Revolution began in 1821. The situation had become so intolerable that the island saw a significant exodus, to Greece, Italy and sometimes France. Among the Orthodox Greeks and the Maronites who could not go into exile, a certain number, once again, had to recant. Twenty-five years later, with abuses and discrimination having disappeared, a few 'renegades' appealed to Goepp for French protection so that they could become Christians again. There was no guarantee that this kind of interference was possible: Goepp showed he was sympathetic, while avoiding taking a position on the matter; he asked the Ambassador for directives, and received a recommendation to promise nothing and intervene on their behalf only if their lives were in danger.[123] In May 1846, he saved a Greek *raya* woman from the clutches of the Turks: she had been forced to become a Muslim, and after her husband's death she was determined to leave Cyprus with

120 CPC TL 1, 5 November 1863, ff. 379-85.

121 CPC TL 2, 3 February 1868, ff. 157-62.

122 FCDL 28, 19 September 1858 ff. 634-5 and 2 November 1858, ff. 640-1.

123 CCC L 20, 22 December 1845, f. 34.

her three children, who had been baptised in secret. She took refuge in the Consulate, and at night Goepp made sure she safely boarded a Greek ship bound for Smyrna.[124]

Once the Christians' situation improved, the renunciation of one's religious beliefs should have become a thing of the past. Yet in June 1847 Goepp observed that "les séductions et les mauvaises passions" (seductions and unhealthy passions) were giving rise to conversions every year.[125] In November there was a delicate affair to settle when he had to 'save' a Maronite woman who had been blinded by love and renounced her faith before she saw reason. With the Pasha's approval, Goepp had her brought to Larnaca, where she was placed in a French household. Encouraged by his success, the consul decided to rid Cyprus once and for all of apostasy and after he obtained permission from the governor, Christians were forbidden to change their religion and the decision was made public throughout the island.[126]

In December 1863, Maricourt pressed the Governor on behalf of a villager from Ayia Marina. The young man had reverted to his Christian faith, and been ill-treated and forcibly enlisted in the Turkish Army, despite the fact that he had paid the tax exempting him from conscription. The *Mejlis* having confirmed he should be enlisted, the consul wrote to the ambassador, who advised him not to take the matter further, as he should have known that whenever 'occult Christians' returned to their former religion they were unable to escape compulsory enlistment.[127]

Finally, at the request of the Archbishop Sophronios, a unique case was reported to the Embassy in 1868 by Gustave Laffon, then the Consulate's administrator. A Greek from Varosha named Leftéri – he was raised in the home of a *linobambaki* – was married to a Greek woman and had been paying the capitation tax for five years. He was considered a Muslim by the authorities and sent to prison before he was enlisted and circumcised, which aroused the indignation of the Greek population.[128] The fate of the unfortunate Leftéri is unknown, but the drama was the subject of an article above the byline *Impartial* in the French journal *La Turquie* dated Thursday 7 January 1869. However, the French Embassy had not remained inactive and the

124 CCC L 20, 30 May 1846, ff. 53-4.

125 CCC L 20, 28 June 1847, f. 95.

126 CCC L 20, November 1847, ff. 110-11.

127 FCDL 29, 14 December 1863, "particulière" and FCDL 30, Pera, 7 January 1864, "particulière".

128 FCDL 30, 16 December 1868, no. 52.

Porte sent a request to Saïd Pasha for a complete report on the affair, with the recommendation that he should intervene 'with moderation'.[129]

Reference to nineteenth century consular correspondence shows that France's representatives, working with quite remarkable zeal, made attempts to improve the miserable conditions in which Christians of the period were living. They tried also to limit the decline in the Christian population over a period of intense emigration that left agriculture in difficulty with no little impact on trade with Europe.

4 Measures of Public Interest

The new provincial administration had much to do following the great reforms sponsored by the Porte. A few governors, however, sometimes proposed improvements of more local interest; the consuls not only approved but even contributed their assistance at times. In 1841, Talat Efendi took decisions concerning the creation of a hospice in Larnaca and the road improvements because communications and travel between different points of the island was lengthy and tedious.[130] Some of his successors also tried to act for the common good and have greater involvement in their tasks, with a view to taking Cyprus into a new era. A few timid alterations or attempts at improvement were signalled by Maricourt, from whom we learn that the governors had orders to implement more modest measures 'of material order'. First there was Ziya Pasha who, in April 1862, explained to the consul (on his protocol visit to the Seraglio) that the Porte had given assignments to complete three projects: drain the marshes, develop cotton, and destroy locusts. Also desirable were the creation of a regular maritime route between Constantinople and Larnaca; the creation of an annual two-week September fair in Nicosia; and a postal service between Larnaca and Nicosia. Needless

129 FCDL 30, handwritten note from the French Embassy's drogman Perruchot de Longeville dated 12 January 1869.

130 CCC L 19, Fourcade, 28 February 1841, f. 195. Concerning the road, nothing was undertaken. In December 1864 there was still question of establishing a passable road and the new Governor Taïb Pasha arrived with a Polish engineer named Jordan who was a French *protégé* employed by the Porte. To finance the project a special tax was introduced, and the labouring peasants had to work without wages. Finally, lengthy debates were held in the Nicosia *Mejlis* without any decision being reached (CPC TL 2, 16 December 1864, ff. 55-6 and CCC L 22, 20 April 1865, f. 222). In September 1868 the topic of the road was again on the table. A new tax was raised and both foreigners and *protégés* were asked to contribute to it. While Colonna Ceccaldi tended to accept the payment, given the modest sums involved, although other consuls refused, the Ministry was categorical in its refusal: the treaties stated that nationals were exempt from all charges of this nature (CCC L 22, 2 September 1868, f. 386 and 10 September 1868, f. 393).

to say, none of those 'honourable' ideas came to fruition.[131] His own successor Khaled Bey also had 'ideas', in particular to create a market to promote raising cattle in Nicosia. That intention also fell on deaf ears, but Khaled Bey continued to improve sanitary conditions in the bazaars of Larnaca, and also widen streets and pavements. He would also reorganise the harbour, port-service having previously amounted to "une affreuse anarchie" (a frightful anarchy).[132] As for Colonna Ceccaldi, we learn from him that two projects were envisaged by the Ottoman government, namely the organisation of Larnaca into a municipality that would render great services – certain situations were emergencies, like town cleanliness, water distribution, wharf construction and landings – and the creation of an agricultural credit bank (agriculture was being devoured by money-lenders with interest rates of between 18% and 36%). The context for the municipality was chaos, and it was the same for the farmers' credit bank, which had no capital of its own. Developments came in a 'Turkish' manner and the result was what was most feared: 600,000 piastres went towards offsetting administration costs. The consul would conclude: [133]

> En réalité, les réformes progressistes de la Turquie se transforment en mesures fiscales mais n'aboutissent aucunement.

Some of the public interest measures were the subject of information notes sent to the Embassy and Ministry, in particular because the consuls had taken an active part in their introduction. Mostly they concerned the war against locusts, creating quarantine hospitals (the 'lazarets'), draining marshland, and bringing clean water to Larnaca and Marina.

4.1 Locusts

These were a recurrent theme in consular correspondence, as it was thought at the time that swarms of desert locusts were brought by winds blowing in from Egypt and Syria. In actual fact, the first English reports indicated that those insects were indigenous. Locusts lay their eggs in isolated places whose access is difficult, and from May to June each female is capable of laying a hundred eggs, which

131 CPC TL 1, 24 April 1862, f. 284 and CPC TL 1, 12 May 1862, ff. 293-4.

132 CPC TL 2, 5 October 1864, ff. 29-30.

133 "In reality, the progressive reforms of Turkey are being transformed into fiscal measures but with absolutely no outcome" (CCC L 22, 28 June 1869, ff. 436-9; CPC TL 2, 28 June 69, f. 196; FCDL 30, 9 June 1869, no. 61).

hatch in February or March the following year.[134] In 1842, the Turkish government, which until then had refused to lead the struggle, raised a tax in kind of 600,000 kg of locust eggs. The Archbishop of Nicosia asked the consuls and their nationals to set the example.[135] Yet the measure never met much success with peasants and in 1844, merely 120,000 kilos had been registered, against the 500,000 that were supposed to be gathered (Fourcade, Bonato 2000, 179). In 1847, Goepp made a special commitment to the egg-hunt and urged the French to take part, setting the example himself; the governor meanwhile finally took steps of his own and demanded a tax payable in a number of insect-eggs in proportion to the size of the taxpayer's fortunes. The following year he introduced a subscription to purchase eggs, weigh them in public (4,000 tonnes), and throw them into the sea.[136] In 1856, Doazan reported that the governor led a successful campaign of 40 days against the locusts, writing:[137]

> On pourra démentir l'assurance des ulémas disant que Dieu seul peut enlever les fléaux qu'il envoie aux peuples pour les châties.

By 1860, unfortunately, nothing was resolved; the governor had indeed set up commissions to destroy the locusts, but nothing worked due to the inertia of an administration: it was just when the peasants went to work in the fields – with insects already in the air because it was too late – that they were given orders to collect the eggs. And if they could not collect them, they had to pay. Darasse wondered, "Ils paient et que devient l'argent?" (They are paying, but what has become of the money?).[138] Maricourt was particularly prolix on this subject.[139] By 1862 no decision had been taken, but that year an ingenious system perfected and experimented by Richard Mattei (the largest landed proprietor in Cyprus and Prussian vice-consul) revealed itself to be efficient although extremely expensive, because it made too many traps necessary. Other measures were clearly fanciful, like the one that consisted in using water from Konya, whose miraculous properties were said to attract birds that would then exterminate the locusts… In April 1863, the "fortes têtes du medjilis"

134 See for example: Gordon-Cumming, 1883 and Burke 1888.

135 CCC L 19, Fourcade, 28 February 1842, f. 246.

136 CCC L 20, 6 March 1847, f. 79; November 1847, f. 111 and 8 January 1848, f. 118.

137 "One is able to deny the assurances of the Ulemas who say that God alone can take away the plagues he sends down on the people to punish them" (FCDL 28, 17 May 1856, f. 387).

138 CCC L 21, 19 July 1860, ff. 269-70.

139 CPC TL 1, 24 April 1862, f. 286; 12 May 1862, ff. 291-2; 10 April 1863, f. 350; 2 May 1863, ff. 354-5.

(strong-heads of the *Mejlis*) were recommending methods that were anything but useful – "la poudre, le feu et l'eau bouillante" (powder, fire and boiling water) – while Governor Tevfik Pasha was acting more pragmatically by raising another locust-egg tax. But he, too, ordered them to be thrown into the sea, and the currents washed them back onto beaches where the insects hatched and invaded Marina… Still in 1863, in May the new Governor Khaled Bey arrived, saying that he too had been charged with ridding the country of locusts. But his ideas were aberrations, and it was again question of working miracles with water, this time from Mecca:[140]

> Il s'agit seulement de faire boire aux corbeaux le liquide sacré. Dès qu'ils en auront goûté, ces oiseaux inspirés d'en haut, ne manqueront pas de dévorer jusqu'au dernier les insectes dont il a plu au Prophète d'infester cette malheureuse île.

In 1867, Governor Saïd Pasha, aided by the Archbishop, raised a tax of one kg of eggs per taxpayer and sent an expedition numbering 1,800 men into the fields, which ensured a good harvest. A few years later (1871) the insects seemed to have disappeared, but their extermination was in appearance only. It was not until 1883 that the English administration decided it was better to destroy live locusts rather than hunt their eggs.

4.2 Quarantines and Lazarets

In public health matters the consul had an informatory role of prime importance. Above all he had a duty to alert ship commanders to sanitary instructions and the rights that were payable, not forgetting his obligation to extensively control the application of the laws that governed his nation's vessels. He closely followed the quarantine rules so that vessels of all nations would submit to the same rules and benefit from the same derogations.

In the course of the first half of the nineteenth century, the island's inhabitants had to face several epidemics of plague (1800-01, 1813, 1832, 1835), smallpox (1849) and cholera (1831 and 1865) that ships had imported from coasts to the west (Panzac 1996). In 1827 quarantine was organised in Cyprus at the instigation of Consul Edmond Méchain (in post 1817-29) who continuously used his influence

140 "It is only a matter of making the crows drink the holy liquid. As soon as they have tasted it, these birds with inspiration from on high will not fail to devour every last one of the insects with which it has pleased the Prophet to infect this wretched island" (CPC TL 1, 2 May 1863, f. 355).

to impose basic health measures.[141] Funds were collected to enable this new institution to operate, through a voluntary subscription to which the Europeans and the ship captains contributed. After an aborted attempt in 1832, it was finally in 1835 that the Greek, Turkish and French communities created a lazaret at their own expense. The quarantine service began in close collaboration with the French consuls: sanitary rules were laid down; a director was appointed; and thereafter the quarantines were organised, with all suspect vessels obliged to anchor in Larnaca. Agencies were set up in Limassol and Famagusta, but Kyrenia, which concentrated relations with Caramania, was not concerned (for reasons unknown.)

Because the consuls had responsibilities regarding the health situation, they took the liberty to intervene in the institution's administration. In 1855 the sanitary measures adopted by the Lazaret were in Doazan's opinion insufficient. Vessels arriving from an Egypt stricken by cholera were obliged to quarantine for seven days beginning on the date of the patent, not from the date of departure until free navigation in Larnaca, which reduced the quarantine to five days. Moreover, the latest reorganisation had abolished the director's post at Limassol and so ships berthed there without going into quarantine. The Embassy transmitted the information to the High Council for Health in Constantinople, and orders were issued: masters of vessels could not take their patent until leaving port, and the director of the Port of Limassol would be replaced by an official presenting guarantees of the capabilities the post required.[142] In 1865 it was the entire Consular Corps that obtained an extension of the quarantine duration (ten days instead of five, depending on the port of origin), after the inhabitants had sent delegations to the consuls and local authorities. The Embassy, however, disapproved of the measure, as the doctors in charge of the quarantine had instructions that were to be respected to the letter unless referred to the administration on which they depended. Charles de Vienne was invited to avoid actions of this kind and to use his influence to make his colleagues understand a particular incompatibility: steps like those are not the responsibility of the Consular Corps.[143]

Finally, we can note the petition dated 23 June 1866 that was addressed to the Consular Corps in Larnaca by European residents and *protégés* (66 persons) demanding that the quarantine be moved some distance away: the walls of its buildings touched the city and

141 CCC L 16, 3 March 1827, f. 122.

142 FCDL 28, 10 July 1855, ff. 342-3 and Therapia, 7 August 1855, f. 341 (wrongly classified).

143 FCDL 30, 13 November 1865, no. 150; 26 November 1865, no. 151 and Pera, 9 December 1865, no. 88.

represented a danger to public health. The petition also demanded that, in the event of an emergency, the director of the institution would be authorised to temporarily quarantine all travellers arriving from countries that were suspect, until such time as the director received his instructions. The reason being that orders took time to arrive, due to the conditions of navigation and the unreliable nature of communications with Constantinople.[144] It results from the above examples that a consul's powers in health matters were of prime importance, and that their interventions were efficient.

4.3 'Cyprus Fevers' and the Draining of Marshland

There was only one endemic disease on the island referred to as 'fever' (actually malaria), and from which most westerners suffered after an infection due to the presence of marshes close to Larnaca, Limassol and Famagusta. Health officials were almost powerless, despite realising there was a link between the poor quality of the air in the marshes and sickness in the population. They understood also that climatic conditions played a role and that foreigners were most affected, but they were unaware that mosquitoes were hosts to a parasite (Alphonse Laveran would discover that in 1880, and Ronald Ross would prove it in 1897). As early as the 1830's, Consul Bottu had attempted, in vain, to convince authorities to drain marshland efficiently, but his efforts were fruitless because the governors refused to take the matter seriously (Bergia 1997, 333). On 6 July 1863, Maricourt sent a missive relating to "une souscription pour le dessèchement de deux marais à Larnaca" (A subscription for the drainage of two marshes in Larnaca), but on 6 December, by another letter, he gave reasons that "ont empêché le consul d'y souscrire" (prevented the consul from subscribing to it). Those letters addressed to the *Direction des Fonds* are unfortunately untraceable today. Finally, it was not until 1875 that a first marsh near Larnaca was dried up at the request of the French consul Baron Pierre Alfred Dubreuil, thanks to the action of Governor Aziz Pasha.[145]

4.4 The Waters of Larnaca

In 1855 Doazan raised the question of supplying Larnaca with water. He was no doubt thinking of the problem posed by ships that berthed to replenish their supplies of fresh water. The city had been connected

144 FCDL 30, Colonna Ceccaldi, 24 June 1866, no. 11.

145 CPC TL 2, 4 July 1875, f. 239.

to several springs since 1740, when Békir Pasha caused an aqueduct to be built, but it had never been maintained properly and by now it was in ruins, leaving Larnaca with no water fit to drink. Doazan, "sur les instances des pauvres gens de ce pays" (at the insistence of the poor people of this country), formed a fund-raising commission in Larnaca and Nicosia and handed the treasurer 90,000 piastres, a sum to which he largely contributed. Doazan would relate how work was progressing:[146]

> Le 9 juillet, cent ouvriers se trouvaient réunis à six kilomètres de Larnaca pour commencer les réparations que le défaut d'architecte m'imposait la charge de diriger. Pour m'acquitter de cette mission, je me rendais sur les lieux, presque tous les jours à 3 heures du matin et ne rentrais qu'à onze heures et midi par une chaleur de 40 degrés. Afin de ménager les fonds insuffisants, je dus appeler la population à venir tous les dimanches, ouvrir les canaux ; mon appel fut toujours entendu ; car j'ai compté jusqu'à 1200 personnes chaque fois. Après sept mois d'un travail assidu, j'ai eu la satisfaction de ramener une eau claire et limpide dans nos deux villes, jusqu'à la quarantaine bâtie sur le rivage où les bâtiments peuvent maintenant s'approvisionner facilement.

For his action – he was also responsible for the construction of a fountain in Marina – Doazan was awarded a decoration with the medal Medjidié fourth Class. When he received his posting to Panama in July 1856, he regretted he had been unable to conduct "des travaux d'utilité publique" (works of public interest) satisfactorily, as his efforts were in the interest of not only Cyprus but also shipping.[147] Finally, we can note that in 1859 Darasse obtained a letter from the Vizier with instructions to allow vessels to take on water without subjecting them to any kind of tax.[148] All the same, the works undertaken by Doazan did not suffice: in 1863 Maricourt wrote that the aqueduct was "dégradé et mis à découvert" (impaired and exposed).[149]

146 "On July 9, one hundred labourers found themselves gathered six kilometres from Larnaca to begin the repairs that the failings of the architect gave me the responsibility to conduct. To perform this task, I went out to the site almost every day at three o'clock in the morning, returning only at half past eleven in a heat of forty degrees. To use the insufficient funds sparingly, I was obliged to appeal to the population to come out every Sunday to open the channels; my appeal was always heard; for I counted up to 1200 persons each time. After seven months of assiduous labour I had the satisfaction of bringing clear and limpid water back to our two cities as far as the quarantine built on the shore where the buildings can now be supplied with ease" (FCDL 28, 11 June 1855, ff. 338-9).

147 FCDL 28, 1st July 1856, f. 399.

148 FCDL 29, 4 March 1859, f. 2.

149 CCC L 22, 18 April 1863, f. 82.

4.5 The Customs Landing

Maricourt believed it was his duty to intervene when facing the problem of the Customs landing. On several occasions he had mentioned that the site where inspections were carried out was less than convenient and rather distant from the place where passengers and goods arrived at the wharf. In June 1863, a note from the General Administration for Indirect Taxation indicated that Customs should designate a site devoted to inspection of passengers' personal effects. There were rumours that it would be placed at the Customs landing, which seemed inadequate to the consul. He proposed that the inspections should take place closer to the centre of Larnaca, and even voiced the idea of moving Customs. In June the following year, still no decision had been taken. Maricourt solicited the Ambassador, who turned to the Director General of Customs in Constantinople, who then questioned the Director of Customs in Larnaca… Following the same path in reverse, the response reached Maricourt in August: the current building was totally adapted to inspections by officials and the site that had been proposed was too far away. The Ambassador concluded:[150]

> Je ne puis donc que vous inviter à laisser tomber cette affaire.

5 Consuls and Archaeology

The nineteenth century was one of rivalry between the great powers, and Cyprus did not escape being influenced by the agitation – military, political and economic – that affected the east of the Mediterranean. But not only that. It saw the broad movement of interest for the Orient that had excited the curiosity of Europeans ever since the Era of the great Discoveries. For reasons of prestige, western nations desired to play a role in the discovery of the Hellenic and Oriental civilisations: mass education was encouraged, museums were founded, and exhibitions were organised on a regular basis. In that context of European competition, acquiring antiques designed to enhance the collections of the great museums saw the French State vying with England, Prussia and Italy for domination. Until then, archaeological activity on the island of Cyprus had been relatively marginal, with peasants proposing their finds in the fields to antique-dealers, the representatives of foreign nations, and travellers.

Several consuls were actively engaged in Cypriot archaeology. In 1845, Dagobert Fourcade and Théodore Goepp lent assistance to the

150 "I can therefore only invite you to drop the matter" (FCDL 29, 19 June 1863, no. 62 and Therapia, 13 July 1864, no. 62; 20 August 1864, no. 65).

historian Louis de Mas Latrie in the course of digs – albeit summary – that he caused to be executed in Dali (the ancient city of Idalion), from which he brought back a dozen sculptures or fragments of sculptures that are today kept in the Cabinet des Médailles in Paris (Amandry, Hermary, Masson 1987).

Louis de Maricourt, in the company of his brother Charles, was the first European official to search for Cypriot antiques for his own pleasure, and not for profit. It was said that in his family's tradition, when taking an evening walk in the northerly part of the hilly country bordering Larnaca's Salt Lake from north to south, he and his brother would unearth little terracotta heads, and it was this that encouraged them to hire workers for digs on a larger scale (Bonato 2010b, 115-17). The 'finds' belonged to a deposit of terracotta objects that revealed the presence of a sanctuary for worshippers of the female divinity traditionally called *Artemis Paralia* (Maillard 2023). The Maricourt collection, which was considerable according to his contemporaries, represented only a tiny part of what had to be the ex-voto of the sanctuary, which was later entirely emptied by pillagers. The consul's collection was divided amongst his heirs, and only some thirty fragments were recovered in 1898 from one of Maricourt's sons. Today they are kept at the Louvre Museum in Paris.

As a matter of prestige, the consul wanted also to play a role in removing the *Vase d'Amathonte*, a colossal vase like a limestone monolith over six feet high and ten feet in diameter. It lay in the courtyard of the Aphrodite sanctuary at the summit of the Acropolis of Amathonte. In 1862, Melchior de Vogüé took possession of it in the name of France while heading an archaeological mission considered as the follow-up to Ernest Renan's *Mission de Phénicie*.[151] In March 1865, Maricourt notified the Ministry that the British vice-consul, Horace P. White, had caused the demolition of the wall surrounding the vase so that he could examine it. This made it necessary for France to quickly take steps to avoid seeing the vase displayed at the British Museum! A young architect named Edmond Duthoit – he had accompanied Vogüé in 1862 – was assigned by France's Ministre de la Maison de l'Empereur et des Beaux Arts to organise transport for the vase. The Ministry of the Navy ordered a rear-admiral named d'Aboville to remove the vase, and in June he appeared in Larnaca Bay aboard his vessel *La Magicienne*. Maricourt, who did not know that Duthoit had arrived, took matters into his own hands and on June 24 he went to Amathonte "avec tout le consulat" aboard the naval vessel. The removal was a failure because the vase turned out to be much too heavy, and would have compromised the stability of the ship. Early in September, the Ministry of the Navy advised Charles de

151 On *Mission de Vogüé*, see Bonato, Dondin-Payre 2017.

Vienne, the acting consul after Maricourt had died of cholera only a month previously, that two vessels had orders to meet up in Limassol. Transporting the vase to the seashore was a remarkable exploit for the period (Bonato 2010b, 117-19); and the *Vase d'Amathonte* finally went on display inside the Louvre Museum on 16 July 1866.

Meanwhile, in July 1865, Maricourt had alerted Duthoit to the discovery near Limassol of headstone slabs with Latin and French inscriptions that dated from the thirteenth century.[152] The Turks had plans to destroy them. Duthoit went to Limassol at the end of August, making drawings of the stones, and they turned out to belong to a small Christian church located in Polemidhia. Duthoit recommended to the Foreign Affairs Ministry that they be removed. Recovering the slabs was hindered by the action of the governor, and Charles de Vienne had to request for a letter from the Vizier to be sent to the Embassy.[153] The slabs are today preserved in Paris at the Cluny Museum and at the Louvre Museum.

Tiburce Colonna Ceccaldi, Maricourt's successor, organised transport to France for numerous artefacts as part of his attributions as Consul (Bonato 2018). Apart from the Limassol tombstones, there was a cannon from the reign of François I^{er} that was situated on the ramparts of Famagusta, and also numerous objects discovered by Edmond Duthoit in July 1865 at Golgoi.[154] Today they are in the Louvre Museum. During his posting in Cyprus, Ceccaldi threw himself into the adventure of archaeology on his own behalf (Bonato 2019). In the middle of 1866, in the company of his brother Georges, he began digs on the outskirts of Larnaca and in the region of Salines. In 1867 more commercial reasons led him to take an interest in Dali, just when the peasants, encouraged by the increasingly higher prices offered by the consuls, had given great impetus to excavations, and many had entirely abandoned working in the fields as a much less lucrative occupation. In 1867 Ceccaldi's first campaign focused on the site's two acropolises, *Mouti tou Arvili* and *Ambelliri*. The most important object recovered was a limestone statue of a woman representing Aphrodite or a Ptolemaic princess in the guise of the goddess, an offering in the sanctuary dating from the third century BC. In January 1868, excavations began in the necropolises spread around the site of Idalion, and tombs were opened on a large scale by the peasants. Several hundred were searched under orders from Colonna Ceccaldi, and provided him with numerous vases, terracotta objects and ceramics, glassware, jewels, lamps and other bronze artefacts. In their

152 See Duthoit's correspondence in Bonato, Dondin-Payre 2017, 316-17 and 322-3.

153 FCDL 30, 29 November 1865, no. 153; 12 January 1866, no. 157 and Pera, 21 December 1865, no. 85; 12 January 1866; 14 January 1866, no. 87.

154 On Duthoit's mission in Cyprus, see Bonato 2001.

writings the Colonna Ceccaldi brothers mention several sites where digs were carried out or where articles they purchased originated, notably Trikomo where two large-sized statues were discovered: the *Dame de Trikomo*, representation of the Great Goddess of Cyprus dating from the middle of the sixth century BC, in a purely Cypriot style, and a goddess with a turreted crown, also representing the Great Goddess of Cyprus and dating from the second half of the fourth century BC. Today the 'Colonna Ceccaldi Collection' bought by the Louvre in several lots between 1869 and 1872 contains 381 items (32 stone sculptures, 178 terracotta and 99 vases).

Amathonte, Idalion, Salines… all of them names that bring to mind French archaeological research in Cyprus, for which the year 1862 marked the true beginning with the arrival of the first State-financed mission, a corollary of the renaissance of territorial conquest in the sciences and increasing demand from western museums. But as interesting as they were, French activities in the early 1860s were merely the first stages of the harvests reaped in the decade 1865-75, when in the Ottoman Empire a *firman* only was necessary to obtain authorisation for a dig, but also to carry away the antiques discovered as a result (the law on antiques was promulgated in 1874). During those ten years, which were dominated by the personality of United States Consul Luigi Palma di Cesnola, there were scenes of tombs being pillaged in a frenzy, encouraged by the development of the antiques market. As a result, thousands of Cypriot antiques were brought to light and dispersed throughout the world.

6 Conclusion

The years 1840-70 were a period of transition, during which the Ottoman Empire went through an intensive reorganisation of its administration. In Cyprus, the initiatives taken as early as 1830 seemed confused to say the least, and putting them into effect was extremely complicated. The governors had instructions to implement the reforms desired by the Sultan, and it was recommended that the consuls provide assistance. In 1856 Doazan received orders from the Embassy: he was to report the effect produced by the terms of the *Hatt-i-humayun* and give his opinion concerning the accomplishment of some of its improvements.[155] Opposition was total: the governor, the *kadi* and the *ulemas*, the bishops, the Europeans and the Levantines, all of them lost their privileges. Only the *rayas* seemed to rejoice but they were not daring enough to show it, one of the problems being that the evidence of Christians had never been admissible.

155 FCDL 28, 2 April 1856, ff. 374-85.

Doazan's main recommendation was to make the religious element of the institutions disappear, with the *Mejlis* composed of elected members, half of them Muslims and the other half Greeks (including one Maronite). Its president would remain a Turk, and be appointed by the executive body. The most astonishing proposal was to install a European auditor with each governor. Doazan, aware that none of his proposals was really feasible, closed with this observation:[156]

> Le pays comprend parfaitement qu'il n'est pas encore complètement préparé pour les institutions qu'il vient de recevoir et que le Hat ne pourra jamais être appliqué sans l'intervention des Européens.

Indeed, for lack of means and energy, and due to great resistance on the part of the primates and officials, the impact of the reforms was even less than moderate.

Between 1840 and 1865, the place that France occupied in Cyprus was preeminent, and recognised by the population and foreign officials alike. And the consuls would underline this. In 1861, when the paper currency *kaime* was distributed, Du Tour was questioned 'by many Greek and Turkish persons' who wished to be sure that they had to pay that tax.[157] Certain requests were of a more personal nature, and exiled Muslims in particular sought to obtain the French Embassy's mediation with the Porte. In 1857, Darasse forwarded a grievance from the *muschir* (general-in-chief), Ahmed Pasha, who hoped for a reprieve, and in 1866 Charles de Vienne sent the grievance of the former *kaimakam* (governor of a province) of Jeddah.[158] Darasse would even state that the Turks came to his home to complain, imploring his support, like Ariff Effendi, a member of the *Mejlis* in Nicosia who wished to be appointed as the *malmudir* (director of finance), while others solicited the title of *kavas* to benefit from French protection.[159] The Embassy, however, did not want to be involved in such domestic matters; if it did intervene, it would only be unofficially, and with no guarantee of success.

In April 1864, Maricourt began alerting his superiors to the decline of France's position to England's benefit. And it was indeed during that period that the British became increasingly visible: naval vessels, but also merchant ships began appearing more and more

156 "The country perfectly understands that it is not yet entirely prepared for the institutions that it has just received, and that the Hat can never be put into effect without the intervention of the Europeans" (FCDL 28, 2 April 1856, f. 382).

157 FCDL 29, 20 October 1861, f. 246.

158 FCDL 28, Darasse, 23 November 1857, ff. 571-4 and FCDL 30, Vienne, 8 January 1866, no. 155.

159 FCDL 28, 16 April 1858, f. 598; 23 June 1860, ff. 90-3.

often in the bay at Larnaca. And in January 1865, Maricourt observed with dismay that French trade for the year 1864 had been bested by English commerce due to the disenchantment of France's merchant navy.[160] Other warning signs could be seen, like the appointment in 1863 as the director of the Larnaca branch of the Imperial Ottoman Bank of Robert Hamilton Lang (landowner who served on several occasions as British vice-consul and full consul in 1871 but only for a few months). Maricourt's impressions were confirmed by a bitter Colonna Ceccaldi in 1868, who said the nation was "en pleine décadence" (in full decline) and that:[161]

> Elle ne comporte plus qu'un ou deux commissionnaires, quelques employés et petits marchands, et deux ou trois agriculteurs, les autres sont en proie aux expédients, ont leurs terres hypothéquées ou sont à la veille de les vendre.

Like most of his predecessors, he drafted a detailed report on the deplorable situation in Cyprus to try and create greater Ministry interest in his circumscription which, if it was well managed, would be potentially a 'possession' of prime importance.[162] Darasse had already stated the Greeks were ready to accept a foreign power and that they preferred France,[163] and Maricourt was writing that Cyprus could again become a "grenier d'abondance, la perle de l'Orient" (a granary of abundance, the pearl of the Orient).[164] Above all, Colonna Ceccaldi was underlining the fact that Cyprus should not 'escape' action by France, for under a better administration it would again be:[165]

> Une position magnifique, une terre de promission, une des plus riches contrées de l'Orient.

He exposed what should be put into effect: 1. To divide taxes equitably between Constantinople (salt flats' production, Customs revenue, poll tax) and the island (tithe, various other contributions). These would serve public utilities and also the Army and justice. 2. To

160 CPC L 2, 29 April 1864, ff. 13-15; CCC L 22, 25 January 1865, ff. 208-9.

161 "It now has but one or two shipping agents, a few employees and small merchants, and two or three farmers; the others are prey to expedients, with their lands mortgaged, or else they will sell them tomorrow" (CCC L 22, 23 March 1868, no. 35, f. 370).

162 CCC L 22, 6 July 1867, ff. 307-25.

163 FCDL 29, 23 June 1860 f. 93.

164 CCC L 22, 20 April 1865, f. 225.

165 "A magnificent position, a promised land, one of the richest countries of the Orient" (FCDL 30, copy of letter to Paris, 2 April 1867, no. 14, not kept at La Courneuve, not folioed).

reform the courts. 3. To accomplish the most urgent infrastructures (the irrigation system, the roads and ports). 4. To endow public education. 5. And finally, to destroy the locusts, "le plus grand fléau du pays… après le Gouvernement turc" (the greatest plague of the country… after the Turkish government). Tiburce Colonna Ceccaldi considered himself to be 'a conscientious agent' whose duty was to seek a solution to the Oriental Question, no less, which to him could be summarised as:[166]

> Dans l'autonomie progressive des populations de races diverses que renferme l'Empire ottoman.

He ended by recommending that those measures should be entrusted to a new man, but one who would be difficult to find in Turkey. He therefore proposed to:[167]

> Rechercher les moyens de séparer sans secousse violente Chypre non de l'Empire Ottoman mais de l'administration de Constantinople et d'indiquer la possibilité d'y établir un état de choses normal, conforme à la fois aux intérêts généraux de l'Europe et aux besoins, aux droits légitimes du pays.

His words anticipated the signature on 7 July 1878 of a *firman* ratifying the *Cyprus Convention* which had granted England administrative control over the island. In another report, and comforted by his military experience, Colonna Ceccaldi drew up the list of the island's fortresses in case of "éventualités non irréalisables" (non-unfeasible eventualities).[168] He tarried on the subject of Famagusta, which could be taken very easily because its weaponry was out of order. And he would even go so far as to propose taking Cyprus if an opportunity for France presented itself in the Orient!

From the study of their correspondence, an abundant and easily obtainable source, it becomes obvious that the consuls were the cornerstone of the French presence in Cyprus: they were at the centre of a network, and were unavoidable intermediaries between Ministry, Embassy, colony, French travellers, *protégés*, island authorities, foreign colleagues, representatives of the Church and even the

166 "Being in the progressive autonomy of the populations of various races enclosed within the Ottoman Empire" (CCC L 22, 6 July 1867, f. 309).

167 "Search for the means to separate Cyprus without a violent shake, not from the Ottoman Empire but from the administration of Constantinople, and indicate the possibility of establishing there a normal state of things, conforming at once to the general interests of Europe, and to the needs, the legitimate rights, of the country" (CCC L 22, 6 July 1867, f. 325).

168 CPC TL 2, 10 May 1867, ff. 125-30.

population. The Capitulations had granted them an exceptional power, and everything – isolation, slowness of communications, rivalries between European states, the sometimes anarchic situation of their circumscription – incited the consuls to play a more important role, one that over the centuries had largely overtaken its initial brief to defend French trade and navigation in foreign waters. The role grew with the constant expansion of commercial relations, and their freedom from the jurisdiction of their territory of residence allowed the consuls to combine those economic functions with activities in legal and political spheres. For confirmation, one only needs to consult the *Guide pratique des consulats* (published in 1851): it contains no fewer than 780 pages.

The consuls' direct contacts with governors and high officials of the Empire were continual, courteous and good, and consuls were requested to be conciliatory and show moderation. Those official relations allowed them to be watchful over the privileges granted by treaty, and also enabled them to ensure that the need for reforms was still a concern of the country's authorities, as well as those improvements that were in the population's general interest. And still they had to preserve harmony with France. They did that so well that certain governors would ask for advice, and assistance, from the consuls, to the point where they would take no decision without consulting them, or at least, that is what Doazan and Maricourt said of Osman Pasha and Khalet Bey.[169] But it was not always that way, and certain pashas were very guarded over rescinding privileges granted to foreigners in the Levant with a disregard for the country's customs and traditions, often contrary to regulations and treaties.

Du Tour depicted Khairoula Pasha as a governor attached to creating all kinds of difficulties, delays and denials of justice for the French, who were treated more poorly than the *rayas*.[170] And Maricourt had to resort to "un langage plein d'indignation et de menaces" (language filled with indignation and threats) to obtain what he wished when talking to Tevfik Pasha.[171] When obstacles prevented the representatives of France from exercising their prerogatives correctly, they had the Embassy intervene officially with the Porte so that the latter would take action with the local authorities; there would then be a succession of letters from the Vizier to obtain, among other things, the removal of local officials. The examples are numerous: Doazan and Campbell, the English consul, caused the revocation of the Limassol *kadi*, Mehemet effendi, "l'ennemi

169 FCDL 28, Doazan, 1st December 1855, f. 364 and Maricourt, CPC L 2, 5 October 1864, f. 30.

170 FCDL 29, 14 February 1862, f. 279.

171 CCC L 22, 16 March 1863, f. 66.

acharné des Européens" (the bitter enemy of the Europeans), for his insulting words against the Allies;[172] in December 1860, Du Tour had the director removed from the quarantine after he had allowed himself some vexatious manoeuvres in verifying the health permits of ships of the Imperial Navy;[173] and Maricourt obtained the removal of the interim *mudir* of Larnaca, Kuffi effendi, who inspired little confidence, and caused another to be appointed, Mustapha effendi, a man who was:[174]

> Honnête, actif, énergique et très disposé à ne recevoir ses inspirations que du Consulat de France.

While the consuls obtained many concessions, there was one request that was never granted, and that was the transfer of the Nicosia government to Larnaca, where the island's activities were located. It was requested repeatedly, particularly by Doazan, but the Sublime Porte always maintained that there was no seraglio in the Cyprus *Échelle*.[175]

On rare occasions, the consuls acted in lieu of the Ottoman authorities. In 1860, after the events in Lebanon, a brig flying the Ottoman flag and carrying Druze, Arabs and other "musulmans de la pire espèce" (Muslims of the worst kind), all coming from Egypt, attempted to land its cargo after being driven back from Rhodes by an English corvette. Darasse took charge of the matter:[176]

> Les autorités agissaient d'abord mollement mais elles ont dû promptement se mettre à mes ordres, et je puis dire sous mes ordres. La cargaison est restée à bord, des vivres ont été embarquées par mes soins et à mes frais et j'ai suivi la nuit le brick voguant vers Beyrouth afin que les passagers ne débarquassent pas sur quelque autre point du littoral.

As for Du Tour, he took pride in maintaining order in Larnaca and reorganising the *Mejlis* with England's vice-consul, while the

172 FCDL 28, 1st December 1855, ff. 364-5.

173 FCDL 29, 19 September 1861, f. 232; 18 December 1861, f. 267; Therapia, 9 October 1861, f. 235; Pera, 20 January 1862, f. 271.

174 "Honest, active, energetic and highly disposed to receive his inspirations only from the Consulate of France" (CCC L 22, 21 August 1863, f. 143).

175 FCDL 28, 24 January 1855, f. 308 and Pera, 12 February 1855, f. 310.

176 "The authorities acted with slackness at first, but they had to submit promptly to my instructions, and do so, I might say, by my order. The cargo remained on board; victuals were taken on as I ensured, and at my expense; and at night I followed the brig sailing to Beirut, so that its passengers did not disembark at any other point of the coast whatever" (FCDL, 29, 20 August 1860, ff. 117-18).

governor remained locked away in his harem.[177] Rarely did consuls exceed their prerogatives, in the belief that they were acting for the best, like Maricourt with the *kaime* and Vienne with the lazaret, and their actions earned them the sharp reproach of the minister and the ambassador.

So, it is surprising that officials of foreign powers were able to interfere in purely domestic affairs within the Ottoman administration, and do so with success. How can one explain that ascendancy, and to what might it be really attributed? Had the governors received instructions to please the representatives of France and England, who were their allies in the Crimean War, and whose influence at the heart of the Empire was considerable? Was it due to the governors' incompetence? Unless it was simply weakness on their part. It mattered little to yield over minor questions, given the importance of their powers of conviction in obtaining the support of officials, and so the acceptance of the great reforms that called into question the privileges granted to foreigners. Whatever the answers, the consuls, thanks to their freedom of action, genuinely countered the powers-that-be in Cyprus and played an important role in the radical transformation that took place in this province of the Ottoman Empire. And that is indeed what the study of their correspondence reveals.

Glossary

In brackets is the spelling used by the consuls in their correspondence.

Barataire: the holder of a *berat* or patent. The term is used in the French archives.
Berat: official document issued by the Porte at the request of ambassadors so that they might employ a *raya* subject in their service.
Ferik (*Férik*): the lieutenant-general or general of a military unit.
Firman: a written order from the Sultan that commanded obedience by the whole world.
Kadi (*cadi*): the Muslim judge charged with applying Canon Law in his district (*kaza*).
Kaimakam (*caïmacam*): a lieutenant who serves as a replacement. In the nineteenth century: a governor of a province.
Kaime: paper currency. An interest-bearing treasury bond that was redeemable at a fixed date and was accepted as payment by public funds.
Kavas (*cavas*): a guard of honour granted by the local authority. The presence of *kavas*, who were paid and lodged by the consuls, signalled that the persons they accompanied had the protection of the state.
Kaza: the district whose seat was occupied by the *kadi*, a canon law judge.
Khatt-i cherîf: an imperial charter.
Malmudir: a director of finance.
Mazbata: minutes of meeting session.

177 CCC L 21, 15 October 1861, f. 329.

Mejlis (*Medjilis*): the council.
Mejlis-i Kebir (*Medjilis Kebir*): the Grand Council or High Council of the island located in Nicosia. Presided by the governor it was the institution relied on to conduct business.
Mekeme (*mékémé*): Ottoman tribunal presided by the kadi.
Mudir: the chief of a district (*kaza*).
Muschir: a general-in-chief.
Raya: a non-Muslim subject who was liable to pay tax to the Sultan. *Raya* taxpayers were typically peasants or manual workers.
Teskere (*teskéré*): a document or certificate.
Tombrouk agassi: the chief of police.
Ulema: Muslim theologian.
Zaptie (*zaptié*): a 'policeman'.

Consular Sources

CCC L: Correspondance Commerciale et Consulaire, Larnaca. La Courneuve: Archives diplomatiques, ministère des Affaires étrangères
CPC TL: Correspondance Politique du Consul, Turquie, Larnaca. La Courneuve: Archives diplomatiques, ministère des Affaires étrangères
CPC LC: Correspondance Politique du Consul, La Canée (Crete). La Courneuve: Archives diplomatiques, ministère des Affaires étrangères
FCDL: Fonds Constantinople, série D, Larnaca, 166PO/D/43). Nantes, Centre des Archives diplomatiques

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Contemporary Times

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A Stranger's Visit from the 'Iron Curtain'
Cyprus as an Unrealised Project of Soviet Archaeology in the 1960s

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Abstract This paper introduces a largely unknown aspect of the historical relationship between the young Republic of Cyprus and the USSR, namely the first contact established between the archaeologists of both countries in 1962, during the short visit of Prof. Sergey Kisselyoff to the island. The study is primarily based on unpublished archival materials from the Institute of Archaeology (Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow). The early years of Cypriot independence, marked by the establishment of new governmental institutions and the formation of its foreign policy, coincided with a period of relative political liberalisation in the USSR (the so-called 'Khrushchev Thaw'). This phase was also characterised by the Soviet Union's active engagement in global politics, including its use of foreign archaeological expeditions as an element of cultural policy and 'soft power'. Prof. Kisselyoff's trip diary, alongside other archive documents, provides valuable insight into his activities and contacts on the island.

Keywords Cyprus archaeology. Contemporary history. Soviet archaeology. Public diplomacy. Sergey Kisselyoff. Cyprus issue. Khrushchev's thaw. Soviet history. Cold War. Iron curtain.

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1 The Historical and Political Background of the Visit

During the Khrushchev Thaw, foreign trips of Soviet scientists, including those to non-socialist countries, became a significant phenomenon.[1] This development accompanied broader signs of relative liberalisation and the revival of public activity in academic circles. Examples of this revival include the reorganisation of Academy staff following the 1953 elections (Tikhonov 2016), a noticeable increase in Soviet academic publications on ancient history – revealed by S. Karpyuk via quantitative analysis of the obituary and festive papers of the period (1953-64) (Karpyuk 2015; 2018) –, and the increased coverage of foreign excavations in Soviet journals.[2] Reciprocal visits between Soviet and foreign scholars, as well as the establishment of Soviet archaeological missions abroad, further illustrate this trend (Merpert 2011, 199-213, 234-6). The Mediterranean, however, remained largely inaccessible to Soviet scholars for several decades. The last major Soviet academic to travel there before the war was Nikolay Vavilov, who was arrested in 1940 and died in prison in 1943. Another Soviet scholar, M.I. Korostovtsev, who lived in Cairo from 1943 to 1947 as a special correspondent for the TASS agency and was linked to Soviet intelligence, was sentenced to 25 years in prison (Ladynin, Timofeyeva 2014, 363-77).

In 1958, Vladimir D. Blavatsky, a leading classical archaeologist, was incorporated into the presidium of the 7th International Congress on Classical Archaeology in Rome. The same year, the Ideological Commission of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Communist party approved a visit to Greece by 25 Soviet specialists in ancient Greek history and archaeology (Afiani, Yesakov 2010, 936-9). Concurrently, a joint Soviet-Albanian archaeological expedition began excavating Apollonia Illyrian and Oricum, lasting two field seasons and providing Soviet archaeologists a rare opportunity to work in the Mediterranean (Blavatsky, Islami 1959, 166-204; 1960, 51-111). Participants in the first field season included V.D. Blavatsky, I.B. Zeest, M.M. Kobylina, N.I. Sokolsky, T.V. Blavatskaya, N.I. Onaiko, I.T. Kruglikova, G.A. Tzvetaeva – a significant part of the Department of Classical Archaeology at the Institute of Archaeology. The Soviet partnership in the excavations of Apollonia continued in 1959-60 (Onaiko 1963, 72-8) and ended abruptly in 1961 due to political conflict between the two communist parties (the USSR and Albania).

1 On the phenomenon of the Soviet tourism and public diplomacy in more common framework, see Berton-Hogge 1982; David-Fox 2003; Gorsuch 2010; 2011; Saveliev 2013; Orlov, Popov 2016.

2 Sventizkaya 1955; Brashinsky 1957; Sidorova 1957; 1957b; 1959; Avdiev 1962; Kachuris 1965; 1966; Marinovich 1962; 1963; Peters, Saveliev 1962.

Another major Soviet archaeological project took place in 1961-63 in Nubia, directed by Boris Piotrovsky, as part of efforts to salvage sites threatened by the construction of the Aswan High Dam. However, the idea of establishing a Soviet Egyptological mission in Cairo had previously been independently proposed by various scholars. The first initiative came from the aforementioned M.I. Korostovtsev, and during the years of 'thaw' it was revived by N.S. Petrovsky and Prof. V.I. Avdiev (Timofeeva 2016, 324-47), who sent letters to diplomats and high-ranking party officials outlining the necessity and advantages of such a project, considering the contemporary political situation in Egypt and Near East. These initiatives were serious propositions, not mere reflections of some scientific interests which renowned Soviet scholars ventured to declare in more liberal times (Timofeeva 2018, 134-5). The Soviet academic system was centralised and controlled by several governmental and party institutions, which coordinated and approved all international activities: the State Committee for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries (GKKS), the Central Committee of the Communist Party, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and several intelligence agencies, among others. For Soviet authorities, the foreign contacts of the scholars served as a means of political influence – public diplomacy aimed at creating a favourable image of Soviet society abroad, demonstrating the advantages of socialism and promoting the success of Soviet (marked as Marxist) science and cultural values. In this specific historical period, the personal research interests of Soviet historians and archaeologists aligned with the political course of the ruling class.

It is noteworthy that the first overseas activity of Soviet archaeologists began in the post-war period, under Stalin's rule, within the areas of political, ideological and even military influence of the USSR. These activities took place in countries such as Mongolia,[3] China and the 'people's democracy' of Eastern Europe – Bulgaria,[4] Albania (Blavatsky, Islami 1959; 1960; Onaiko 1963), and Hungary (Kisselyoff 1950b). Following this, in the time of 'thaw' and later, Soviet archaeologists expanded their activities to developing and non-aligned countries, with the notable exception of Western Europe and North America. In these regions, Soviet scholars could attend international congresses and visit museums and monuments, but they were not permitted to conduct excavations.

The Academy of Sciences funded and coordinated these activities, and at times, Soviet archaeologist collaborated with specialists from

3 Kisselyoff 1947, 35-8; Merpert 2011; Yusupova 2018; Kudryavtsev, Volodin 2019; Kudryavtsev; Gusev 2020.

4 Artsikhovsky 1946; Bogatyrev 1947; Tokarev 1946; Tretyakov 1947; Kudryavtsev, Gusev 2020; Kudryavtsev 2020.

other fields, such as palaeontology, agriculture, ethnology and geology (Yusupova 2018). The role and scale of Soviet intelligence service in these archaeological endeavours abroad cannot be fully uncovered through open sources. However, the case of Petr D. Darovskikh, a Soviet foreign intelligence agent (PGU KGB) who served as a logistics manager for the expeditions in Nubia and Mesopotamia, demonstrates this connection (Krol 2021, 52, 171 fn. 89).

In 1961, a special group of foreign archaeology was established within the structure of the Institute of Archaeology in Moscow, following a decision by the Academy of Sciences dated April 25. The group was focused on three main research areas: 1) Mediterranean archaeology, 2) South-Eastern Asia and 3) Latin America. It is noteworthy that all three areas coincided with the Soviet Union's key foreign interests in the early 1960s, during the height of the 'Cold War': the Middle East and Balkans, Vietnam and Cuba (Krol 2021, 47-8).

Cyprus gained its independence on August 16, 1960, and from the outset, the new state was recognised in the Soviet Union. Remarkably, some Soviet publications about new archaeological discoveries in the Mediterranean, published before Cypriot independence, placed information about excavations on the island in chapters alongside those concerning Greece, as the Hellenic identity of the ancient culture was the main criterion for its classification as 'Greek' (Kruglikova 1947, 216-17).[5]

In a letter dated December 1961, Prof. V.I. Avdiev wrote to Mikhail A. Suslov, the secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, indicating that Cyprus had officially requested the Soviet Academy of Sciences' participation in the research of Cypriot antiquities (Timofeeva 2016, 346). Although the full details of this request remained to be uncovered in both Russian and Cypriot archive sources, it is crucial to note that the interest in academic collaboration was mutual and initiated by the Cypriot side.

The year of 1962 was significant in the history of relations between the young Republic of Cyprus and the USSR. Almost simultaneously in the spring of that year, Cyprus was visited by Yuri Gagarin, the first man in space (Rossoshansky 2011, 102-3), one of the functionaries from the Central Committee of the Communist Party Alexey V. Romanov, a special correspondent of the popular Russian magazine *Ogoniok* Henrich Borovik, and the archaeologist Sergey V. Kisseloyff.

A travelogue written by A.V. Romanov after his visit was published as a brochure by Politizdat, the governmental publisher of political

5 The same story with Asia Minor, when archaeological discoveries in Old Smyrna are also included in the review of the new archaeological discoveries in Greece (Pogrebova 1950, 212-21).

literature, with a circulation of 50,000 copies (Romanov 1964). A significant amount of material, financial and human resources were devoted to Cyprus: the West German Embassy expressed concern over the Soviet Embassy's attempt to employ 130 Cypriots (Sammoutis 2007, 18). After the conclusion of a trade agreement in December 1961, the USSR acquired 2/3 of Cyprus's raisin production (Skettou 1984, 40-54). Many Cypriots went to the USSR for the education – these are just a few examples of the broad political campaign orchestrated by the Soviet government to increase its influence in the Eastern Mediterranean.

In this context, we must consider the inclusion of the Cyprus in the activities of the Soviet Institute of Archaeology in Moscow. One particular case is especially instructive. In autumn 1961, Yury A. Saveliev, a young post-graduate student, applied to the Institute of Archaeology in Moscow to pursue classical archaeology and requested scientific supervision from Professor Vladimir D. Blavatsky, the director of the Department of Classical Archaeology (Saveliev 1961a). Saveliev passed all the entry exams successfully and planned to conduct research on the tile stamps of the Bosporus Kingdom, given his prior experience in this field and his frequent participation in excavation at ancient Panticapeum and Phanagoria (Antonova, Demskaya 1961), besides his research on the collection of stamps in the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts (Saveliev 1961b). However, by early spring 1962, his research topic was changed. Saveliev was reassigned to the Foreign Archaeology Group and began studying Cypriot culture of the Early Iron Age (Saveliev 1962), as instructed by the Institute's authorities.[6] The timing of this change coincides closely with Prof. S.V. Kisselyoff's preparation to visit Cyprus, suggesting that the Institute's plans for collaboration with Cyprus were well underway, and the need for specialists in this area was urgent.

2 The Visitor

Professor Sergey Vladimirovich Kisselyoff (1905-1962)[7] was not chosen by chance for establishing the first contact between Soviet and Cypriot archaeological institutions. By the beginning of the 1960s he had already become a prominent Soviet archaeologist, vice-director of the Institute for the History of Material Culture (since 1959 – the Institute of Archaeology) in Moscow (1945-51), specialising in the archaeology of the Neolithic and Bronze Age, and worked as

6 Andrey Agafonov, pers. comm; Herold Vzdornov, pers. comm.

7 VDI 1963; Passek 1963; Kyzlasov 1995; Formozov 1995; Klein 2014, 363-72; Merpert 2005; Devlet 2019.

professor at the Moscow State University, where he taught courses in the archaeology of the Bronze and Iron Ages.

The rise of his academic career was related to the Second World War when, during the Nazi assault on Moscow in autumn 1941, most of the academic staff was evacuated to the Soviet Republics of Central Asia and to the Ural region. Kisselyoff stayed in Moscow and was involved in the work of a special commission for the study of the history of the Great Patriotic War, including describing the destruction of historical monuments and other damage caused by Nazi troops (Karpyuk 2019a, 172-5; Kudryavtsev, Volodin 2020). He also continued teaching archaeology at Lomonosov Moscow State University and revived archaeological practice for students as early as the summer of 1942 (Merpert 2011, 84-5). In these years, the centre of Soviet academic archaeology moved from Leningrad (first weakened as a result of Stalin's repressions in the 1930s and then depopulated because of the war, blockade and evacuation) to Moscow (Karpyuk 2019b, 120). In 1945, Kisselyoff became the vice-director of the Institute for Material Culture History (since 1959 – the Institute of Archaeology), which, in fact, led almost all archaeological activity in the Soviet Union. Within the organisational structure of the Institute, he created a special department – a 'sector' – for the study of the Neolithic and Bronze Age, becoming its director and involving his graduate students in its work.

For his studies in the ancient history of South Siberia, he was awarded the Lomonosov (1946) and Stalin State (1950) prizes (Kisselyoff 1951). Between 1950-54, Kisselyoff was Academic Secretary of the Presidium of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, and in 1953 he became a corresponding member of the Academy. For a long period (1949-62) he was also the editor in-chief of the main Soviet academic journal in ancient history – *Vestnik Drevnei Istorii* (Journal of Ancient History/Revue d'Histoire Ancienne). This position gave him the opportunity to be in touch with a wide range of leading Soviet specialists across different research areas, from classical antiquity to the ancient Far East.

As an archaeologist, Prof. Kisselyoff organised excavations in South Siberia, the Altai, and Central Asia. In the winter of 1946-47, he was sent to Mongolia to prepare for the large-scale archaeological exploration of this country. The joint Soviet-Mongolian expedition worked under his direction during two field seasons, 1948-49, and discovered the capital of the medieval state of Genghis Khan – Karakorum – and other settlements in Mongolia – both medieval and ancient.[8] This expedition had a significant impact on

8 Kisselyoff 1947; Merpert 1995; 2011, 133-66; Kudryavtsev, Volodin 2019; Kudryavtsev; Gusev 2020.

the development of the national school of Mongolian archaeology, and some participants of the excavation went to the USSR to continue their education at Moscow State University.

Afterwards, in early spring 1950, immediately after the conclusion of the Treaty of Friendship, Alliance and Mutual Assistance between the USSR and the People's Republic of China, Prof. Kisselyoff visited China as a member of an official delegation of Soviet scientists, where he met a wide range of the scientific community and university students and had the opportunity to promote the successes of Soviet historical science (Myasnikov 2009). The composition of the academic delegation, which included an archaeologist (Prof. Kisselyoff), an agronomist (Prof. N.I. Nuzhdin), and a lecturer in the political economy of the transition to socialism (M.F. Makarova), reflected the Soviet vision of China as an agrarian society with an ancient cultural tradition aiming to build socialism. The visit lasted two months and provided a good opportunity to see several museums and archaeological sites and to establish contacts in local academic circles.[9]

In the same year (1950), Kisselyoff was appointed executive secretary of the Soviet academic delegation that attended the 125th anniversary of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in Budapest (Kisselyoff 1950b).

In 1956 he participated in a meeting of historians from three countries (USSR, Mongolia, China) to write the fundamental *History of the Mongolian People's Republic* (Kisselyoff 1956), and in November-December 1959 he again visited China for about a month to study museum collections and archaeological sites (Kisselyoff 1960). From this second trip to China three volumes of diary entries have been preserved, which offer interesting material for comparison with the diary of the scientist's trip to Cyprus (Kisselyoff 1959).

In all these foreign trips, beyond the study of archaeological sites and museum collections, he fulfilled important official functions as a representative of Soviet academic science, established collaborations with scholars from abroad, and developed cultural diplomacy.

Mediterranean archaeology became an area of interest for Kisselyoff by the late 1950s, when he entrusted his younger colleague Valery Titov (employed at the institute since July 1959) with the task of collecting information on the archaeology of Neolithic and Bronze Age of Anatolia, the Levant, the Aegean and the Near East. The professor planned to write general study titled *The Bronze Age of the Old World*, aiming to synthesise his personal perspectives and experience from the Far East to Europe.

It is evident that, for the scholar, this was not merely a scientific research trip, but also a mission of responsibility as part of Soviet

9 AN SSSR 1950.

cultural diplomacy. Prof. Kisselyoff's diary records that he met not only archaeologists in Cyprus, but also local authorities, officials from the Ministry of Education and Culture, politicians of various rank, and members of the AKEL party.

To conclude, Prof. Kisselyoff can be regarded as a typical representative of the Soviet academic functionary of the thaw period: his mentality was formed in early Soviet society; he made his career during the political and wartime turbulence of Stalin's era but managed to maintain an optimistic outlook on the future; he mastered the 'Marxist-type' authoritarian discourse and knew the *modus operandi* in dealing with Soviet state structures and different levels of power; he had leadership experience, having held directive positions in the Institute of Archaeology and in the editorial board of *Vestnik Drevney Istorii*. Elsewhere in the Academy, he tried to act as a protector for his younger colleagues.[10] His broad research interests and erudition gave him a unique perspective on his Cypriot foreign mission. After the 1956 declaration of peaceful coexistence with the capitalist world, Soviet public diplomacy needed actors like him.

3 The Evidence

The presented paper is based primarily upon testimonies preserved in the personal files of Prof. S.V. Kisselyoff, which are stored in the Archive of the Institute of Archaeology in Moscow. The file devoted to the Cyprus voyage contains the trip diary, a number of photographs taken by Prof. Kisselyoff in Cyprus and in Greece (some of them marked in pencil on the reverse side), tourist maps of Cyprus, Athens and Austria, tourist leaflets issued by the Department of Antiquities, postcards with representations of museum items and views of the land and cityscapes of Cyprus, Athens and Austria, visiting cards of Soviet, Cypriot and Greek diplomats met by the professor during his journey, travel documents, museum tickets, hotel vouchers and leaflets, some small sheets of paper with short notes (Kisselyoff 1962).

The diary occupies 118 pages of a special notebook issued by the Academy of Sciences for the needs of field scientists. The title page indicates who owned the diary, when and where the trip was, and there is also a request for any person who found this document to transfer it to the USSR Embassy in Nicosia (1).

A detailed description of the circumstances of the flight from the Soviet Union to Cyprus and the first days of the visit to the island is provided, followed by a detailed description of the Cyprus Museum

10 Kuz'mina 2008, 15-16; see also Klein 2014, 364, 368-71; Yelnitsky 2014, 56, 65, 88, 93-4.

exposition. Then there are records of the move to Athens, as well as a similar detailed description of the National Archaeological Museum in Athens. Some pages of the diary are filled with short notes and sketches for recalling specific moments of the visit (conversations, meetings, etc.) and the list of personal names of the people met by Kisselyoff in Cyprus and Greece. Most of the notes are in pencil, following the rules of field documentation used in the USSR. Many notes are complemented by drawings, which Kisselyoff did with his own hand on the spot.

All this evidence, taken as a whole, helps to reconstruct the details of this trip and to consider it as the first case of academic contact between Soviet and Cypriots archaeologists in the first years of Cypriot independence.

3.1 The Visit

As can be seen both from his diary and the existing ticket, Kisselyoff's voyage began on Thursday the 3rd of May 1962. The departure time was 09:25 in the morning and the Professor had seat 6a, close to the plane's window, and could watch the landscape passing by and make some notes about it in his diary (2).

As there was no direct connection between Cyprus and the USSR at that time, the travel from Moscow to Nicosia was complex: at first S.V. Kisselyoff went to Prague, where he changed planes and departed for Zurich, where he had 7 hours to wait for a new plane to Athens. He stayed in Athens for one night at the Lido Hotel, and early in the morning took off for Nicosia, where he finally arrived at about 8:00 a.m. on Friday, the 4th of May.

As can be seen from the notes in Prof. Kisselyoff's diary, this long journey to Cyprus, during which he could see three other foreign countries (Czechoslovakia, Switzerland and Greece) impressed him very much. In his short remarks he mentions the picturesque land and riverscape of the Vltava River in Prague, the uniform (with *magendawid*) of the Israel airlines stewardess, the unusual hats of men from Bayern or Tirol, the famous Türler's watch shop, the monument to Oscar Bider in the airport of Zurich, and the sunrise over Athens in the morning (3-4). In the airport of Athens, he copied three inscriptions which he saw: "ΑΠΑΓΟΡΕΥΕΤΑΙ Η ΕΞΟΔΟΣ", "ΑΠΑΓΟΡΕΥΕΤΑΙ ΤΟ ΚΑΠΝΙΣΜΑ" and "ΠΥΛΗ 4" – with translations into Russian – trying in that manner to take his first steps in learning modern Greek.

The seat which the professor took on Scandinavian Airline System (SAS) aeroplane offered him the opportunity to view Cyprus from above. When they approached in from the bay of Morphou, he noted:

> We are passing over a plain, which is limited from the South and from the North by rather high mountains. The villages are surrounded with gardens, the fields are bare; apparently rich in sand and clay. (4)

At the airport of Nicosia, he was warmly welcomed by a group of Cypriots from the Friendship Society, who honoured him with a bouquet of roses. Among this group there was the Russian-speaking Cypriot communist Christophoros Ioannides, who later accompanied Kisselyoff as an interpreter in his journey across Cyprus. Member of the Central Committee of the AKEL party, he had studied history and archaeology in Prague and spoke English, Czech and Russian. In the 1970s he was the permanent representative of AKEL on the editorial board of *The World Marxist Review* (also known as *The Problems of Peace and Socialism*) in Prague.[11]

There were also two representatives of the Soviet embassy – Boris Andreyevich Morozov and Anatoly Vladimirovich Pripisnov (both the third secretaries of the Embassy of the USSR). The former is mentioned in Kisselyoff's diary several times and his visiting card is also stored among Kisselyoff's files. Morozov was evidently responsible for minding the professor and accompanied him during the whole visit.

Professor Kisselyoff stayed in the best and most fashionable hotel in Nicosia – the Ledra Palace – and resided in room 138, which cost £2 and 607 mils,[12] with meals and tax included. It is remarkable that among the photos taken by the professor in Cyprus, the first five frames represent different views of the hotel, and one cadre is marked: "My room is on the second [i.e. the first in Russian denomination] floor on the corner" (4).

After six hours of rest, Kisselyoff once again met the representatives of the Friendship Society, which elaborated the preliminary program of the visit for the next 9 days, taking into account that after the meeting with P. Dikaios (expected for the next day) there could have been some changes to the itinerary. The plan presumed that almost every day, from the 5th until the 13th of May, the professor would visit a different region of Cyprus and see monuments in the following order: Kyrenia, Larnaca, Paphos (2 days), Choirokoitia, Salamis, Vouni, and Soloi. Thursday the 10th of May and Saturday the 12th of May were reserved for the Cyprus Museum, where some lectures were expected (probably Kisseloyff himself gave lectures on the actual issues of Soviet archaeology, as he did during his visits to China and Hungary). As we can understand, from both the short

11 Sophokles Sophokli, pers. comm.

12 Cyprus had prices in pounds and mils from 1955 until 1981.

notes in the diary and the photos, the main features of this plan were successfully realised.

After these preparations Kisselyoff went to see Nikolay Vasilyevich Aksenov, the KGB agent, who had worked in Cyprus since February 1961.[13] "A pleasant general talk. The force of democracy. Letters. I stay to attend the report on the USSR" (5). The last phrase presumes that this meeting took place in some official or public place (probably in the Embassy of the Soviet Union in Nicosia or in the headquarters of any Soviet organisation in Cyprus). According to unwritten rules, the official position of Prof. Kisselyoff required such consultations with representatives of the Soviet intelligence service and control over him. As for the 'letters' mentioned in the note, it is not possible to be sure, but considering that Kisselyoff was a member of Communist Party and has already been abroad with responsible missions, it should not be excluded that the occasion of his visit has been used to transfer some delicate sealed messages either from the USSR or back home. It is noteworthy that, for all this 'pleasant talk' Kisselyoff uses the expression "the power of democracy", as Soviet official and unofficial foreign policy considered the independent Republic of Cyprus to be the result of a progressive union between the local working class, an anti-imperialistic circle of intellectuals, studying youth, and even clergy who achieved the liberation of their country from the control of the UK.

At the end of the evening the professor visited his new fellow B.A. Morozov's place, drinking a dry white wine called 'Aphrodite' – this episode has been curiously summarised with a short note: "A night of torments".[14]

The next morning, the 5th of May, at Ledra Palace, started with an English breakfast – a new type of meal for the Soviet voyager, and thus specially noted in the diary. By 9:00 a.m. the professor and his company went to the Department of Antiquities and met its Director, Porphyrios Dikaios. Kisselyoff characterised him as "a courteous European" and added that the books brought from Moscow as a gift had certain influence and made their communication more friendly and close. During this conversation, Vassos Karageorghis joined them and was also introduced to the foreign guest, the colleagues discussed the plan of Kisselyoff's visit and after that they took a short

13 In his notes Prof. Kisselyoff simply called him by his official full name, without any rank and other concretisation, but this person is mentioned in the secret report on the President J.F. Kennedy's assassination detecting all Soviet military and secret service officers with the surname Aksenov (mentioned in the CIA release on the 23rd of March 1964: 104-10006-10037, 3: `https://www.archives.gov/files/research/jfk/releases/104-10006-10037.pdf`, see also Bagley 1964).

14 It should be noted that Prof. Kisselyoff had some problems with health, which brought him to unsuccessful medical operation and finally to death.

tour through the Cyprus museum. Kisselyoff enjoyed the exposition very much and, despite the relatively short time at his disposal, the scholars found several topics for discussion, such as the ornament of Neolithic *Combed Wares* (Kisselyoff named it "spur-like ornament"), bronze daggers, the carbon dating of Choirokoitia layers, and the discoveries of Schaeffer in Ras-Shamra. Dikaios was pleased when Kisselyoff recognised the clay model of the sanctuary from Vounous, published in the French archaeological magazine *Syria* (Dikaios 1932). Kisselyoff also noticed that a bronze item from Enkomi was a shepherd's crook, but not a sceptre, as attributed by Schaeffer. In discussing the disputed questions of Enkomi and Ugarit relative stratigraphy and chronology, Kisselyoff also supported Dikaios point of view against Schaeffer's interpretation (Kisselyoff 1962, 6; Karageorghis 2007, 53-4).

The Soviet guest was much impressed when visiting the rooms with archaic sculptures, but his note concerning terracotta figures from Agia-Irini ("Millions of terracotta statues and figurines from one tomb (Sic!)" Kisselyoff 1962, 7) demonstrates that in a flow of items, emotions and explanations he could not understand everything correctly. At the end of the tour Kisselyoff saw 'a crypt' with emulations of different burials from the Neolithic to the Iron Age and found them exposed in a "very mysterious manner". After that the first meeting with Cypriot colleagues was over and the Soviet Professor departed for Kyrenia guided by a significant escort: Ioannides as interpreter, the Soviet diplomat B.A. Morozov, a Cypriot teacher and amateur local historian, whose surname Kisselyoff spelled – evidently incorrectly – as *Popriannou* (Kyprianou or Papaioannou?), and the driver from the Soviet Embassy, Mikhail Ivanovich.

On their way to the North coast the group made their first stop in Bellapais, where they visited the abbey and had coffee with salted peanuts for a snack. In Kyrenia the group visited the castle, saw the harbour and a tourist liner from Yugoslavia with West German tourists aboard (the note on them is followed by a remark on the close relations between West Germany and Archbishop Makarios III ("friends of Makarios")) (8) – the information on current political affairs evidently provided by the Professor's companions, either from the embassy or from Cypriot 'sympathisers' of the USSR. After Kyrenia they went to Lampousa to see the remains of the monastery, the church of Agios Eulalios, and the remains of the ancient cemetery "excavated by Americans and looters". Then the group turned back to Nicosia, passing by the Castle of Saint-Hilarion (erroneously

named Saint-Laurent in the diary).[15] Kisselyoff devoted the evening to writing letters to his wife and the preparation of a lecture.

The next day, the 6th of May, was dedicated to Larnaca. The professor and his companions began their trip rather early, at 07:30 a.m., and when they arrived in Larnaca there was an official meeting with the Mayor Georgos Christodoulides – a member of AKEL –, and other members of local municipality (9). After a short greeting event in the lobby of some hotel (incidentally, Kisselyoff noted that Christodoulides' daughter Vera was, at that time, a student at the Patrice Lumumba Peoples' Friendship University in Moscow) the group set out for Hala-Sultan Tekke and some representatives of the local community joined them. They visited the mosque and Kisselyoff determined the Umm Haram tomb as a sort of dolmen. After the mosque he had some time to visit the ancient settlement of the Late Bronze Age and walked back and forth across the field in the hope of finding any ceramic shred, but without great success. Kisselyoff also took a couple of photos walking in the imposing palm grove near the mosque, and then the group left for Kiti.

Being unfamiliar with local Cypriot toponymy, Kisselyoff confused the names Kiti and Kition in his diary – this was in fact about the former (10). They saw Panagia Angelloktisti church and the unique mosaic inside of it, and then returned to Larnaca, where they visited the house of the Pierides family and saw their collection. Kisselyoff met Mrs. Theodora and Mr. Demetris Pierides (who knew some greeting words in Russian), found the collection very imposing and was especially impressed by the number and quality of medieval glazed bowls and Roman and Hellenistic glass, as well as by the servant meeting them at the entrance and by huge araucarias in the garden. At the end of the visit, he took a group photo with the hosts of the house at the entrance – we can count ten persons, including Mrs. Theodora Pierides, Mr. Demetris Pierides, Ch. Ioannides and probably the activists of AKEL from Larnaka.[16] The other photos represent the monument to Kimon at the seafront and Agios Lazaros church and thus indicate the other objects visited in Larnaca. The group had lunch in some restaurant to the East of the city, at the seashore and then came back to Nicosia.

The notes concerning the following days of the trip are not so rich in details. Kisselyoff left several white pages to describe them

15 This mistake is curious for Russian: both names are associated with Old Russian literature: the monk Laurentius was creator of the oldest medieval Russian chronicle that remained to our times (Laurentian Codex), while Archbishop Hilarion was author of the *Sermon of Law and Grace*.

16 In his diary Kisselyoff mentioned Mr. Zachariades from Larnaca, who was the leftist activist loyal to the USSR (probably the member of the Frienship society Cyprus-USSR) and evidently took part in Kisselyoff's meeting.

afterwards, but probably had no free time for it, so we should use the evidence of the photos, some visiting cards and postcards, plus some short notes and remarks at the end of his notebook.

The 7th and the 8th of May were envisaged for visiting Paphos, but it is more probable that on the former date Kisselyoff and his companions arrived in Limassol. At the town hall they met the Mayor of Limassol, Kostas Partasides, a significant public figure of AKEL and one of the leaders of Cypriot trade unions (80-1).

Besides this meeting, Kisselyoff visited the Limassol Museum at Lemesos castle, observed the archaeological objects from the excavations of Sotira, Erimi, and other sites, and classified them as comparable to the items of Chalcolithic and Early-Middle Bronze Age he had examined in the Cyprus Museum in Nicosia. A short note on the "huge Mycenaean pithos from Amathus" (81) reflects his misunderstanding of the famous limestone vase from the Sanctuary of Aphrodite. Then, the professor visited the archaeological site of Kourion, the Sanctuary of Apollo Hylatis and Kolossi Castle.

The next day, the 8th of May, was evidently devoted to Paphos. The travellers drove to Petra tou Romiou and saw the birthplace of Aphrodite. Prof. Kisselyoff took three photos of a picturesque view, and on the reverse of the offprint he wrote later, in a poetic verse-like manner:

> The place, where Aphrodite was born from the foam of the sea.

On behalf of a local AKEL organisation the professor was received by the second Secretary, Kostas Sophokleous, who gave him a set of colour postcards featuring views of Cyprus. The cards depicted the harbour of Paphos, its medieval fort, St. Paul's pillar, scenes from rural life at Alakati, the view of Hala Sultan Tekke, and another Muslim minaret. On the reverse sides of the cards Kostas Sophokleous made kind and friendly dedications, unsuccessfully trying to reproduce the difficult full name of the Russian academic: instead of the correct 'Sergey Vladimirovich Kisselyoff' he wrote rather "Σεργέϊ Δημήτρεεβιτς Κισιλέφ" (Sergey Dmitrievich Kiselyoff, i.e., the son of Dmitry), or "Σεργίεβιτς Κισιλεφ" (Sergeevich Kisselyoff, i.e., the son of Sergey), thus confusing the first name and patronymic of his guest.

There were several locations in Paphos that were interesting to the archaeologist. First and foremost, the newly discovered mosaics in Kato-Paphos. In the rush of the visit, Prof. Kisselyoff wrongly described the mosaic scene with Icarios from the House of Dionysus as a fresco (80). Afterwards, the group visited the 'Tombs of the Kings' and the Paphos District Archaeological Museum (Prof. Kisselyoff mentioned "the museum in the mosque"). The visiting cards stored in the Kisselyoff's files allow us to conclude that the professor met Georgos S. Eliades – a local Paphian intellectual, archaeologist,

ethnologist and founder of the Ethnographic Museum, who also served as the honorary curator of the Paphos District Museum. It is likely that G.S. Eliades guided Kisselyoff during his visit to Paphos and perhaps to the Paphos area. Another visiting card from the file reveals that among the Paphian hosts of the Soviet scholar Dr. Nikos D. Mavronicolas – a lawyer, parliament member, and AKEL-backed representative in the Greek Chamber of Representatives.

Beyond archaeological sites and museums, Prof. Kisselyoff also visited the Gymnasium of Paphos, meeting its principal, Pavlos Pavlides, and vice-principal Savvas Koupatos (82). Their photographs, taken at the entrance of the gymnasium's portico, includes Dr. G.S. Eliades and two dogs. It is the only image the Professor captured in Paphos with his camera. Notably, G.S. Eliades was also a teacher at the same school. S.V. Kisselyoff mentioned Pavlos Pavlides in his diary once more when noting a project to organise teacher training courses for Cypriots in the USSR. In the page margins, he emphasised: "Pavlides!" – as if he considered him as possible candidate for the project (83).

The group also visited Kouklia, where Prof. Kisselyoff examined the site and inspected the museum's artefacts, particularly noting the significant number of syllabic inscriptions stored in three rooms. There, he realised three sketches: a head wearing the double crown (with 'ureaeus' on the forehead accentuated) from the Louvre, the coloured wings of the sculpted sphinx from the Marcello 'siege mound', and a limestone capital shaped like a lotus flower from the same assemblage.

After Kouklia, Kisselyoff and his companions travelled the northwest to see the Vouni Palace and the ancient theatre of Soloi. Surprisingly, no surviving photos or drawings documents this part of the trip, and only a few words in his notes summarise the guides' narrative, which echoed E. Gjerstad's interpretation of the sites:

> The palace was Persian, then it became Greek… Soloi against Vouni.

The tourist brochure *A Brief History and Description of the Vouni Palace*, issued by the Department of Antiquities and found in Kisselyoff's files, may partly explain this brief commentary.

The next day, the 9th of May, began with a new trip to Choirokoitia. This time, it was Porphyrios Dikaios himself, the excavator of the site, who guided his Soviet colleague and companions. He is depicted in at least three of the ten photos taken in Choirokoitia. Dikaios went down into the trench, showed and explained everything to his Soviet colleague and gave him, as a souvenir, the touristic guidebook *A Brief Guide to the Neolithic Settlement of Choirokoitia* with his autograph in French:

à Monsieur le Professeur Kiseliov, souvenir de sa visite à Khirokitia, 9/5/62.

In the other rare photo, we can see Kisselyoff himself standing in the trench, next to the stone foundation of one of the circular buildings, rather confusingly, left hand with his hat hidden behind his back while right hand touching his forehead. The edge of his diary can be seen in his left pocket. It was an almost unique moment of the trip, when the Professor gave his camera to someone else to get photo of his own.

The trip to the Neolithic site took only the first half of the day, while in the afternoon the professor began a thorough examination of the exhibition in the Cyprus Museum. It took him three more days (the 10th, the 13th and the 14th of May) to complete this task, and the notes and drawings made in the museum occupied 21 sheets of the diary (i.e. about 30% of all inscribed space) (14-28). These pages are full of chronological indications, copies of ornamentation patterns, sketches of interesting objects, sometimes made with an indication of the scale, explaining remarks and the ideas born during the examination.

To supplement these notes the professor purchased a number of coloured and black-and-white postcards depicting the most prominent items in the museum: vessels of Neolithic, Early Bronze, Mycenaean and Early Iron Ages; terracotta figurines from Agia Irini; the statue of Aphrodite from Soloi; the sceptre from Kourion-Kaloridziki; a clay model of a sanctuary from Vounous; a picrolite idol; the bronze statue of Septimius Severus; several limestone statues; the reproduction of the mosaic from Kiti.

Part of the next day, the 10th of May, was dedicated to the professor's lecture (Kisselyoff 1962, 5, 8, 80; Karageorghis 2007, 66). Unfortunately, no further details have survived, nor do we have records of the second lecture he gave on the 12th of May. The latter is marked in the diary as "common", suggesting it was more public (likely held at the Cyprus-USSR-Friendship Society), while the first may have been addressed to the colleagues at the Department of Antiquities. Although the texts have not survived, based on Kisselyoff's lecture drafts from Hungary in 1950, and his report to the Soviet Academy of Sciences following his first visit to China, we can infer the main topics: the success of Soviet archaeology and historical research, the wide range of studies conducted in the USSR on monuments from various epochs, the new possibilities for writing the histories of newly independent peoples free from class and colonial oppression, and the immense value of international collaboration (Kisselyoff 1950a).[17] He

17 AN SSSR 1950.

might have spoken about his own excavations in South Siberia and Mongolia, though these were somewhat removed from his Cypriot colleagues' interests. The work of his Institute of Archaeology colleague Tatiana Passek, who excavated Tripolye and contributed to settlement chronology, was more relevant to Mediterranean Bronze Age archaeology. As editor-in-chief of the Soviet *Journal of Ancient History*, he could have also discussed the study of classical antiquity in the USSR, possibly touching on Professor Solomon Lurie's research on Linear B, conducted in parallel with M. Ventris and J. Chadwick.

Unlike his lectures in early Communist China or the Hungarian People's Republic, Kisselyoff could not assume the role of an 'Elder (or even Big) Brother' in Cyprus. Cypriot archaeologists, though fewer in number, were well-educated professionals who did not require indoctrination in Marxist methodology. The confrontational rhetoric Kisselyoff had employed during the Stalinist epoch was useless in Cyprus. As he observed upon meeting Dikaios and Karageorghis, they treated him as "courteous Europeans", which likely influenced his own manner and behaviour. This shift aligned with Soviet foreign policy goals under Nikita Khrushchev, who, six years earlier, had declared a new diplomatic approach at the 20th Congress of the Communist Party. Soviet archaeology, represented by Kisselyoff, had to offer something more concrete than just academic tomes on Soviet or World History written in Russian. Unfortunately, the details of the lecture, audience reactions, and any subsequent discussions remain unknown.

On the 11th of May, Kisselyoff and his group toured the eastern part of the island – Famagusta, Salamis and Enkomi. Photos indicate that the interactions between archaeologists became more informal and friendly. Dikaios once again hosted the group, organising a small banquet with wine on the veranda of the dig house in Enkomi, and the Soviet delegation received an authentic experience of Cypriot hospitality. Notably, Kisselyoff appeared in a photograph sitting side by side with Dikaios, both smiling. His diary, however, only contains a concise chronological and stratigraphic scheme of Enkomi as outlined by Dikaios (Kisselyoff 1962, 85).

A significant number of photos (12) were taken in Salamis, where Kisselyoff met V. Karageorghis again. Evidently, the site made a strong impression on him. The group visited the gymnasium, theatre, and royal necropolis, where Ch. Ioannides descended into the dromos of one of the tombs. They also conversed with local workers employed at the excavation. Kisselyoff showed particular interest in the use of machinery for clearing excavation debris.

On the 12th of May, Kisselyoff met with Konstantinos Spyridakis, Chairman of the Greek Cypriot Assembly and the first Minister of Education (Kisselyoff 1962, 80, 83; Karageorghis 2007, 60). The meeting was attended by Soviet diplomats N.V. Aksenov and V.V. Pushkin, highlighting its significance.

Dr. K. Spyridakis, an archaeologically and historically inclined educator, probably discussed organising teacher training courses for Cypriots in the USSR. The diary records details such as delegation sizes, payment arrangements, and visit scheduling (Kisselyoff 1962, 83).

At the top of the list of the people he met in Cyprus, Kisselyoff mentioned Andreas Papadopoulos, the Minister of Communications and Works, who was the member of the government responsible for the Department of Antiquities (79). Probably their conversation took place on the same day, and if it was not a mere protocol meeting, they could discuss the prospect of future collaboration with the Institute of Archaeology of the Soviet Academy of Sciences. However, no other traces of this discussion remain.

Next morning, the 13th of May, the Professor began with writing the report – it was probably the summary of his meetings of the previous day (29). Upon finishing this work, by 10 a.m. he went once more to the Cyprus museum, where bought postcards representing ancient items and the historical landscape of Famagusta and Kyrenia, and leaflets with description of the archaeological sites. After that, he finished the examination of the exhibition.

The cards and tourist brochures were not the only souvenirs that the professor brought home from Cyprus. After Kisselyoff's passing, his wife and colleague, Dr. Lidya Evtykhova, transferred four ancient Cypriot vessels to the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts in Moscow, which could only have originated as a result of this trip: a *White Painted III* small juglet (Cat. no. 172), a *White Painted III-IV* bowl (Cat. no. 181), a *Bichrome IV* oinochoe (Cat. no. 259) and a krater (Cat. no. 290). It is uncertain if these vases were a donation from the Department of Antiquities or acquired through other means (Akimova et al. 2014). As the professor's widow later sold these items to the museum, this suggests that they must be personal belongings, not a collection which was, from the very beginning, intended to be transferred to any special scientific or public storage.

Rest part of the day was devoted to the visit to Famagusta, where the professor admired the Gothic architecture and Venetian fortifications, as evident from his photographs. He also met with Mayor Andreas Pouyouros, a lawyer and politician who had led the city since 1953 (Kisselyoff 1962, 79) and was the President of the Friendship Society 'Cyprus-USSR'. From this meeting, he likely received an envelope containing photo postcards depicting Famagusta's newly built kindergarten, showcasing its façade, interior, and children's activities. These images symbolised the Republic's social progress, aligning well with Soviet Cold War visual propaganda, which emphasised peace, education, and collective well-being.

The final day of the visit, the 14th of May was also partly devoted to the Cyprus museum and then to some meetings with activists from the Friendship Society. Among them was Eugenia

Paleologou-Petronda – the famous Greek writer and activist, established in Cyprus since 1960. She gave her visiting card to Prof. Kisselyoff with the wish "Bon voyage" (IA RAN Φ. 12, b. 78). Next morning, the 15th of May, he left for Athens.

S. Kisselyoff stayed in Athens for several days, visiting the Athenian Acropolis and the Daphne Monastery. He also thoroughly examined the National Archaeological Museum and paid a daily visit to Mycenae (Kisselyoff 1962, 43-72). He spent at least four days there continuing to Vienna, where he also stayed for some time, visiting Schönbrunn Palace and other sites (76-7), before finally returning to Moscow. If the route calculations in his diary were accurate, he arrived on May 25, not by direct flight but via Warsaw (78). Thus, the last foreign trip of his life came to an end.

3.2 Remarkable Comparisons

Although, by the time of his visit to Cyprus, the professor was a seasoned traveller who had been abroad numerous times, this trip was unique as it marked the first time he saw countries beyond the 'Iron Curtain'.

Experiencing a foreign country under unfamiliar circumstances, Kisselyoff compared elements of this new reality to his own known world. He often drew parallels between foreign landscapes and his homeland, using his 'mental map' to make sense of what he observed. His diary provides valuable insight into this process.

Mountains in Switzerland are characterised as:

> picturesque view, like our Urals. (3)

The mountains on the way from Nicosia to the north looked "like in Crimea" (7). The cellars of Bellapais seemed:

> like the prison in the Sudak fortress, but more substantial. (8)

The mountain and seaside view in Kyrenia:

> already seems to be not Crimea, but like the Caucasus shore at Ochemchir or at Poti. (8)

Kyrenian castle was like a decoration in the Soviet film *Othello* (issued in 1955), created using the real Genoese fortifications in Akkerman (Ukraine) and Sudak (Crimea) (8). The way from Nicosia to Larnaca:

> like in Koktebel (Crimea), but longer and flanked by rows of cypress trees. (9)

Larnaca town:

> fully Eastern in its appearance, looks like Old Town in Baku, but more accurate, the streets are paved and coloured with advertisements. (9)

Larnaca seafront:

> looks like Sukhumi, but the palm-trees are of two-and a half-storied height. (9)

Mosaic in Panagia Angelloktisti in Kiti:

> much alike the scene of Annunciation in the Agia-Sophia. (i.e. the Old Russian Cathedral of Agia Sophia in Kiev, not in Constantinople – dated to 11th century AD). (10)

Notably, Kisselyoff was most captivated by the combination of mountain landscapes and picturesque sea views in Cyprus. Having spent his life in continental Russia, where his archaeological excavations took place in regions like South Siberia, Khakassia, and Mongolia, he compared Cyprus primarily to the few warm seaside destinations accessible to Soviet citizens: Crimea, the Black Sea coast of the Caucasus, and Baku, the capital of Soviet Azerbaijan, which at the time was a multiethnic and multireligious city with a significant Russian and Armenian population coexisting alongside Muslim Turks (referred to in Russian imperial terminology as 'Caucasus Tatars') until the tragic events of the 1980s.

The Venetian fortifications in Cyprus reminded him of a closely related architectural parallel – the Genoese fortresses and castles in the northern Black Sea region, such as Sudak (Sougdaia) and Akkerman, which he had either seen personally or in films.

Another important comparison the professor made concerned the food prices. In his diary there are two pages containing price-lists – one for Athens (86) and another for Vienna (77). He meticulously recorded the prices of goods that were scarce in the USSR at the time: various types of coffee and chocolate, wine and Martini, poultry, biscuits, honey, natural lemonade, and fruits, as well as the cost of dinner. On a separate page, he also made financial calculations regarding expenses in Cypriot pounds, including transportation costs, fuel prices, and reasonable daily wages for workers (81), suggesting that he was estimating the budget required for a potential archaeological expedition.

This tendency to draw comparisons extended to his examination of museum exhibitions, where he made professional observations, seeking visual similarities to establish cultural links and

chronological synchronisations between geographically dispersed ancient civilisations.

For instance, in the Philia culture, the spur-like shell pendants reminded to of those from the Catacomb culture of the second half of the 3rd millennium BC (29). The decoration on a large Red Polished Ware bowl from Marki, adorned with terracotta figurines standing on a special ledge, resembled decorative principles from the Cucuteni-Tripolye culture – a connection he found "of exceptional interest!" (32). A Mycenaean krater from Pyla-Verghi (Karageorghis 1968b, pl. II, 1) struck him as analogous to examples from Tiryns (Kisselyoff 1962, 36).

A miner's tools displayed in the Cyprus museum reminded him of analogues from Sukhumi, Soviet Georgia (39). On one of the Syro-Palestinian painted jugs he found some ornamental motifs close to the Hittite depictions of ornamental birds (34). An Early Bronze Age jug seemed to him very similar to ceramics from Jordan (material he knew via publications in archaeological periodicals) (29). Gold bracelets with zoomorphic protomes on the edges reminded him of the items form North Pontic tumuli and the Treasure of Oxos (41), and he mentioned that other jewellery in the exhibition were like some items from Mycenae (42).

During the visit to Enkomi, Prof. Kisselyoff noted the stratigraphy of the site and its interpretation by Dikaios, and emphasising that the date of destruction of the Stratum II (Late Bronze II) coincided with the destruction of Troy VIb (85).

The search of analogies has been continued also during the visit to the National Archaeological Museum of Athens, where some tools resembled the items from Caucasus, while one bronze chisel looked like the tool from Tripolye, Stratum C2 (50).

He noted the ceramics and jewellery from Poliochni looked like items from Troy (48), and a lion-shaped pendant resembled the finds from the Maykop culture of the North Caucasus (47). Some stone vessels from Mycenae have been attributed as similar to analogues from Mochlos, and a famous crystal duck-shaped ladle from Mycenae resembled both a cosmetic spoon from Egypt and the ornithomorphic handles of wooden artefacts from the Shigir peat assemblage (Middle Ural region). The sickles from Mycenaean tombs also reminded him of analogues from Siberia: "Wholly Siberian sickles!" (56) and daggers were attributed as having "Scythe-Siberian appearance" (57). Examining zigzag-ornaments on the ceramic objects from Siros, he noted their similarities with Balkan patterns (70).

Finally, concerning one type of arrowhead found by Ch. Tsountas Mycenaean Tomb of Clytemnestra, he recorded "Like in Cyprus", clearly referring to recent Cypriot impressions (57).

The professional point of view and special skill of finding similarities between different monuments and material culture which are

revealed by Kisselyoff's diary notes reflect his conceptual approach to the object of his research and teaching. For several decades he gave, at the Moscow State University, a fundamental course of lectures entitled *The Bronze Age of the Old World* and, by the beginning of the 1960s, he decided to write a sort of concluding monograph on this topic. N.Ya. Marr's academic conceptualisation, once dominant in archaeological circles of the USSR, presumed that similar social and economic conditions provoked similar traits of material culture. It has been widely criticised (also by Kisselyoff himself) since I.V. Stalin's article *Marxism and Problems of Linguistic* (1950), but in fact the latent influence of this idea continued to shape the state of minds and influenced the attempts to reveal similarities in the material culture of ancient societies, which existed synchronically or at the same phase of social development (Klein 2014, 141, 364-71). Anyway, a special interest in the forms of different working tools and wares, decorative motifs and patterns was considered to be key aspects for writing ancient history, and a close friend and colleague of S. Kisselyoff, Prof. Artemy Artsikhovsky, proclaimed it as:

> Archaeology is history armed with a spade. (144-55)

4 Minor Outcomes and Other Consequences of the Visit

The trip to Cyprus was the final overseas voyage of Prof. Kisselyoff. He underwent an unsuccessful operation and passed away due to complications on November 9, 1962 (Kyzlasov 1995, 166; Yelnitsky 2014, 95). In the Annual Report of the Director of Department of Antiquities of the same year he was already mentioned as "the late Professor S.V. Kiseliof" (Dikaios 1963, 6), indicating that news of his passing had reached the island. The following year, Porphyrios Dikaios left his position at the Department of Antiquities, retired, and permanently departed from Cyprus (Karageorghis 2007, 71).

During the 1960s, the next generation of Soviet archaeologists continued to engage with Cyprus, yet none held administrative or academic positions comparable to those of Professor Kisselyoff. They were younger, more attuned to contemporary Mediterranean affairs, and well-travelled across Europe and the Near East. However, their public influence remained limited, and they lacked the authority within the Academy of Sciences necessary to establish new institutions abroad.

Following Professor Kisselyoff's death, in December 1962, another Soviet archaeologist from the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, Natalia A. Sidorova (1924-2001), a specialist in ancient Greek vase painting, visited Cyprus as part of a delegation from the USSR-Greece Friendship Society. Her brief report, published in the Journal

of Ancient History, suggests that her visit was short. She met with P. Dikaios and Chr. Ioannides and visited only a handful of sites: Nicosia and the Cyprus Museum, Salamis, Kourion, the Limassol Archaeological Museum, and Panagia Angeloktisti in Kiti (Sidorova 1963). Her account expresses sincere admiration for the high standard of archaeological work and the wealth of monuments on the island (192-3). However, as her article indicates, the primary purpose of her visit was to engage with the Cyprus-USSR Friendship Society and conduct public diplomacy with Cypriot figures sympathetic to the Soviet Union, such as trade union leaders and AKEL activists (185).

Almost two years later, in November 1964, Valery Sergeevich Titov (1932-1990), a lesser-known colleague of Professor Kisselyoff, visited Cyprus as part of another Friendship Society delegation (Karageorghis 1965, 4; Titov 1981a, 6). Titov, who worked at the Institute of Archaeology in the Department of Neolithic and Bronze Age Studies, had assisted Kisselyoff in researching *The Chalcolithic and the Bronze Age of Europe and Asia* (Titov 1959; 1981b). Details of his visit are scarce, but it is known that, like Kisselyoff, he travelled to Cyprus via Greece. After this journey, he defended his dissertation on Neolithic Greece, later published as a monograph of international renown (Titov 1969). Over the years, Dr. Titov travelled extensively, and while organising an exhibition on Soviet archaeology, he remained in Western Europe for an unprecedentedly long period for a Soviet citizen – from August 1966 to September 1967. However, he never returned to Cyprus (Titov 1981b; Artyomenko 1969, 108-9).

In March 1965, Anna K. Korovina (1924-2000), specialist in classical archaeology and employee of the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts visited Cyprus as a member of the Soviet Women's Committee and took part in the International Women's Congress (Ionova 1965; Karageorghis 1966, 6; Antonova, Luganskaya, Streltsov 1966). Afterwards, in 1967, she returned to Cyprus again and examined the monuments and studied the collection of the Cyprus Museum in Nicosia (Karageorghis 1968a, 6; Antonova, Georgiyevskaya, Sedova 1968; Korovina, Polevoy, Sidorova 1976, 7). Anna Korovina was a member of the Communist Party and besides her archaeological research and work in the Pushkin Museum she was also an active member of the Soviet Committee for the support of Greek democratic politicians (which existed between 1967-74) and got acquainted with a number of Greek emigrants.

A.K. Korovina and N.A. Sidorova worked together in the Pushkin Museum, they both knew Prof. Kisselyoff (the former even took part in the professor's excavations in Siberia), and they formed a little taskforce who managed to establish a collaboration with their Cypriot colleagues of the Department of Antiquities: Angeliki Pieridou, Kyriakos and Ino Nicolaou, and Athanasios Papageorghiou. From the Cypriot side it was Angeliki Pieridou who played special

role in communication with the USSR[18] since, together with her husband Georgios Philippou Pierides – Director of the Public Library in Famagusta (Iakovou 1996, 9-11) –, they took part in the activities of the Cyprus-USSR Friendship Society and received Soviet archaeologists during their visits to Cyprus in 1964-67. They also visited the Soviet Union during the period when the president of the Soviet Friendship Society was Ivan P. Kondakov, who was both a colleague of G.P. Pierides as a librarian and head of Lenin's Library in Moscow. During these visits Angeliki Pieridou had the opportunity to examine the ancient collections of the main museums of the USSR.[19]

The most significant outcome of this collaboration was the exhibition *The Treasures of Cyprus*, held in Moscow and Leningrad in the autumn of 1970 at the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts and the State Hermitage (Karageorghis 1971, 3-5; 2007, 104; Korovina, Polevoy, Sidorova 1976, 7). Korovina and Sidorova also co-authored two popular books: *Goroda Kypra*, a guide to Cyprus's archaeological monuments (Korovina, Sidorova 1973), and *The Treasures of Cyprus*, which provided an overview of the Moscow exhibition (Korovina, Polevoy, Sidorova 1976).[20] However, following the tragic events of 1974, these activities largely ceased for both personal and geopolitical reasons. Angeliki Pieridou passed away on October 23, 1973 (Iakovou 1996, 11; Karageorghis 2007, 107), and for her Soviet colleagues, Cypriot archaeology had never been a primary focus. Instead, they continued to travel extensively, studying ancient sites across Syria, Italy, Morocco, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Romania, Greece, and Turkey, excavating Greek colonies along the northern Black Sea coast, and fulfilling their responsibilities at the Pushkin Museum (Korovina 1979). The absence of governmental encouragement, combined with unfavourable political circumstances, effectively ended Soviet interest in Cypriot archaeology for decades.

The only Soviet specialist in Cypriot archaeology of that time was Yuri Aleksandrovich Saveliev (1935-2008), who prepared his PhD thesis under the direction of Prof. Blavatsky in the Institute of Archaeology and was a member of the group of foreign archaeology. His thesis was successfully defended in 1966 and became the first comprehensive study of the archaeology of Cyprus in the early Iron Age in Soviet historiography. However, uneasy personal relations with his scientific director, Prof. Blavatsky, influenced the decision of Y.A. Saveliev to leave the Institute of Archaeology and continue his work

18 Karageorghis, pers. comm.; Marina Pieridou, pers. comm.

19 Marina Pieridou, pers. comm.

20 It is remarkable, that the book was ready to press in August 1974, but the issue was delayed until 1976 – probably for political reasons.

again in the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, where he concentrated on the study of cuneiform inscriptions from the Near East.[21]

An intriguing document from the archive of the Russian Academy of Sciences reveals that in September 1962, the Society for Progress and Development of Famagusta requested financial assistance from the Soviet Academy of Sciences to support excavations at Ancient Salamis. Soviet Ambassador in Cyprus Pavel Yermoshin endorsed the initiative and considered the possibility to arrange Soviet archaeological mission in Cyprus (Yermoshin 1962). However, the Director of the Institute of Archaeology in Moscow, Prof. Boris Rybakov rejected, answering that Soviet archaeologists had no plans to excavate in Cyprus (Zhukov 1962) and all the efforts of Sergey Kisselyoff and the Soviet diplomats in Cyprus in this field were lost in vain. This refusal seems especially as strange and unreasonable, if we take into account that in the USSR there was a ready excavating team of Prof. Blavatsky and his colleagues who just in the previous year had to stop their work in Albania because of political reasons and could be involved into a new Mediterranean project. Who can imagine, how permanently acting Soviet archaeological institution could influence upon the political islandscape during the Turkish invasion of 1974?

Ultimately, despite significant academic and governmental efforts, no Soviet academic school of Cypriot archaeology emerged in the 1960s. A combination of personal factors and shifting Soviet foreign policy following the retirement of N.S. Khrushchev led to these possibilities remaining unrealised.

The Soviet archaeologists were limited by their lifetime, social system, political authorities, type of scientific organisation and funding, migration visas, personal likes, and dislikes etc. Furthermore, they could play their role as agents of the 'soft power' and public diplomacy only depending on the decisions of the Soviet government and party functionaries. The contrast between the more than modest Soviet results in Cyprus and the success of the Polish archaeological mission in Paphos, which originated almost in the same years (since 1965), is evident (Karageorghis 2007, 81-2; Papuci-Władyka 2011, 413-15) and reveals significant difference in the position of the archaeological (and other academic) institutions in both countries during the Cold War, and the grade and mode of their incorporation into the global world of science.

At the same time, the Soviet archaeological missions successfully worked for many years in Bulgaria (1961, 1963-71), Hungary (since 1971), Iraq (1969-80), Syria (1987-2010), Yemen (1983-2010) (Merpert 2011, 219-367; Makarov 2019, 129-38), and Afghanistan

21 Andrey Agafonov, pers. comm.

(1969-79) demonstrating that – in favourable political conjecture, with governmental support, and with a significant amount of human, financial and material resources – Soviet archaeology could be sent abroad and produce long-living academic projects and research schools.

While the personal evidence can reveal, in some respects, the role of the human factor in the history of Soviet-Cypriot archaeological collaboration, the scale of political influence on this process is still kept in silence. Yet, silence itself can sometimes speak volumes.

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A Land for Strangers
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Some Reflections of a Foreign Orthodox Priest in Cyprus

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Abstract This paper stems from the author's service as a priest in the Cypriot village of Askas, offering insights into Cypriot (village) culture from an outsider's perspective. The village serves as a microcosm where community dynamics and nature shape Cypriot culture and religion. Examining urban-rural dynamics and cities' cultural role, the author asserts that, despite Cyprus' historical dynamism, enduring constants emphasise the importance of 'roots' amidst migration. The priest and Church play a central role in fostering social cohesion in Cypriot society.

Keywords Cypriot society. Village culture. Community culture. Migration. Church. Priest.

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1 Introduction

The following is a small reflection drawn from the author's personal experience as an Orthodox priest in Cyprus. After a year-long service in the village of Tseri, he moved to the mountain village of Askas, in the district of the capital Lefkosia and in the Troodos Mountain range, where he served as a priest in the years 2010-15. The experience itself was peculiar in many respects. First and foremost, it is uncommon for a foreign priest to serve in a traditional Cypriot village. Adding to the peculiarity, the author is a Czech Orthodox priest, hailing from a predominantly atheist country, where orthodoxy is not even a traditional confession. Given its singularity this experience seems worth relating. Hopefully holding a broader interdisciplinary value, the following will touch upon observations about the migratory nature of human interaction and life in the context of Cyprus.

2 Askas, a Cypriot Village Between Departures and Returns

After looking back and establishing a kind of common denominator of contemporary life in Cyprus as seen through the prism of the author, which is also related perhaps to the Cypriot historical context, one can state that it is a dynamic of return and departure. Cyprus is an island of departures and arrivals, of returns and dreams of returning. Of cultures leaving and new ones entering. Of lost battles and battle victories. A story of the power and humbleness of the Church. Of people in exile and people coming back. Of resilience and defeat. Though this may sound as a romantic exaggeration, in fact it reflects the actual situation in Cyprus, whether the inhabitants of Cyprus realise it or not. As in many other areas of Europe, the interplay with the past represents a kind of burden, requiring the contemporary inhabitants of Cyprus to rediscover new ways of understanding their past within the dynamics of a globalised world.

Most of the episodes recalled here took place in Askas, a small village near to the larger Palaichori in the Troodos mountains. A few of them instead happened in Tseri, formerly a village now a suburb of Lefkosia. Both the villages (i.e., Askas and Tseri) are affiliated with the recently established Metropolitanate of Tamassos and Orinis. This was created on the foundations of one of the oldest dioceses in Cyprus. Tamassos is indeed associated with the ordination of St. Heraklidios by the apostle Paul and Barnabas (in the year 45).

Askas is noteworthy due to many reasons. In numerous mountain villages in the Troodos time seems to have stood still with their architecture, social culture and art bearing witness to a remarkable continuity with past centuries. Askas, for example, has a long-standing

iconographic tradition from the twelfth century onwards. Moreover, its inhabitants can trace back their ancestors for many generations, even if modern large-scale emigration makes the populations' development and its social fabric more complicated.

Next to the village there is a small valley with beautiful and tall Mediterranean pine trees. Here you can find a tiny chapel dedicated to both Saint Paraskevi and Saint Christine. Popular both in the West and East, Christine the martyr very likely originated from either Italy or Phoenicia. Her dedication is rare in Cyprus. In this sense, the chapel itself proves the conflation of the Greek orthodox tradition with Western influences brought to Cyprus by foreign rulers. The chapel icons indeed display in their lower registers the figures of benefactors according to the Western iconographic style of that period. Given its high artistic value, one may wonder why this building was built in the middle of nowhere with no houses nearby. Though located in a remote area, this chapel is a valuable example of Byzantine art blended with foreign influences.

2.1 Departures

Like many mountain villages in Cyprus, Askas has been affected by the large-scale migrations to other Cypriot regions, to bigger cities or simply abroad. Sometimes the villages successfully handle this phenomenon, but they often simply go extinct. Needless to say, these results are detrimental to the preservation and further development of local Cypriot culture. Such a situation is not peculiar to Cyprus. Quite the opposite, it is typical of almost all the contemporary national narratives. While consistently endangering villages with its economic policies, the modern state still publicly promotes the preservation of the village as a stronghold of traditional culture.

Living in large cities such as Paphos, Limassol or Lefkosia mostly entails an anonymous existence, detached from a constant or static and specific place, which would be normally offered by the village setting. Here the city in Cyprus resembles any other city in the world. This relates to the broader question of whether contemporary large cities are capable of facilitating, producing and not merely absorbing culture as such. We could argue that in larger cities any culture is dependent on continuous migration from outside. The city does produce culture, but this always draws upon external inputs whether historical or contemporary. In the case of Askas, interpersonal relationships are the primary factor in cultural development. The question of is whether and how cities affect such a development is another story.

Of course, one may believe that any specific culture, such as that of Askas, is not necessary at all, since culture is an artificial construct without concrete relevance. However, the Cypriot context

demonstrates that culture is interrelated with other aspects of humanity, e.g. society and sustainability (Duxbury, Cullen, Jordi 2012). The destruction of village culture thus means destroying mankind in one way or another. The loss of these traditional contexts appears even more sad when no alternative is offered.

Completely abandoned villages constitute an interesting phenomenon in Cyprus. The reasons for abandonment are various, e.g. economic and military (Şenol Sert 2010, 240). For example, an old Bronze Age site is now an abandoned village, full of ruins surrounded by vegetation, and is found in the valley next to the village of Palaichori (close to Askas). According to local interviewees, the village was abandoned after undefined and infectious illnesses and other odd events occurred. The inhabitants spontaneously decided to move out. Nowadays no one dares to live there. The experience has remained in the collective memory and hinders resettlement.

2.1.1 Mobility and Social Interactions

Many of the mountain villages in Troodos were and still are independent from each other, both culturally and socially. Even today communication and social interaction between neighbouring villages, such as Askas, Phterichoudi or Palaichori, is limited for one reason or another. Difficult mobility conditions may have contributed to this situation, but other factors play a role as well. Among them, the local mindset, according to which the village is the primary self-sufficient unit in Troodos. Earlier on, wandering priests came from other parishes just to serve the liturgy in each village and then left. This surely fostered some contact between villages. Contact was also ensured by wandering salesmen.

Today contact is easier. Nonetheless, vestiges of bygone eras are still evident. For example, an elderly man in a fifty-year-old van, selling completely "ridiculous and useless things", used to visit Askas. After decades of shouting and calling during the various sales visits around villages, he got a high-pitched voice that easily attracted the locals' attention. However, his products were so distant from the real needs of the villagers that he never sold anything. Still, this never discouraged him from coming back and stopping his van in the main square of the village. He probably knew he would not sell anything but his long-standing habit prompted him to go there nonetheless. It is evident that in the past sellers like this man were of pivotal importance not as to exchange commodities as to bring news. Circulation of information was indeed particularly difficult in mountain areas, regardless of the small size of Cyprus.

The relevance of mobility to the survival of small villages has been acknowledged by the government as well. According to local

sources, the government was invested in mobility policies especially after the occupation in 1974, in order to make the population of mountain regions move to cities, notably Lefkosia. This apparently abstract claim holds significant relevance, as Askas' contemporary depopulation is directly linked to this 'government policy'. In recalling the recent past, the villagers often expressed emotional anger, as they find commonalities with the current situation.

2.1.2 Communal Lifestyle

2.1.2.1 Agriculture

As a general rule, migration to cities leads to a change in lifestyle, so that younger generations show an increasing disinterest in agricultural activity. When looking at the uncultivated and abandoned fields and terraces of Askas, one can be caught by a general depression. The very same terraces that men strove for carving out from the rugged and harsh mountains now lay uncultivated slowly deteriorating. This is not only a question of agriculture but primarily of culture and way of life. Often foreigners are the ones working in the fields, younger people losing touch with physical labour. Fields used to be owned by various families. Despite the unavoidable land fragmentation, the yield was excellent, as the fields were systematically and effectively cultivated through various processes (Burton, King 1982, 187).

The land and landscape formed the culture of every Cypriot village. Somehow many people who migrated to cities thought that they could carry their cultural characteristics with them, but sooner or later they realised that their individual and collective culture was tied to the land and vice versa. You could not take your identity with you, either you had to return or build a new one. Culture here was linked with religion understood here also as a belief in the unpredictability of nature, and this unpredictability demanded respect and awe. Religion in this sense is nothing else than the belief that you cannot control forces and you have to simply 'believe'.

The younger generation from Askas and elsewhere in the mountain areas has lost contact with the land. The relationship with farmland is a complex one in Cyprus. After selling their lands to live a more comfortable lifestyle more comfortably in the city, some richer landowners and farmers have regretted their decision, often missing their previous occupation in the fields. Causing a lacking sense of community, decreasing population further facilitated migration. In the villages affected by depopulation, people felt more and more isolated and eventually decided to move to cities, hoping for greater social connection. This created a spiral still ongoing. The lesser the

people living in the villages the greater the pressure on those left to move out as well.

The community-based mentality of Cyprus strikes any foreigner the most. This is especially true for a priest used to the strong individualist environment typical of Central Europe. However, it is not only about a different philosophical paradigm (i.e., Western individualism vs Eastern collectivism) but rather about concrete implications in terms of societal life. A communal based society relies on a particular, socio-cultural, agricultural and religious environment in a given human context. Therefore, we may suggest that collectivism – to be intended as a tension to community –, or rather the community as such, accrues to the internal core of the human being and is not an artificial or ethnic construct. Accordingly, it does not relate to any East/South/West division. In other words, community is essential to human survival. The question whether other contemporary models of societal life can offer such a community-based platform is still unanswered. Most communities who are dependent on nature for their essential needs and closely related to nature do have this communal character.

Many people who moved from Askas to cities have realised that preserving their village-based communal lifestyle is impossible, and when they come to visit back in the village, they complain about it. The former wider community of the village is replaced by sporadic and chaotic individual relations in the cities. What, however, still preserves the communal nature of Cyprus generally is that all inhabitants of larger cities occasionally visit the villages of their ancestors, so as to maintain some relations with their co-villagers and relatives as well.

2.1.2.2 Buildings and Architecture

The backbone of the village's communal life has always been the church and the *kafenio* 'coffee house'. However, even these institutions underwent transformation due to migration. While the Orthodox Church unsurprisingly builds new churches to accommodate the growing populations in the cities, the individual village parishes are struggling to fulfil their role of being a cohesive community force. Nevertheless, the city parishes cannot fulfil the same central role of those in traditional smaller communities. This also relates to the role of priests. City priests usually live elsewhere, thereby having an anonymous relationship with their parishes and the believers, whereas in the villages priests used to live inside the village, so as to be fully integrated in their communities after years of pastoral work.

The villagers always had the opportunity to know their priest very well. This did not always translate into positive feelings towards the

priest or vice versa but it did testify to an intimate relationship between the priest and his community. While in the village the priest and his parish were active 24/7, the city parish usually livens up on Sundays and feast days. Being the community's foundations is the primary role of the church and the parish. Given that the city parish is progressively losing this role in the society, there are only two possibilities for the traditional parish, either to survive by changing its way of reaching out or to disappear by making way for the individualism and anonymity of the city. In the past, cities such as Lefkosia did develop a village community-alike environment. The medieval buildings and planning of the old town in Lefkosia indeed suggest a sense of well-knit communities. Older houses usually have an enclosed courtyard which very likely was the gathering point of the extended family and the workspace of craft manufacturing. Such an architectural organisation undoubtedly facilitated community growth.

Obviously, modern cities do not always follow this architectural tradition. It seems that previously the city was modelled after community contexts, whereas now this is not always the case. The naturally community-based architecture has been evolving over time, as the city architecture responds to the needs and character of the community involved. If there is no need for a sense of community, there is no architecture of this kind. Whether intentionally or not, the houses in Askas, similarly to most mountain villages, are more or less adjoining, sharing walls and other facilities which foster a close-knit community environment, at least architecturally. Houses in Askas were made of stone; the roof was made from bamboo straw and slim wooden beams covers by tiles. As usual, the architecture was best suited for the local climate very cold during the winter and hot in the summer. The rooms were tiny and often more people shared small rooms. Stones were used for road pavements as well.

The stones are sharp in Askas, recalling the mountains or caves typically depicted in Byzantine icons. The churches in the Troodos also display a type of architecture usual in Cyprus but rather resembling northern European buildings with sharp angled wooden roofs to endure strong snowfalls (Pelekanos 2016, 18). Furthermore, the traditional house in Askas also offered space for mules, the standard transport means, as well as for other animals such as goats. In their lower parts, or basements, houses contained huge tanks for water and wine. These giant ceramic bowls were conical in shape. Given the variable supply of water, these containers were crucial.

Modernity also carries with itself various new elements, which are at odds with the local landscape and the traditional architecture. They appear as kind of unwanted intrusions destroying the uniformity of the community as a whole. For example, in the centre of Askas one can find many dysfunctional cars left by their former owners on the road. These cars contrast with the fabric of the village and its

surroundings. In the centre of the village below the main road, there is a giant sycamore, standing out in the area. This tree is at the corner of winding road next to a stream. During the night big rats used to climb the tree up and down along the branches in strange dynamic movements. Underneath the tree there was a rusty wreckage of a car from the seventies. Father Andreas, a retired priest from Askas, used to sit on his balcony above the main road. Along was with the author, he was always present in the village. They shared the impression that the Church and the *kafenio* were the only stable lighthouses around which everything was constantly changing and moving about.

2.1.2.3 Land and House Property

Compared to Greece, owning a house is considered extremely important in Cyprus. The Cypriot parents have the unwritten obligation to provide their offspring with means (e.g., land) to help build a house upon marriage. Due to the available resources, in Askas the parents usually give to their children one of the already owned parcels instead of a new one. More recently, the chances of owning a house have significantly decreased. The economic hardship was such as there were many bank foreclosures.

Despite everything, it is typical of the village tradition not to sell the house or the land one owns. The Church is particularly conservative in this regard. It rarely sells its own buildings, as its constitution forbids it. When this happens, it is usually fraught with public outcries and scandals.[1] In Askas any attempts to sell the parish lands would be tantamount to a declaration of war. In Askas itself, there were many empty houses and a few well-maintained. Their owners could leave for years or months coming back sporadically. Nonetheless they were so attached to their land/house that rarely someone decides to sell their property. Such an attitude seemingly complies with the 'curse' of all migrants, who keep bearing a certain image of their home without ever being able to discard it. The former *Muchtaris* 'village chieftain' could mention many houses that were built on the basis of various idealistic or romantic plans but are now empty or only sporadically inhabited. The most striking example is newly built house on top of the highest local peak in an almost inaccessible area. The former *Muchtaris* stated:

> There was this young man who insisted on building a house here. I sold him an 'impossible' piece of land high up the mountains with

1 *Katastatikos chartis tis Agiotatis ekklisias tis Kyprou* 1979.

no possible use. He built a house there but I have not seen him come here for years.

Many people originating from Askas, maintained contact with the village by visiting on Saturdays and Sundays. They were called the *Savatokiriakes* 'weekenders'. These are usually people who grew up in the village and then moved to cities, but still come mostly every Saturday and Sunday. Not surprisingly the more generations pass by, the less attachment to Askas remains. It is obvious how people who have more responsibilities in the city gradually reduce their visits to Askas to once, or even less, a year.

2.2 Returns

Nowadays, there is a general interest in rediscovering one's heritage and roots in Askas. While a couple of decades ago, the catch call was to move for work or other reasons elsewhere, today there are growing numbers of individuals who decide to move back to the village seeking peace and comfort. Adapting to village life is difficult for those coming back from the cities or simply for city folk desiring to live in the village for the first time. The most recent developments show a remarkable interest in living in Askas. The fabric of the village also consists of individuals living alone or a solitary life for one reason or another. For example, many started businesses there. There are also some eccentric individuals.

2.2.1 Marios

Marios is a young man who earlier on moved to Lefkosia with his first wife. He is a very temperamental individual who is easy to provoke. Life did not turn out well for him in Lefkosia as he got divorced. Recalling when being alone in a flat, he remarked: "I did not know anyone around me". "The neighbours did not talk to me, and I felt isolated". He then found a new wife who did not mind the isolation of a mountain village – at least until now – and moved back to Askas. He bought a small parcel in the area close to Saint Paraskevi/Christine. His house is at the edge of a small hill, not far from another isolated property. This other property is made of wooden beams overlooking the majestic valley. This wooden house belongs to a rather eccentric individual Michailis, who built it in Russian style, as a log house with wood imported from Russia. Marios is now learning to cultivate the land, and has hobbies, such as collecting old English Morris cars and renovating them.

To build the house, he took out a mortgage. Eventually, he built the house, which is difficult to access during the winter period. And

he loves the peace and quiet of the neighbourhood. Regardless of the isolation has maintained friendly relations with everyone around, and even became the local village chieftain (*Muchtaris*) later. He is calmer now no longer following his temper, matured as many mature and return somewhere.

2.2.2 Georgios

There are other houses built on isolated parcels around Askas, often testifying to the various degrees of the psychological state of the individual who built them or began building them. This is so, since they were often started by people who dealt with their psychosomatic issues through a project of building a house. Many Cypriots see building a house as a kind of hobby or therapeutical process. The richer are obsessed in building more and more houses. The poor simply leave a house unfinished if they do not have the resources to finish it.

After many years of living with his mother Nikki, Georgios eventually found a foreign lady (from the Philippines) twenty years younger and married her. He is now in his fifties and is a chain-smoker. As he already had a heart operation, he has been discouraged from building a house by himself, and his mother was willing to leave him her own house. He has insisted on building his own house, nonetheless. Now the couple struggles to conceive children but, hopefully this will change. It seems that foreign women are more inclined to accept the rather isolated lifestyle in the villages.

2.2.3 2.2.3 Andreas

Andreas, who has recently died, was still young when he returned to the village after his wife had left him. His little daughter decided to stay with her mother upon the divorce. Therefore, he could easily move back into his parents' house, still on the brink of poverty. Having six children (four sons and two daughters), the parents could count on the woman's revenue only. The husband had often been unemployed because of his precarious heart conditions. The wife cleaned houses and public roads but also worked as a cook in some local restaurants.

Andreas' father did not have a good relationship with Father Andreas due to a past conflict between the two. This "prevented" him – as he put it –, from going to the church for many years. Andreas stated many times, that he loves the Church, but because he does not like the priest Father Andreas, he simply does not go to church services. The author told him that this should not be an excuse for not going to church, but no, he insisted that "until Father Andreas will be

there", he will not go to church. After some time, Andreas' mother, who was the backbone of his household, died suddenly. Andreas' father was devastated, always expecting himself to die before his wife.

Upon his return to Askas, Andreas settled in with the intention of renovating his parents, house. A former employee of Mercedes-Benz, he was an extremely talented auto mechanic. He did not have his own garage and was forced to repair cars directly on the road parked next to his house. He was often lying underneath them dangerously close to passing cars, lifting the broken cars with a primitive metal mechanism. Villagers considered him a genius in his own right, and everyone from the village brought their cars for repair. This created even greater wonder at the fact that he returned not using his skills to make a career elsewhere. Suffering from diabetes, he died in his late thirties due to a sudden heart attack. At that time, many of his brothers and sisters were unmarried or divorced testifying to the difficult times in Cyprus. They all returned together to their parents' home, seeking comfort and stability.

2.2.4 Michailis

Michailis, who was in his sixties at the time of the interview, was from a rather wealthy family. They indeed owned a considerable number of small plots in Askas. Like many other older people, Michailis was given an astronomical payout upon his retirement. According to the Cypriot regulations, high pension payouts used to be the norm, but they predictably turned out, to be unrealistic. However, using (part of) this pensioner money, he built a log timber house overlooking valley of Saint Paraskevi. This seemed rather strange, since he owned several houses in Askas and could have stayed in anyone of them.

Michailis loved his village Askas, but his wife of many years did not share his enthusiasm for the village. She found it to isolated and preferred to stay in Larnaka, where the couple had a house also. This gradually developed into the couple's mutual alienation and Michalis then found a Ukrainian woman to help him around in Askas, which however led to further problems in his marriage. His log timber house stands on the edge of a precipice with a beautiful view overlooking all over to Lefkosia. The place can get very windy. He looks at the view down below overlooking the Cypriot plateau. We can wonder whether he has a true bird's-eye view on things. Michailis was just not satisfied in any of his houses, but perhaps the problem was not with the place where he lived but with his soul. In any event, his journey led him to be even more isolated.

3 The Church between Departures from and Returns to the Village

The Church and its monasteries have imperceptibly but steadily sustained the local areas in many ways, as in the past. One might claim that, beyond the question of religious belief, European scholarship has overlooked the significant role of priests and, churches in the development of communities. Rather, recent debate has focused on the positive relations between natural environment and monasteries or churches (Mallarach, Corcó Juviñá, Papayannis 2014, 357), but arguably this is only one aspect and there are many more to be explored from a social and anthropological perspective.

As a priest serving in a village, the author has repeatedly realised that 'simply being there' is one of the most relevant tasks of a priest. The priest and the monastery or church are like reference points in times of confusion and loss of perspective, as it happens every day. This was true in pre-Christian times as well, though according to current religious traditions.

3.1 Feasts and Liturgy

The Church's contribution to local areas can be primarily seen in relation to religious feasts and liturgical rites.

3.1.1 Mnimosina

The priest facilitates and at the same time in a way symbolises family and community gathering such as those for the commemoration of the dead (*mnimosina*). The priest is always invited for the *mnimosina* coffee usually after the liturgy on Sundays. People who commemorate their deceased during the liturgy or during vespers invite the priest to come to their houses for a coffee or some other refreshment, where members of the extended family also are present.

The commemoration of the deceased is a long-standing Mediterranean tradition. It does not only express some link with the past, but also enlivens the idea that the community incorporates all the cosmos, the living, the deceased and the future generations symbolised by the children. Even those who usually neglect to visit the village, do so on the date of the commemoration of their deceased relatives. The commemoration of the deceased is an important aspect of how villagers see a continuity with the past and delineates the ahistorical nature of the village itself.

Father Andreas of Askas told the author that in the earlier days, priests would descend on mules to other villages travelling around

serving liturgies were it was required to do so, and then after a couple of days or weeks re-emerging back home. This kind of liturgical movement of course helped to create liturgical unity in style and the dissemination of one type of liturgical style of singing, serving etc., to other areas. Or on the contrary occasioned the evolution of new forms. This also betrays a kind of mobility of the priesthood.

3.1.2 The Groups of 'Theologians'

The priest's sole association with prayer, social activities and community work has partly led to the emergence of a specialised corps of *theologoi* 'theologians', who supposedly provide theoretical theology and are usually found preaching in the church. In other Orthodox traditions there is no such phenomenon and the priest is expected to be fully educated and able to preach by himself. Perhaps the practice of professional theologians/preachers is a remnant of earlier periods. Under the various occupational periods of Cyprus, Orthodox priests did not have the chance to receive education and the latter was a privilege of non-clerics. Even earlier, lay people used to participate to a greater extent in the liturgy, just as in the synagogue for example, with preaching alternating between people. Or it may draw upon the Byzantine tradition of professional teachers and theologians.

It can happen that the official theologian/preacher offers sermons of a rather substandard sort or lesser quality. This might appear funny, when thinking of their avowed rhetorical skills, sometimes even patronised by some bishops. Father Andreas of Askas had a 'healthy disrespect' towards these wandering theologians, and, with the pragmatism typical of the village used to tease them because of their purely rhetorical and completely detached from reality sermons. The villager's evangelisation is consistently attempted. Occasional lectures are given by visiting missionaries to offer education. However, villagers generally distrust such a theoretical approach to religion and rather prefer a kind of realistic spirituality.

The author of this article used to give sermons frequently. On such occasions, Father Andreas, who was still alive at that time, would stand at the side of the church and shout during the sermon "Oh come on, it is too long, stop please", or "now that is an observation we did not know". He used to constantly interrupt the sermons, complaining about them being too boring and things like this. Similarly, to an opera performance, where people throw tomatoes if the singer is not up to their expectations. Father Andreas' behaviour would be unacceptable anywhere else but is indicative of the villagers, realistic spirituality and their inclination towards truth and 'real' life. The author learned to appreciate these interruptions, as they made the sermons even more lively.

3.1.3 Local Saints and their Cult

The rediscovery of a local saint, or the popularisation of his or her cult, can provide a new stimulus for the local community's development. In the neighbouring village of Fterikoudi, there is a cave where a local saint named Avvakum reportedly lived, and whose body was buried there. Visits to his tomb are associated with various healings, including in relation to hearing. Recently a few monks have arrived and established there a small heritage. This has attracted interest in the area. As the neighbouring village Askas has benefited from this too.

The region where Askas is located also holds the popular monastery of Machairas. Yet on the road to the monastery of Machairas from the direction of Palaichori there is a completely abandoned village. Given the arid mountainous surroundings with the little vegetation except for isolated trees, the conditions are extreme and inhospitable. Accessibility to the area is so difficult that mules or donkeys would probably be the only means of transportation useful here. Located in a dry valley amidst tall sharp hills with arid ground and stones, the village cannot rely on agriculture. The houses were necessarily built above each other in terrace style. Yet, regardless of this desolation, the owners are reluctant to sell their lands. Rather, strolling around the village, one can see old worn-down shutters on rusty nails hanging in the wind as if inviting people into the houses.

3.2 The Land and the Crop

When speaking of de-population, one should keep in mind that many of the villages in the Troodos mountains are products of ancient migration from the coastlines. It is a well-established fact that many villages such as Askas at first welcomed people escaping from the Ottoman, Latin or Arab invasions. The rather unusual dedication of one of Askas' churches to John the Forerunner and his beheading might also suggest this. This dedication indeed evokes an atmosphere of death and imminent martyrdom. Coastal inhabitants then decided to move up to the mountains, in order to find greater security and peace even if this essentially meant a decrease in agricultural opportunity (Papacostas 2014, 192).

Considering the extremely bad conditions in the mountainous regions, any long-term habitation must have been the result of desperation in most cases. As proved by the archaeological records, it often took some time for the newcomers to find place worth settling in. Askas itself seems to have been originally founded in a lower area a few kilometres from the present site. The ruins of a small chapel dedicated to saint George are indeed located in that area. Perhaps also

filled with houses then, the site of the chapel was later abandoned in favour of the present site, located at a higher altitude. It was common for a village to be first located in one place and then moved to another. The area around the above-mentioned chapel of saint Paraskevi/Christine next to Askas might have undergone a similar process. However, nobody knows whether this chapel was intended as a structure separated from or integrated into the village.

The obsession with owning land does not however correspond to an equally obsessive desire to work in agriculture. Terrace fields and hard-earned agricultural land has fallen largely into decay. Observing as the tiny fields built in terrace style into the hard stony mountains, we can only imagine how difficult it was to fight for every inch of arable land. The mountainous land around Askas consists of high positioned terraces which in today's world would hardly be considered as worthy of being cultivated. The terraces are made from stone laboriously carried up or locally gathered and structured into *skala* small-spaced 'terraces', where only three olive trees and perhaps some vegetables can fit. The water had to be carried on mules, or donkeys. Travelling through the standard path of a local farmer again, the author himself climbed up on one of these terraces in the mountain. If one was to imagine bringing water and supplies all the way up, it would seem necessary the whole day to complete the task. Let alone working in the sun with primitive tools. The terraces were usually filled with olive trees, wine trees/scrubs, and almond trees. Poor families used to have only a few terraces with likewise a few trees. It was not rare for a family to offer a single tree as a donation to the church. The parish in Askas would own individual trees given by donors.

The younger generation has largely lost interest in cultivating inherited land, thus many of the terraces are going to ruin, like perhaps village culture itself. This is also true for the wine shrubs, which are left uncultivated. The uncultivated vineyards are an even more sad sight, given the prestigious role wine production used to have in the past. Though water supply has improved, cultivation has not grown. The inhabitants of Askas used to wake up early in the morning to their fields, with the priests being no exception. These people were so used to this work that they could never stop, not even if significantly handicapped by health or other issues.

Priesthood did not replace one's life as a farmer; it was rather understood as an addition to it. One could easily encounter the late Father Andreas walking with his stick to a terrace. Similarly, Father Neophitos from the neighbouring village of Palaichori also lived a humble life, working hard until his old age. Both the houses of Father Andreas and Father Neophitos were extremely humble inside. Old worn-down wooden furniture, walls unacceptably covered with dust and black dust from the furnaces burning wood or coal. Walls

with extensive cracks. Humble small rooms. The two priests would sit on their animals and tend to the fields, then come to serve in the church. They did not need wristwatches, because they knew by the very minute when to come down to the village, pray and serve in the church. The harmonious relationship with nature corresponded with a harmonious relationship with the liturgical cycle. Instead, the new generation of priests is quite different. Priests nowadays come to serve the villages from Lefkosia or the cities without living in the local parish. The connection with the village and its land, and the Church is thus disrupted.

3.3 Politics

The Orthodox Church has had a special role in Cyprus, which was further enhanced by the historical developments themselves. The relationship of people with the Orthodox Church is much more intimate than it is in Greece. In the framework of the occupation in 1974, the Church was viewed as the defender of Cypriot cultural and ethnic values. In fact, the resilience of the Orthodox Church is remarkable. Cyprus was first (from 1191 to 1571) occupied by Latin Christian powers (from 1191 by the Lusignan's and from 1489 by the Venetians) then by the Ottomans, and eventually subdued to the British rule. Given these events, complex processes making the community and the Church a unity must have contributed to the survival of the Orthodox Church.

However, just as in Greece, the leftist tendency in Cypriot politics and population, as well as the internal formalisation of the Church itself, had undervalued the role of the Church in the society. The traditional formal position and role of the Orthodox Church of Cyprus is a curse and blessing at the same time. On the one hand, the modern Orthodox Church can be likened to a situation where one lives a serene life, always counting on the parents' help, regardless of when and why one returns to them. Analogously, the Cypriots somehow rely on the Church to be always there but without realising that one needs to build and develop this institution, otherwise it will die like anyone's parents and there will be no one to fall back on. On the other hand, the Church has difficulty in realising that it should be more than a formal institution, in order to survive. Family breakdowns, high divorce rates, and detachment from traditional land agricultural activities, coupled with the modern chaotic lifestyle undoubtedly contribute to the fact that less and less young people know how to live in contexts with rules and responsibilities. This affects the Church as well, because nowadays men and women can rarely fit into the demanding role of the priest or the priest's wife, as it entails self-sacrifice and discipline.

In the cities priesthood has often become a career path instead of a 'calling'. This further worsens the future development of the Church.

Moreover, the priest may find it difficult to embrace pastoral activity, seeing it as a decrease in formal authority in society. The lesser the authority the lesser the possibility of changing society to the better. In other words, Cypriots want the visible priest to be around but do not want to listen to him. Of course, there is an inherent paradox here, because priests are constantly required to change yet remain the same, in order to improve themselves spiritually and also their frock. Especially in the villages the priest is like a kind of ambulance moving around and making everyone feel safe, or at least as if the ambulance was near if necessary.

Modern research on Cyprus and its Church, insofar as brilliant, has paid little attention to the socio-anthropological or spiritual aspect of the everyday function and dynamics of the church and priesthood in the villages or any enclosed and independent cell community. While the topic is often approached on the basis of institutional and documentary sources, field work seems useful to understand its socio-anthropological or spiritual aspects.

The expectations about an Orthodox priest in Askas and those about an Orthodox priest in Central Europe, where the author served, appear different. People in Askas were not in need of theological convincing, as they all believed and attended church regularly. The priest in Askas or any other similar village is required to be emotional sympathetic, empathetic and highly skilled in acting within a community. Only once he has convinced the community of his ability to 'feel' and thus gained their respect, the priest might start to speculate about issues in theology or belief. The spirit of egotistical individualism and gradual destruction of all forms of emotion broadly understood make this extremely difficult.

Given the peoples' general attitude, contemporary priests are often unable to fulfil the basic role of being a community figure, regardless of their intellectual education. This is essentially linked with the Orthodox emphasis on spirituality and mystical theology as a means of interaction with the community. According to this theology, the saint, believer or priest is supposed to be 'near God', and this proximity provides the individual priest with the ability of strengthening the community. While in other contexts, the priest or minister is part of the community in terms of function, here the priest must facilitate the construction of the community. By offering spiritual mediation, he gives the community the power to be a community. In today's logic of course the community needs no such power to be a community.

A similar logic can be seen in other religious contexts, where the divine or its carrier is a kind of source of power for the community. In many native contexts, it is believed that community needs something – often linked to the sacred – that solidifies it and gives strength to be such. Something similar happens in the Old Testament with Moses, who was not only a leader or theologian but gave

'strength' to the community. Perhaps, the real reason for the resilience of the local communities and the Church in Cyprus under foreign rule lies in this aspect.

4 Fellow Priests

Before the current decline of population, Askas used to have more priests in the village, which made sense due to the size and number of the then existing parish churches.

4.1 Father Andreas

Father Andreas grew up in a humble environment. Life was simple but had its joys. He often recalled how Askas' streams were full of *chelonia* 'turtles'. His father would catch them and cook them, and he loved them very much. *Chelonia* as well as other animals unfortunately disappeared from Askas because of poisons used against *kunupia* 'gnats'.

According to the villagers' accounts, Father Andreas was ordained at a very young age. The village was in need of a priest and there were not many candidates available. The *Papadia* 'wife of a priest' was eight years older than Father Andreas, and the local gossip indicated that nobody was 'interested' in her. They married when Father Andreas was around nineteen. This means that the *Papadia* was around twenty-seven years of age when she married, an extremely late age for a woman to marry in Askas, not to mention that her husband was uncommonly much younger. She gave birth to eight children. They all moved away from Askas, though keeping houses in the village. She reportedly was particularly tolerant with her children. It is believed because she was well aware of being older than Father Andreas.

The author himself saw more than once both Father Andreas and his *Papadia* working hard on the fields, perhaps the *Papadia* even more so. This proves the village saying "He did not work so he became a priest" wrong. The *Papadia* appeared a soft-hearted person, as if there was 'no single bad bone' in her body. She used to smile like some female saint emanating absolute tolerance and acceptance of the other. Her smile was that of a person in harmony with herself and emanating love. She was not particularly talkative. After one of her sons died of a heart attack at the age of around forty-five, her health started getting worse, obviously because of the sorrow. She was then diagnosed with dementia and, not long after this diagnosis, died. Father Andreas conducted his wife's funeral himself, without showing any emotions during the service.

Colloquially speaking, Father Andreas was "hard-headed as a mule". Such a hard-headedness is perhaps essential for faith to survive, even though it might be of discomfort for people around. According to locals, most mountain priests of the past generations possessed this hard headedness combined with a great sense of spiritual realism. In Father Andreas there was no room for trifles or naïve and pretentious piety but for a faith stemming from a perfect blending of healthy idealism and pragmatic awareness of the people's needs and characters.

4.1.1 Father Andreas' Sensitivity to his Parishioners' Feelings

After forty years of priesthood, Father Andreas learned to understand the state of his parishioners, and perhaps his own as well. Most importantly, he knew what kind of burden to load and what kind of burden not to load in his pastoral work. This perhaps is a skill one can gain after years of service. This approach entails putting on believers such a burden as to enable them to take on further burdens only after they are ready, according to Matt. 11:29-30. Many times, this resulted in comical situations. Once, for example, a lady asked to the author of the present paper to pray for her health after the main liturgical service. The author was at that time serving with Father Andreas. After the liturgy, the author prolonged the service, adding prayers for health choosing a longer service. After a while, Father Andreas interrupted these prayers saying: "Come on, you don't have to pray for so long!". Everyone there heard this remark.

Hearing this, one may doubt Father Andreas' piety, but the truth is that he knew that this lady used to ask for these prayers repeatedly. Accordingly, extensive attention to the required prayers was not needed. Moreover, this could also prevent others from asking for similar petitions. Therefore, he proved himself right. His inherent ability to feel for the wider community as a whole at any moment was the criterion directing his actions. This does not mean that Father Andreas was a living saint. He also had many downsides, including being gullible, and that at times he got offended too easily.

4.1.2 Father Andreas and Reading

Father Andreas would sit on his balcony, reading constantly. The contrast between his love and knowledge of literature with his hard agricultural work and rustic appearance was striking. He loved classical literature including Dostoevsky. Without making generalisations, in the past education and commitment to hard physical work were not in conflict. The Communist social understanding of the working

class versus the so-called intelligentsia appears false and misleading, as if hard physical labour automatically dissociates from education. This reflection is still important, as hard physical work should not prevent one from being educated, contrary to what public discourse often suggests.

Father Andreas used to read extensively, constantly improving his basic education. He had graduated from the local seminary in Lefkosia, the main educational institution for the Church of Cyprus. Often there was a discussion in the village about the fact that previous generations who had a basic education seem to be more educated than today's university graduates. Kostas, the head of the parish council, used to repeat that in the past basic education was on a "higher level than today", so that even barely educated individuals resulted fairly-well educated, according to modern standards.

4.1.3 Father Andreas' Political Activism

Father Andreas proved his 'hard-headedness' especially during the crisis of the then archbishop and president of Cyprus Makarios. The Holy Synod (i.e., the highest governing church council) then consisted of only three members, generally a small number for an independent Church. In March 1972, they demanded him to resign from one of his two appointments, since he was both the secular Republic President and the Archbishop of the Church of Cyprus. All three members of the Synod (i.e., the Metropolitan of Paphos Gennadios Machairiotis, the Metropolitan of Kition Anthemos Machairiotis, and the Metropolitan of Kirenia Kyprianos Kyriakides) agreed on him stepping down from the post of President of Cyprus.[2] In the Synod of 7 March 1973, Makarios was deposed and defrocked but later reinstalled by a wider Orthodox Synod convened by Makarios himself (Clerides 1989, 100). Archbishop Makarios did not have the slightest intention of resigning. For this reason, he has been regarded as hungry for power, eventually causing the Turkish invasion.

While the political rival of Archbishop Makarios, the general George Grivas, accepted the decision of the synod, it is difficult to ascertain the laity and clergy's response to that. The Greek Junta seemingly supported the bishops. This claim can be confirmed by the events involving Father Andreas. His *Papadia* told the author that at that time officers associated with Grivas used to spend were

2 The *New York Times* reported this event in its issue of 10 March 1973, 3. See also the article by Douglas, J.D., "God and Caesar in Cyprus". *Christianity Today*, 15 February 1974. https://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/1974/february-15/god-and-caesar-on-cyprus.html.

spending hours talking with Father Andreas during the night. Very likely they were looking for supporters among priests. The church's walls still display a fading graffiti sign saying Enosis. Father Andreas supported the Synod and subsequently faced persecution. He was denied access to the parish church and someone else came to serve there. He set up a private church in his own house, without receiving any salary for many years.

His hard-headedness prevented him from leaving to his *Papadia*'s dismay, who was instead concerned about the dire economic situation. At some point, as he related, the anti-Archbishop group offered him a lucrative priestly position on the island of Hydra in Greece. He decided to stay in Cyprus nonetheless. Later on, the Turkish invasion of Cyprus somehow put the ecclesial crisis to an end.

4.1.4 Father Andreas' Last Years and Inheritance

The year before his death was marked by a kind of personal melancholy. The loss of his son, and the controversy with the icons (see below), perhaps saddened him to such an extent that he did not come out of his house, feeling tired and ill. He wrote a book called about the wall paintings of Askas' church that were previously covered by paint and had to be restored (Demostheni 2008). Furthermore, Father Andreas wrote two books of stories about Askas. They were printed in a limited number and therefore exposed to oblivion. The Father gave one copy to the author of the present article, who can testify to his high level of education.

4.2 Father Neophitos

Father Neophitos served in the neighbouring Palaichori, a slightly larger village and well known for its Unesco listed churches. At the time the author knew him, he was around seventy-five, his voice was unfortunately barely recognisable, partly because of the many years of chanting. He used to serve frequently and at length, as recommended by the ethos of the Orthodox Church, at the church of Saint Luke, which unfortunately did not preserve its older iconography, differently from other churches in Askas or Palaichori.

Father Neophitos grew up in very humble conditions. He was from a poor family with many children, and later worked in the mines of Troodos and other mines. Decades ago, the working conditions in Cypriot mines were inadequate, resulting in many health issues. Regardless of the bad working conditions, many miners from the

villages were pleased by the great sense of community of the mine and the prosperity of some local villages associated with the mines.[3]

Afterwards, Father Neophitos began working in agriculture and tended his own small fields. Today he continues to work in the field regardless of his age, and still has *Tsura* goats. Over the years, many younger priests were sent to the village to replace or help him, but there were always conflicts. Eventually, the author was asked to help him, since many priests simply did not get along with him. Tolerance appeared to be the key to success in cooperating with Father Neophitos.

The parish and its priest are like a living organism, where everything is essential and needs to be maintained without abrupt artificial intervention. Father Neophitos simply does things in his own way and you either accept it or not, if not, you need compassion in changing things. Tolerance here did not mean a surrender but appreciation of the things as they are.

4.3 Father Michailis

Father Michailis was not a priest from Askas, but the author got to know him when he was serving in the suburb of Lefkosia called Tseri for a short period of time. Tseri was originally a small village which later became a suburb of Lefkosia. Father Michalis is a refugee from the occupied areas of Northern Cyprus, the Karpasia region, which is one of the most beautiful areas of Cyprus with beautiful beaches, and olive groves.

Father Michailis is a tall man, now around seventy-five. He is gradually losing his voice due to a throat condition, perhaps caused by years of speaking and chanting, just as in the case of Father Neophitos. He grew up in one of those idyllic villages close to the beautiful beaches in Karpasia. As he calls it, "a village of honey, lemons and fish". He grew up in a large family. He must have been a handsome man, judging from the pictures portraying him at a younger age.

Not that he has many photographs. He has a portrait of himself as a young priest wearing the clerical hat in his living room in Tseri. Then, there is the customary wedding photograph in the living room. Many priests from the older generation typically hang their photographs as ordained priests in their living rooms. Family photos are not missing in any of the living rooms of the Cypriots. Usually there

3 See *Report on the Health effects of the Asbestos Mines on the Population of Neighbouring Communities*. https://www.gov.cy/media/sites/24/2024/05/Report-on-the-Health-Effects-of-the-Asbestos-Mines-on-the-Population-of-Neighbouring-Communities.pdf.

is a cluster of family photos all over. Portraits of little children, older children and so on. Cypriots love family photos, which explains the large quantity of photo shops all around.

Father Michailis emigrated to Tseri from his village in Karpasia in 1974. Yet, after living in Tseri for decades, he does not completely feel at home here. He never stops describing the earthly paradise he left in his home village in Karpasia. "You had fish from the sea, citrus trees with lemons, in a word a paradise on earth". He also recounted when the Turkish forces came to the village, they firstly asked: "Where is the priest?". The occupational forces knew that by capturing the priest they could affect the local inhabitant's morale. Father Michailis managed to flee to the South just in time before being captured.

4.3.1 Father Michailis' Family

Just as the *Papadia* of Father Andreas, his wife is like a living saint. Hailing from the village as Father Michailis, she always takes care of the family, accepting and understanding others. Father Michailis has four children. They all grew up, in a different context to that of their father and mother. They all rely on the mother/*Papadia* for support, but you cannot say whether they will embrace the same family-orientated life as their parents. One of the daughters cannot have children, whereas the other is married but financially struggling. Among the sons, one cannot find a wife. Another still lives in the parent's house. Life is more complex and perhaps lonelier for the present generation.

In Cyprus, children are used to counting on their parents' love and patience when it comes to psychological and financial support. Though not peculiar to Cyprus alone, this seems more pronounced here because the 'caring' generation, already disappeared elsewhere, is still present in Cyprus. In the past, most Cypriot children were brought up in well-functioning, nurturing and happy families, despite any possibly disturbing external events.

Whether the new generation will be able to do the same is another story. Rising divorce and unemployment rates, individualism, lack of social responsibility, and dependency on parents and relatives for financial survival are just a few of many features, which will undoubtedly turn out problematic in the long run, calling into question the possibility of benefitting from family stability in the future.

4.3.2 Father Michailis' Virtues

Father Michailis is a popular confessor. He has the most important characteristics for a priest – humility, humbleness and especially tolerance. If you are tolerant, you can automatically associate with

people from any time period or social context, including the youngest generation. Father Michailis does not understand science, he does not have a degree from a university, but he 'understands all' because he is humble. His priestly acceptance and openness compensate for the lack of a more general education. Perhaps this kind of openness is even more important than a commonly intellectual or academic openness, since it is also based on and linked to with humility and acceptance brought about by love.

He proved his openness on many occasions. Welcoming the refugees from the North in Tseri was not automatic at all. Even though villagers from Tseri opened their hearts towards the refugees from the North, still, the influx of new people disrupted the existing tight social fabric of the village and presented challenges of integration. Traditional Cypriot villages were like closed families, and any foreign elements were viewed with suspicion.

His investment in issues related to divorce is another example. Father Michailis was from a generation that did not know divorce. Until the sixties, Cypriot society did not have high divorce rates. The reasons for increasing divorce rates are difficult to ascertain. However, divorce in Cyprus displays specific features. As Father Michailis stated, "divorce among young people is like a game". They believe that changing partners has no consequence and it is like changing friends as a child. People are confident that here will always be 'someone' there, regardless of how one behaves. For Father Michailis it is incomprehensible that the same person can commit adultery more than once.

The transition from conservative family values to high divorce rates occurred rather quickly in Cypriot society, the reasons for which are rather unclear. Amongst the older generation, there is criticism of this trend, some do not understand the logic of adultery. As one villager from Askas suggested, "what is the difference between a woman you have at home and one you desire to commit adultery with?". However, regardless of this Father Michailis, has an endless pit of forgiveness for divorcees, truly complying with the Orthodox spirit of forgiveness and non-judgemental pastoral approach.

Perhaps, the extended family-based structures typical of Cypriot society paradoxically functions as a catalyst for divorces. A divorced person can often turn to his friends and relatives for help. For example, one such case is Father Michailis' neighbour, who lived in a nicely furnished flat in Tseri. He was a young man, with a good career, perhaps slightly presumptuous. He had five children, all from a different foreign woman, and a Cypriot wife. Despite this he took care of all his children, the situation was rather awkward, of course and potentially uncongenial to the children.

The young man worked in a state-owned company renowned for over employing people, paying high salaries and demanding little from its employees. His financial stability and abundant spare time

had maybe been conducive to his lack of responsibility more in general. For, while he financially supported his children, substantial care was provided by his parents and extended family. The parents used to come down and clean the apartment, look after the children and so on, simplifying his life with so many children. Of course, any moral judgement here stems from the simple question of whether he would always benefit from his parents' help in the future, with his grandchildren, for instance.

4.4 Father Adam

Another priest working at that time in Tseri was Father Adam, who was a migrant himself from the now occupied Kirenia. He did not achieve such a popular approval as Father Michailis, due to his past as a folk dancer. He had become a priest only upon marriage with a local woman from Tseri. Despite he had undeniable qualities as a manager of the parish affairs, the fact that his wife was of local origin facilitated his assignment. As a priest he mastered a kind of oriental ability to flatter his superiors, which helped him to achieve many goals. He often stated that "the only one who can do whatever he wants is the bishop". He accepted this fact and life was simpler.

5 The Dynamics of the Cypriot Orthodox Church and Society

5.1 Internal Migration and Adaptation

Priests and generally migrants from occupied areas into non-occupied areas were usually accepted with some difficulty, causing not little tension. Interview with long-established inhabitants of in Tseri provide evidence of mutual antagonism against the newcomers after 1974. The after-1974 new migrants were sometimes viewed with suspicion and considered intruders of sorts.

Coming from Northern Europe one is surprised that in such a small island as Cyprus originating from one village and moving to another is regarded as a highly traumatic experience of adaptation and alienation. Even after forty years, many former migrants of Tseri do not really feel at home. This shows the remarkable micro-community structure of Cypriot society, where essentially it is the atomic village or community, rather than the state, that provides individuals with their identity.

Such was the case of Tasos and Loula. They came from a village called Asa in the occupied territories to Tseri after 1974. Provided

with a portion of land, they built a house without however, never really getting used to it. Nostalgic pictures of their former village hanging everywhere in their living room proves Loula's constant desire to visit it. And indeed, she used to comment on how difficult it had been for them to be accepted into Tseri.

5.2 A Movable Priest and the Role of the Church

In contemporary Cyprus priests do not live permanently where they serve, turning out to be like hired professionals who come and go. This situation also strengthens the laity, since it indirectly gives a leading position in the matter of parish administration to the laity.

In fact, any good priest could be rejected by the parish council, often consisting of theologically uneducated individuals or simply individuals who are not socially or ecclesiastically adept or pastorally sensitive. The Cypriot bishops' higher respect towards laity and parish councils compared to other Orthodox Churches is a positive counterpoint.

Many of the newcomer-priests' problems arise when they set about changing things in the parish abruptly. Frictions with the community can easily lead to the priest's rapid departure. Though preservation of local liturgical practices and habits provides for an organic development and structure, local traditions need to be aligned with common liturgical principles to a certain extent.

Akin to the Roman Catholic Church, the bishops' authority in the Orthodox Church is very prominent. In areas such as Cyprus, or the Middle East in general, the social importance of Orthodox clergy accrues to historical reasons as well. For, during the Ottoman period, Orthodox Cypriot bishops served as leaders of the local communities and Orthodox priests as administrators of sort (Wilson 1992, 21).

This recent past still causes resentment, even if unjustified. There are many popular stories of how, during the Ottoman period, ordinary people bequeathed their possessions, houses, or resources to the Orthodox Church. Orthodox individuals reportedly gave their property to the Church, which was given the right to have possessions, as they did not want it to fall into the hands of the Ottomans. This kind of dynamic is often believed to be one of the reasons for the apparent wealth of the Cypriot Church. However, firstly, scholars working on this subject should first agree on a definition of what the Cypriot Church was back then (Hadjianastasis 2009, 75).[4] For, as the author has seen and confirmed even today, the Church was not

4 The land management in the Ottoman administration was not based on the feudal principles typical of the previous Latin rule. See Sakellaropoulos 2022.

a concrete institutionalised concept in Cyprus but rather a conglomeration of complex social and cultural elements.

Whether myth or reality, the alleged wealth of the Orthodox Church is still a very current topic in Cyprus. Especially refugees from the North often call for the Church to "give up its lands", and offer it to the people who were left landless. The same rhetoric was often heard in the villages' *kafenios* having concrete consequences as well. For example, when priests bought *Kumandaria* wine for the liturgy, they were charged more than ordinary customers with this explanation "the priest pays a higher sum".

Contemporary economic crisis makes things worse with people blaming the so-called businessman clerics and bishops, such as the Metropolitan of Kykkos, Nikephoros, for their alleged lack of spirituality (Roudometof 2019, 113). However, despite the criticism, the reality is more complex and philanthropic projects should be credited to the Church by public discourse as well. In fact, the almost gigantic philanthropic activity of people such as Nikephoros Metropolitan of Kykkos goes unnoticed, since it usually occurs hidden behind public view. Due to the pronounced emphasis on the community as the centre of the bishop's power, it is a great challenge for the Church to maintain the balance between bishopric authority and laity. Given increasing loss of historical prestige, however, the Church must find new ways of working with the community.

Despite similarities in power structures, we can generalise here that, while in the Roman catholic tradition the ecclesial power was primarily directed in the confines of judicial authority, the Orthodox Church developed more spiritual authority. In fact, Orthodox clerics' authority depends on the community, something that may turn out unfeasible when related to the many possible problems that can arise. Furthermore, the communal nature of the Cypriot ecclesial environment meant and still means, that criticism about the Church is encouraged and thus larger. Everyone feels entitled to criticise this or that cleric in their daily life, with the Church necessarily becoming more resilient. This ecclesial mentality is peculiar to the Cypriot Orthodox Church, proving to have remained unaffected by influences of Western Christianity in this regard, contrary to other fields such as architecture, and art.

The spiritual setting is of paramount importance in Cyprus, with the candidates for bishopric ideally coming from monastic settings. This conventional background favours obedience and respect toward the bishop due to the overall spiritual understanding of authority in the Orthodox Church we mentioned above. When this does not occur, the authority of the bishop will not be perceived as spiritual but rather linked to administrative position.

Authority without spirituality is tyranny. The Roman Catholic Church with its emphasis on a judicial structure provided for better

procedural safeguards but of course could have missed the greater spiritual dimension. The ways of how these ecclesiological positions functioned side by side in the historical context in Cyprus is subject to further research.

5.3 Kykkos Monastery

Associated with great spiritual, historical or national aspects, some monastic establishments serve as models for other churches, monasteries and parishes. A notable example in Cyprus is the Kykkos monastery, which also houses the icon of the Mother of God Kykotissa.

Many well-known figures come from this monastery, such as the contemporary Metropolitan Nikephoros of Kykkos, former *higumenos* 'abbot' of the monastery. Of humble origins, he ascended the Church ranks thanks to his great economical acumen and managerial capabilities, becoming the abbot of Kykkos monastery. Despite many accusations of "scarce spirituality", the metropolitan Nikephoros reportedly remained simple and humble in his heart, reflecting his humble origins. Retaining childlike simplicity and love in one's heart even after rising through the ranks is important. He betrayed this childlike framework when he once told the story of his happy childhood experiences, which were humble but happy at the same time. As a child, he used to play around the forests close to Paphos, eating watermelons (*karpusias*), living a carefree life of a peasant's child, before entering a career in the Church from early childhood.

Similarly, the current *higumenos* of the monastery Agaphonikos has proven himself over the years as a great manager and caretaker. The economic crisis has hit the monastery as well as its assets hard. There are many popular legends about the monastery's wealth to the detriment of the numerous philanthropic projects sponsored by the monastery. The management of Kykkos is no easy task and must be passed over to a person who has proven himself as a good manager. Over the years, Father Agaphonikos, the present *higumenos*, has proved himself of managing ecclesial and administrative affairs. In addition to this, he also has remarkable spiritual qualities so that people come to him for spiritual advice.

The abbot Agaphonikos looks extremely stark and strict but at the same time has the 'heart of a baby' like his predecessor Metropolitan Nikephoros, as he always tries to satisfy all the requests of help from the people coming to the monastery. After checking the veracity of their needs Agaphonikos often helps individuals anonymously. The downside of being popular is the paradox that the monastery is struggling to attract new monks.

The Cypriot ecclesial structures are built on the absolute prerequisite of obedience to the superior. For obvious reasons, this will

perhaps hinder new ordinations. The greatest challenge in the Orthodox Church mentality is to fulfil the commandments of the superior, even if one disagrees. Regardless of whether one believes something is right or not, one must act according to the orders. This humility is hard to come by and is sought after in future leaders. For generations brought up in a spirit of independence and individualism, concepts such as humility, obedience and self-sacrifice are even more difficult to follow. In this context, clergy from mountain villages had greater independence.

6 Askas and its People

The village school in Askas no longer functions because there are not many children left in the village. There are many textbooks and educational posters lying around in the former school building offering an almost romantic perspective of years gone by. Depopulation of the village has brought its fruits. Some teachers previously lived in Askas, as bachelors. There used to be a house hosting incoming teachers, the last of which demanded that the entire house was painted in shades of green.

Not long ago in Cyprus attaining a humanities degree was regarded as prestigious. Classical education, letters and literature allowed for a civil career, the only secure, and therefore sought after, form of employment. Nowadays, humanities have fallen into disrepute, with prospective students preferring degrees in the exact sciences. A decrease in the prestige of the humanities is also naturally related to a decrease in the prestige of theology.

Depopulation negatively affects all facets of life. For example, village communities are no longer able to provide for their own local priest, as younger clerics are not motivated to work in a slowly dying village. The author decided to go to the village and work as a priest upon the local bishop's request. Initially, there was some concern about a foreign priest in a traditional village of Cyprus. Upon hearing that a *xenos* 'foreigner' would come, many people from the village raised their doubts.

Some inhabitants regarded this as both evidence of gradual decline of mountain culture and as a sort of betrayal, by disinterested local priests. However, the ultimate acceptance of a foreign priest testifies to the multicultural tolerance in the island favoured by its long history and shows that the carriers of a given culture can be transient, here a foreigner bearing and advancing the local Cypriot ecclesial culture. Nonetheless, depopulation and its consequences are concrete, resonating in the village psyche and causing sadness. A certain Bishop Gregorios on one occasion came to serve in the village chapel of Saint Paraskevi, and after the liturgy being

surrounded by mainly elderly believers he started to literally cry and stated "Let's all prayer so that our younger generation, our children will once again find the way to Church". This somehow also evokes the relationship between culture and the Church.

Any priest coming from outside of Cyprus must learn to 'communicate'. It is perhaps fair to state that priests from outside of Cyprus or Greece would be surprised and unprepared by the high necessity of being able to communicate with 'everyone about everything' and the social role one needs to fulfil. The village priest moves around and is supposed to talk about any possible theme. The people expect the priest to interact with people with any background and enquire about their mood, situation and so on. The priest is a community builder and caretaker. In this regard, the role of the priest's wife is more relevant than that of the priest himself. Indeed, she interacts with the community even more than the priest. For this reason, it is of pivotal importance yet difficult to find a woman suitable for such a role.

After five years of service in Askas, the author was eventually accepted into the community, despite a limited improvement in his communication skills. Without a perfect command of local Greek, which was tinged by a dialect, the language barrier was still significant after this time. But, thanks to her talent in communicating the *Papadia* was accepted into the community more rapidly than the priest. When the author was about to leave, an elderly woman told him: "We have accepted you as one of us, but now you are leaving, such is life".

6.1 Muchtaris

Beyond the priest, there are many other important village figures including the *Muchtaris*, modelled after the Ottoman village administration.

However, today as in other periods, being the village *Muchtaris* is no joyous position and many villagers believe that the amount of envy, hatred and criticism that this function attracts is truly 'unbearable' for any individual. As one lady called Eleni once stated, the *Muchtaris* is essential in the village "so that one can criticise someone and feel good". The village *Muchtaris* is essentially a divisive figure, since in most cases he has strong support but also fierce opposition. Interestingly, in the village of Askas, this opposition and support of any *Muchtaris* was usually equally distributed.

Not long ago, in Askas there were impending elections while a long-term serving *Muchtaris* was in charge. The election battle was fierce, with intrigues, lies and gossip and with anonymous pamphlets thrown all over the village, even claiming that the opponent was united with some evil forces against the truth. Every vote and expression of support had serious consequences on social and political networks.

Unfortunately, as perhaps expected, hatred emerged among the two candidates. Later, the ultimately triumphant candidate was accused of squandering public finance. Although this charge has not been confirmed yet, the toll on his family and life was huge. He experienced a divorce and had his family dispersed.

It is also true that this particular *Muchtaris* had rather strange ideas. He had various 'theories', including that "all the best people" from Askas had moved to Lefkosia or elsewhere and those who had stayed "could not make it anywhere" and, for this reason, remained in Askas. He showed a mixture of contempt for the villagers and desire to be the liberator or hero of Askas, initiating a time of development. To an outsider, a village election of this kind may appear a little comical. The fierce battles and lasting, mutual hatred may seem exaggerated in a village setting but are indicative of the fabric of community and its birth pangs.

6.2 The Mangas

Likewise important was the head of the village parish council Kostas. His nickname *Mangas* 'the cool hand guy' characterised him as an absolutely cool person, thought it was uncommon for a person in his late fifties. He used to work daily on the fields but nonetheless maintained a perfectly clean appearance, wearing nice shirts and coats. Whatever agricultural work he pursued, this did not prevent him from coming and maintaining a well-groomed appearance and having a suit on.

When the author began his service as a priest, Kostas was the most well-liked person in the village. He used to attend every liturgical service and was always willing to help. In fact, anywhere the priest went for a service Kostas came along. Soon, the two men became friends. When Kostas was a child, his father left his mother and she had to bring up Kostas with his two brothers by herself in a nice but very damp house. The latter was close to the stream, located in an area in Askas full of insects and associated with many forms of diseases.

Kostas married a lady who reportedly originated from an extended and poor family of thieves. Anyway, his wife was a very nice communicative person, and her relatives offered to Kostas the large family experience he had never had, with frequent gatherings at his house for coffee. He had a son, who will probably remain in Askas permanently along with his girlfriend, meaning that their house will not become a mere weekend house.

However, the great test for Kostas' popularity came when the bishop decided to take away the majority of the Byzantine icons from the parish churches of Askas. The churches of Askas contained an interesting and rich collection of icons dating from the twelfth century

onwards. The iconographic material is especially important since it traces the development of styles and traditions over hundred years in one given parish. The masterpiece in this collection was the Askas cross, a wooden processional cross dating back to the twelfth century. It was housed in the church of *Timiou Stavrou* 'Holy Cross', one of the oldest churches in Askas located in the small central square of the village. It became a kind of symbol of the village, after having been underestimated for a long time.

What happened with the icons is a typical example of the contemporary attitude toward antiquities and their preservation. Often moved by sudden interest in the piece of an art in question, requests of transfer are allegedly made to avoid deterioration. In those cases where there are inadequate conditions, transferring an object of historical significance is obviously the best option for its preservation. But as past experiences show, most objects after surviving in their original conditions for hundreds if not thousands of years, were damaged, if not totally destroyed, after being moved to museums and other locations.

We may recall here the case of the Ethiopian biblical manuscripts. When scholars arrived at the Garima Monastery in Ethiopia, they were amazed, seeing how one of the most ancient illustrated copies of the Gospels had survived in such a 'primitive' setting. How is it possible that, in Europe, despite the available technological instruments, there is nothing preserved as well as this artefact? Of course, more factors play a role in the preservation of artefacts, as we can see, not only the desire to preserve them.

In the case of Askas, the 'museological' fervour was moved by the desire to: (1) preserve the icons by transferring them to a safer museum; (2) to make them more accessible to a greater public; (3) direct the attention toward the bishop of the area. Sometime before these events, some icons had been given for professional restoration, but returned with damages, particularly to their colours. The unfortunate rush to restore icons has led to many such disasters in Cyprus.

The treatment of historical objects, such as the icons, in Askas was interrelated to the future of the village. If the village was to attract visitors, it was not favourable to move its valuables or objects to an altogether different area. Indeed, the villagers began to criticise the bishop because, on the one hand, he kept promising to do everything possible to develop the village, while, on the other hand, he intended to move one of the main attractions of Askas.

At one point, the bishop gave the order to Kostas Mangas, Father Andreas and one loyal member of the parish council to take down most of the older and valuable icons to his newly built museum close to Lefkosia. The situation was unfortunate because the bishop did not inform anyone about this decision except these three individuals and this spirit of secrecy made things even worse. The car came and

took the icons but soon everyone found out. This created a huge crisis in the village, with the three men regarded as the main culprits and smeared throughout the village. On that occasion, the power of the community proved great, being able to punish and exclude any individual who fell into disgrace. This exclusion in the village setting meant almost the same thing as death. Various delegations went to the bishop's office asking for the icons to be returned to Askas. The episode was a tragicomical test of character, since, as usual, many who initially had heroic plans and spoke great words backed down and 'chickened' away.

As a local priest, the author informed the bishop that the decision to take away the icons was, from the point of view of conservation, a good one but, from the point of view of long-term development of Askas and the preservation of its heritage, rash decision. Things go even more turbulent when the villagers decided to meet the bishop in a local tavern to discuss the issues. The bishop came by car. While the bishop was ascending to the tavern, the situation was tense, and a few local heroes had to be calmed down since it appeared they intended to physically attack him. The verbal discussion soon turned into a brawl between the villagers, about different issues and past disagreements. Eventually the situation calmed down just as quickly as the tensions raised. The bishop promised to build a museum in Askas, saying of himself to be touched that "many other villages were lining up to give items to new diocesan museum". After the bishop with the icons left, the situation calmed down, but the community was divided and angry, with major impact on Kostas Mangas, Father Andreas and others who supported the decision to move the icons.

From being the most popular person in Askas, Kostas had descended into the most hated person, since he was seen as being primarily responsible for the icons' lost. The respect for Father Andreas also plunged rapidly. Kostas as an individual was of course angry, being in disbelief about his loss of popularity. Nowhere the anger and loss of status were more pronounced than at the *kafenio*, and the tables at the *kafenio* with their pre-ordered *taxis* 'order' of seating were shuffled into new 'diplomatic' alliances. Kostas began sitting with the then unpopular *Muchtaris* and departed the more prestigious card playing table and group accordingly. The exclusion from the prestigious tables at the *kafenio*, resulted in Kostas taking great offence and for a couple of months disappearing from the *kafenio* altogether.

According to the opinion of the author, building a proper museum in Askas and leaving the icons there was the best option, leaving the icons in their 'natural place' (i.e., the church) was the best solution. This position however, did not meet with approval from Father Andreas. At that time, he seemed to have resigned on the idea that Askas would ever continue existing, likely due to his scepticism about the villages' destiny after his death.

Father Andreas took the developments and the villagers' criticism personally and decided not to attend any services thereafter, and did not appear in church till his death. Many people of the older generations regarded the removal of the icons as a kind of removal of their ancestors from Askas and as a complete betrayal. As a certain Michalis stated:

> I wish they return the icons made and commissioned by our fathers, mothers, grandfathers, grandmothers and ancestors… They had already left us, and now the icons associated with them are also leaving.

The position of Kostas was also difficult and, for one reason or another, he gave up his position as the chief of the parish council. He also was a little saddened by the author's opinion on the question of the icons and this created some tension, because as he stated: "You have thrown me out somewhere down the road, even though I fully supported you".

Of course, everyone involved was right to a certain extent, and this incident shows the complexities of community/parish relationship in the context of the diocese and its bishop. No one was really at fault here, everyone was well-meaning, proving how the community can be shaken without any real problems or issues.

6.3 Kafenio

All the village controversies start and end in the village *kafenio*. The *kafenio* is a place of refuge and has many other social functions. Traditionally, the men intended the *kafenio* as a 'refuge from their wives', or other people. Considering that the houses were very small, and that the extended family was cramped into a couple of small rooms, with many children running around, the outdoors, including the *kafenio*, were perhaps the main areas of communal interaction.

The *kafenio* in Askas is a family-owned business, the main figures of which are Kostas and his mother. Kostas never married and has been brought up in a humble and simple manner. Contemporary women would probably frown on the lifestyle he would offer. He comes from a family of complete frugal strictness. His bedroom was small with an iron framed bed, covered with one of those old-fashioned giant mattresses there were a simple cupboard, and a small table with an old-fashioned alarm clock. Kostas, as anyone brought up in Askas, realised that life in the mountains is tough and harsh and one needs to be prepared. Dwindling population makes things even more difficult for the *kafenio*.

Men would sit around for hours in the *kafenio* and drinking many coffees, usually well-dressed in Sunday clothes. The coffees could have been combined with the local spirit drink *zivania*. *Zivania* is a roughly forty per cent spirit made from wine remnants and has been used to cure almost everything, from a cold, to broken bones. Chain-smoking was a feature of all men in Askas, but times are changing, and smoking is receding.

The *kafenio* is usually frequented by men but this is not always the case. In Askas, playing cards and gambling with candy is popular. The gambling, however, was more serious in earlier periods. Down in the cities, the *kafenio* can be associated with political parties, each *kafenio* associated with a given political party with a flag of that party hanging around. For a person from Eastern Europe who experienced communism, the leftist Cypriot parties often represented by their *kafenios* appear somewhat comical and naïve. As a foreign priest one must be careful not to alienate people in one's homilies by implying anything bad about communism or the leftist parties. For coming to church and believing in communism are highly compatible with the Cypriots.

6.4 Refugees and Internal Refugees

6.4.1 Kostas

From 1974 onwards Askas also welcomed some refugees, who either inter-married or found themselves living here. One such refugee was again Kostas, who was from Cyrenia. He ended up in Askas, because his wife's sister lived there. They decided to build a house, a decision which Kostas regrets now. Kostas usually works hard for many hours, continuously preparing hamburgers or other foodstuffs in one restaurant in Lefkosia. He is also a little angry at Father Andreas, because he did not sell him and his wife a better land to build a house. Instead, he had to build a house on a rather steep slope and his house is yet not finished, standing on think concrete legs with a hollow space beneath like some awkward animal. Father Andreas did not give the permission to sell him a plot belonging to the Church, which would have been more suitable for a house.

Kostas is not happy. He misses Cyrenia, the sun, the sea, the warm people and weather. He believes that people form the coast are more peaceful than the more 'nervous' mountain people. His wife loves to talk to people, and it is impossible to get around her house without stopping for coffee. But, just like Kostas, she is sad, because there are few and fewer people to talk to. This even further elevates the regrets of coming here to Askas. The migration, the cold mountainous weather, and the lack of people certainly do not improve Kostas' mood.

6.4.2 Janis

The family of Janis, a neighbour of Kostas and coming from Cyrenia as well, has been living in Askas for generations. His life was also touched by the events of 1974, when his son did not return from military service and was captured by the Turkish forces. For the past decade he has been waiting for his son to return in vain until the recent death notification. Janis was a widower for a very long time and never married again. He always welcomed the company of women, permitting himself at least a kiss if nothing else. One of the previous village chieftains built a small memorial on the main road indicating "for the lost son". Janis, like many others, did not miss any opportunity to talk with anyone willing to listen to him.

6.4.3 George Kokis

George 'Kokis', a widower as well, also lived a long time by himself. His wife died of cancer and was taken care of by a Philippine woman called Photini. After some time, Kokis decided to marry Photini, displeasing his children who were concerned about this marriage. She was around thirty years younger than George. Photini, just like many women who worked in Cyprus and who originated from the Philippines, was homesick. Many women left behind their little children in the Philippines, and had to reconcile themselves to communicating with them through odd internet connections. Photini was by herself having no children and therefore could stay with George. George used to go out with Photini to the fields every day. Later every Saturday they would get up at three am to take their produce down to the market.

To keep his family calm, George, though in his late sixties, decided to build a small house on a piece of land donated by a friend of Photini. They moved to this house leaving all the other fields and possessions to George's children. George had recently passed away and one can wonder whether his children will be willing to come to Askas and continue with the work on the fields. In the meantime, Photini is living alone.

Some people say that George's ancestors had obtained their possessions in an unfair way, at least as far as one house is concerned. There was a desperate man, who needed to feed his children and said to one of George's ancestors that he would give up his house for a goat with milk to feed his children. George's ancestor agreed and thus bought the house paying with his goat. Villagers believe that this brought bad luck on the family. George had a book from the nineteenth century, he believed was priceless and showed it to the author with pride, claiming that it had "all the knowledge in the world". It

was however an ordinary book. George was a brilliant psaltist who sang in the church, even without any official training. The singers in the church were volunteers and did not receive financial aid.

6.4.4 Apostolos

Apostolos was a fellow psaltist of George. He had four sons, one of them being called the "lost son", since he had some troubles with the law and had to leave Cyprus. The other sons remained in Cyprus, and became more attached to Askas as the years went by. Apostolos misses his son, but nothing can help. Apostolos unfortunately was inclined to womanise, and his faithful wife tolerated most of these escapades. She belonged to those women of the past generations who were faithful to their husbands no matter what. Just like Nikki, her close friend whose husband died at the tender age of thirty after a car accident and, even though she is now seventy, she never remarried again, claiming loyalty to her deceased husband. Later Apostolos calmed down and found a new connection to his wife. Unfortunately, they did not have many years left together when this happened, since Apostolos was developing throat cancer due to his other habit of chain-smoking.

He went for an operation in Greece and, once back, he resumed chanting in the church, even though the doctor had forbidden it and he did not feel well. The author did not know about this sacrifice until his death. One day, during a liturgical service, he suddenly stopped chanting because his voice was no longer functioning, and no one realised what happened and what was the problem and the author told him to continue singing while he just stared at him. Not long after this crisis, he passed away from a heart attack after drinking his morning coffee. His wife displayed great emotion at the funeral. Still now always wears black clothes and spends her time at the local monastery.

At funerals in Askas, just like baptisms, weddings and other liturgical celebrations, there was great participation. You were baptised with all the villagers present; you had your wedding with all the villagers present; and you died with everyone watching you in your coffin. Such a spirit of communion will likely be extinct soon. As we have indicated above, the Church, the people, and the priest were always present in every moment of one's life. Prayers and the liturgical cycle were not a one-time Sunday event, but accompanied people everywhere. You woke up with prayers, worked with prayers, and ended the day with prayers. The older prayer books contained prayers for almost possible situations in the village and in relation to agriculture. It is not a question of emphasising only the Christian context here, but rather the sacral nature of reality as it unfolds in these communities.

6.4.5 Another Kostas

Returning to the village at least after retirement is a constant theme in Askas. Some return in a state of personal brokenness or failure. Some return but their families or especially wives are not sympathetic to the idea any more. Kostas who lived close by to the *kafenio* just like many villagers spent most of his life in Lefkosia, and just like many nourished the idea that someday he would return. For the past five years he has been building an extension, reconstructing the house he had in Askas. He had a wide smile with some old-fashioned gold teeth. He was visibly excited when he came over the weekends working on his house. He believed that Askas was the best place on earth. Looking forward to coming and living there. When he was about to finish the house, he got an aggressive form of cancer. After a couple of weeks, he died. His daughter finished the renovation now but there is no Kostas any more. Perhaps she will have attachment to that place like her father had.

6.4.6 Andreas

Loneliness is of course difficult to manage, and unless there is a spiritual task, ideal or higher goal to follow, in the mountains some may even lose their sanity. Andreas was a rich person, often provoking envy among the villagers. However, his mental health was not sound, and kept deteriorating over time. As he had remained unmarried all his life and did not have any relatives who would be interested in his fate, he was very lonely. Therefore, his mental health deteriorated to such an extent that he made a ridiculous decision to buy a run-down restaurant in Lefkosia, which everyone knew was not going to make any money. He did this apparently to alleviate the 'unemployment' situation in Cyprus but ended up losing everything he put into this venture. He died alone, with no relatives around.

6.4.7 Poppy

Poppy is the wife of (another) Kostas and is one of the wives more open to the idea of returning to Askas with her husband. She is seventy and her husband seventy-five. Both grew up in Askas but later spent the most part of their lives in Lefkosia but love the village. Kostas enjoys going to the *kafenio* and playing cards. Playing cards at the *kafenio* is an important feature of life in Askas. People can spend hours there. Kostas convinced Poppy to come and live permanently in Askas, leaving their house in Lefkosia behind. While Kostas plays cards in the *kafenio* 'gambling' chocolates and occupies himself with

gardening, watering and endless tasks, Poppy does not have much to do in Askas. Even though she grew up there, she does not have that many friends there, at least friends who would remain over the weekend. All the friends live in Lefkosia, in one of its suburbs, Lakatamia. The complexity of city life or life elsewhere either means that you learn to appreciate the simplicity of village life and its beauties or simply disconnect from this life.

Many men have married foreign women and many of them are happy to share their life with their husbands in the mountains. However, even in these cases, many women find it hard to adapt to the conditions, being used to completely different environments. In Askas a tragic event happened. A young woman from Ukraine was killed by someone, either because of jealousy or other problems. Her body and the body of her lover were never found. Some say that their bodies were burnt by someone in the valley with the small chapel of Saint Paraskevi/Christine, since some villagers sensed "bodies being burned".

7 Conclusions

If any concrete conclusions can be drawn from our brief sketch, these would entail an emphasis on the village community as a backbone of Cypriot culture. The resilience of the village and its Church produced an environment, which could absorb foreign elements, peoples and influences, without the risk of destroying or losing at the same time the basic cultural and anthropological identity inherent to and produced by such a community.

The contemporary discourses often neglect the broader socio-anthropological role of the sacred in Cyprus, often reducing the sacred or the Church to their institutional expression. Whatever we believe in, the village environment demonstrates that some referential stable static points must exist for a given social unit to continue and survive. The contemporary emphasis on global abstractness simply does not cut the mark for cultural and community survival. The community 'needs' a reference pointing to its core and basics just as the individual human being or person does. Religion was not produced as the first but as the last thing in line. The more physical hard labour the villagers engaged in and the more problems they encountered and overcome the more religious they became.

The Cypriots who migrated and still migrate find it difficult to immediately identify that core of beingness and identity in other contexts. This is of course the common experience of all migrants, but the difference is that if you have migrated or migrate to another enclosed functional environment, this will compensate for your loss of community and identity. But if you migrate to the typically abstract

contemporary cities, you essentially have nothing left or anything left of your culture and traditions cease to exist.

If the 'land' produces culture, culture produces attitudes to land then, and if there are no such attitudes, obviously there is also no culture. The data from a village such as Askas clearly demonstrates the notion that culture is inherently linked with religion (Belzen 1999, 231). In its turn, religion is linked, among other things to the land. Regardless of belief in any confessions or atheism, religion entails unpredictability and indeterminacy, which are the governing forces of nature.

Furthermore, there is no artificial East/West or South/North or ecclesial/non-ecclesial divide, just as there is in reality no sharp distinction between evil and good, or right and wrong, but a complex interplay of elements. Migration and foreignness are not negative concepts, if society provides for viable carriers of community. The community is able to absorb, accept and transform.

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A Land for Strangers
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Unbuffered Zones
Here let me stand di Marianna Christofides e il loop dell'archeologia estrattiva

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Abstract The art and practice of Marianna Christofides stage the geopolitical divide by challenging the line between fact and fiction, in past time and present time. Facing the stranger thus takes on a diachronic dimension, displaying the contradiction that images of the past offer us to create new contradictions in the present. Such a projection gives the dual concept of the foreigner common to all migrants a claiming character and real expressive power. We seem to glimpse that for Marianna Christofides the foreigner is never just at the gates (or at the check point) but properly and deeply within herself too. In 2013, during a long stay in London devoted in large part to investigating in the National Archives and the British Museum the topic of British colonial legacy and Cyprus's complicity in predatory practices, Marianna Christofides came across Alessandro Palma di Cesnola's volume Cyprus Antiquities. The pages – and especially the illustrated plates of this volume – became the raw material Christofides used to shape her work Here let me Stand, exhibited in the following years first in Berlin, and then in Italy, in Palermo and Turin. The static images of the Cesnola collection are unified in a slow, continuous, incessant shot: an endless horizontal shot, a load that indicates the mirroring self-acceptance of compilation and expropriation.

Keywords Antiquities in contemporary art. Marianna Christofides. Decolonial art practices. Palma di Cesnola. Extractive archaeology.

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La costruzione dell'estraneità, l'assenza (o la presenza) di un territorio fisico che appartenga all'identità personale e collettiva costituiscono un fattore fondativo nella pratica artistica di Marianna Christofides. Nata nel 1980 a Nicosia, questa artista ha vissuto l'instabilità ereditata della sua capitale divisa, trasformandola in un costante riferimento che ha plasmato la sua produzione artistica anche durante la fase iniziale della sua formazione all'estero, in Germania, ad Atene e a Londra. Trasferitasi in Germania da molti anni, l'impegno di Christofides non si è distaccato dalla elaborazione di un universo immaginifico in cui si continua a narrare la vita di artista greco-cipriota che produce e consuma arte in una città divisa, in una città immaginata in cui in realtà non vive e non lavora (Photiou 2021, 115; cf. anche Stylianou et al. 2021, 11).

Questa proiezione dà al concetto duplice di straniero comune a tutti i migranti un carattere rivendicativo e una reale potenza espressiva. Sembra di intravedere che per Marianna Christofides lo straniero non sia mai alle porte (o al check point) ma propriamente e profondamente dentro di sé.

In questa prospettiva, l'installazione *Blank Mappings*, esposta al Padiglione Cipro della 54ª Biennale di Venezia nel 2011, rappresenta un caso esemplare. Un'opera insolita che Maria Photiou (Photiou 2012, 86) ha definito una mappa 'immaginaria', in cui è messa in scena la topografia storica di Nicosia mirando a evocare la memoria di Cipro come un'entità singola.[1]

Un ruolo significativo è rappresentato dai due muri che si intersecano a quattro secoli esatti di distanza l'uno dall'altro: le mura veneziane del 1570 e il muro del 1974. I veneziani che tenevano sotto controllo l'isola iniziarono la costruzione delle massicce fortificazioni urbiche di Nicosia nel 1567, incaricando due archistar e celebri ingegneri militari, Giulio Savorgnan e Francesco Barbaro. La costruzione coincise con la demolizione in un moto quasi inevitabile dell'architettura e della appropriazione degli spazi. I quartieri adiacenti alla linea di fuoco del nuovo muro che chiudeva a cerchio la città e le faceva da perimetro e gabbia furono distrutti, sia per acquisire materiale per la costruzione che per dare un più chiaro campo visivo alla difesa della città. Ma la quarta guerra ottomana-veneziana sul Mediterraneo si infiammò prima che il muro fosse terminato. Il primo di luglio del 1570 gli Ottomani posero l'assedio a Nicosia che ventuno giorni più tardi cadde in mano a Piyane Paşa.

Un muro eretto da stranieri per proteggersi da stranieri era caduto. Questo muro era destinato a futuri restauri – sono stati

1 "Marianna Christofides Interviewed by Alessandra Ferrini and Elisa Adami, in July 2013", disponibile all'indirizzo `https://mnemoscape.wordpress.com/2013/07/12/marianna-christofides-interview/`.

molti e fino a tempi vicinissimi a noi. A partire dal 1974 e con la costruzione del nuovo muro che lo taglia trasversalmente, di fronte al nuovo muro di cemento armato, senza simmetria, senza bastioni e coronato di filo spinato, il muro veneziano di quattro secoli prima ha iniziato a farsi percepire come il passato di un paese unito, come il nobile perimetro che abbracciava una molteplicità di lingue, culture e religioni. Restaurato e ripulito dal suo senso originario e dalla sua matrice coloniale, così appare all'immaginario artistico di Marianna Christofides che disegna questa dicotomia di muri e significati.

La pratica artistica, prima e dopo *Blank Mappings* mette in scena la narrazione della divisione geopolitica sfidando la linea di demarcazione tra fatto e finzione, nel tempo passato e nel tempo presente. Il confronto con lo straniero assume così una dimensione diacronica, utilizzando la contraddizione che ci offrono le immagini del passato per creare nuove contraddizioni nel presente.

Questa dimensione e la memoria imprescindibile dello straniero nel tempo viene concettualizzata e resa quasi un sistema interpretativo da Marianna Christofides in *The Utopia Disaster*:

> Since the Mediterranean Sea has turned to a kind of an EU-Bufferzone and thousands of people lost their lives in the attempt to cross it, hope and despair lie nowhere in the Mediterranean area so close together as at the Strait of Gibraltar. Here, where already during the battle against the Moors, antique mythology was drawn on as part of political propaganda, the non plus ultra of the Pillars of Hercules is again in force today. Even for the naming of the operations at sea against illegal immigrants, antique myths are used. (Christofides 2012)[2]

Nel 2013, durante un lungo soggiorno a Londra dedicato in larga parte ad approfondire negli Archivi Nazionali e del British Museum il tema dell'eredità coloniale britannica e della complicità di Cipro nelle pratiche predatorie, Marianna Christofides si imbatte nel pesante volume di Alessandro Palma di Cesnola *Cyprus Antiquities* (Palma di Cesnola 1881) **[fig. 1]**. Le pagine e, soprattutto, le tavole illustrate di questo volume diventano il materiale che Christofides utilizza per dare forma alla sua opera *Here Let Me Stand*.[3]

2 *Through the Roadbloacks. Realities in Raw Motion Conference*, disponibile all'indirizzo `https://www.cut.ac.cy/digitalAssets/104/104333_100TTR_booklet.pdf`.

3 Video a canale singolo, 29:29, loop, HD, colore, muto.

Figura 1 Alessandro Palma di Cesnola, *Cyprus Antiquities*. 1881. Tavola fotografica illustrativa

Di nuovo negli anni ’70, in questo caso del XIX secolo, dobbiamo ambientare l’attività pseudo-archeologica condotta da Alessandro Palma di Cesnola a Cipro sulla scorta e all’ombra del più ingombrante fratello Luigi, console degli Stati Uniti e futuro direttore del nascente Metropolitan Museum of Art di New York. Fra il 1874 e il 1878 Alessandro accompagna gli scavi intrapresi e ne promuove di nuovi a Salamis, Ormidia, Kourion, Soli, raccogliendo una abnorme collezione di antichità che conta più di 14.000 reperti (Goring 1988; Vagnetti 2004; Bombardieri, Panero 2021a, 27-9). Negli stessi anni Alessandro trascorre lunghi periodi a Londra per studiare le antichità orientali conservate al British Museum, ma soprattutto con l’intento di promuoversi e trovare finanziatori per le sue dispendiose operazioni di scavo. La raccolta prevede un investimento iniziale con voci multiple di spesa, non ultimi i premi in denaro agli ‘informatori archeologici’ locali a Cipro e agli operai che gli portavano la maggior quantità di oggetti in oro e preziosi (Stanley-Price 2018).

Non stupisce, perciò, che a Londra Palma di Cesnola, mentre cerca di intendere cosa sta raccogliendo dai depositi archeologici sull’isola cerchi di intendere chi possa ‘valorizzare’ quella raccolta. Chi meglio di uno sponsor? Un banchiere-sponsor, Edwin H. Lawrence. Questi stringe un accordo con Palma di Cesnola con il quale si impegna a finanziare gli scavi, con l’obbligo di riconoscere a sé la proprietà e all’Inghilterra il diritto di prelazione sui suoi ritrovamenti. Con il trasferimento delle antichità raccolte da Cipro, Lawrence ne diviene *de facto* proprietario e la collezione rimarrà nella sua dimora londinese.

Alessandro, nel frattempo, sposa Augusta Lawrence, figlia minore del banchiere e, fra le altre e molte attività, organizza una mostra delle sue antichità (ovvero del suocero) e un ampio volume della collezione, con numerose tavole fotografiche in cui gli oggetti sono disposti in ordine e appaiono sistemati come in un perfetto catalogo di prodotti di commercio. Questo è il volume *Cyprus Antiquities*. Due anni più tardi, in seguito alla morte di Lawrence e per volontà degli eredi, la collezione viene smembrata e inizia la dispersione in lotti, una piccola parte acquistata dal British Museum e il resto venduto a collezionisti privati attraverso una serie di aste successive (l'ultima è del 1992) (Kiely, Ulbrich 2012).

14.000 sono gli oggetti entrati a far parte della raccolta di antichità Lawrence-Cesnola; nel 2005 un nuovo lotto di 350 oggetti che si ritenevano confluiti nel mercato antiquario e che provengono dalla stessa raccolta e sono illustrati nel volume *Cyprus Antiquities* viene donato da Arturo, nipote di Alessandro Palma di Cesnola ai Musei Reali di Torino (Tarantini 2021). A testimonianza della infinita diaspora, vale qui la pena ricordare incidentalmente che un ulteriore lotto delle antichità presumibilmente raccolte da Alessandro rimane ancora in possesso degli eredi di Arturo. In questo caso i numeri sono importanti e la suggestione che se ne ricava è quella di una vena inesauribile drenata dal sottosuolo archeologico di Cipro, una vena che continua a irrigare collezioni private e pubbliche in Occidente.

Nel video di *Here Let Me Stand* gli oggetti sistemati nelle tavole fotografiche di *Cyprus Antiquities* evocano una sorta di breve stato intermedio, un passaggio tra due stati (Hartmann 2014). I reperti vengono sistemati dopo essere stati scavati e prima della loro musealizzazione e in questo momento partecipiamo a un nuovo 'cantiere'. Guardando oggi tavole fotografiche che testimoniano di una classificazione soggettiva, arbitraria, 'ordinata' (cronologicamente, topograficamente, stilisticamente), ci si rende conto della finzione che è impressa sulla carta fotografica. Per Christofides è una finzione che ha ormai acquisito storicità.[4]

In *Here Let Me Stand* queste immagini statiche sono unificate in una ripresa lenta, continua, incessante: una ripresa orizzontale senza fine. Se si volessero esporre realmente tutti gli oggetti raffigurati, occorrerebbe una vetrina lunga diverse centinaia di metri. Questo ammasso indica l'abbondanza e l'incoscienza della compilazione e dell'espropriazione. Nella proiezione che produce un ingrandimento, collage e montaggio si incontrano indistintamente in un'opera in cui, come scrive Marianna Christofides:

4 "Marianna Christofides: 'Here Let Me Stand', 2013", disponibile all'indirizzo `https://www.onassis.org/whats-on/visual-dialogues-2013/here-let-me-stand-2013`.

> Harmonies and proportions shift, as details magnify. Collage and montage combine seamlessly into a film that aims for the poetic translation of a fictional construction. Findings become evidence of the personally seen and the experienced. (Christofides 2013)[5]

Here Let Me Stand viene esposto a Berlino, nella galleria Campagne Première nel 2014[6] e in Italia per la prima volta nel 2017 a Palermo, nell'ambito della mostra temporanea *Mappe e miti del Mediterraneo*, allestita presso il Museo Archeologico Regionale Antonino Salinas di Palermo **[fig. 2]**.

Figura 2 Marianna Christofides, *Here Let Me Stand* e il Torso dello Stagnone da Mozia. Allestimento per la mostra temporanea *Mappe e miti del Mediterraneo* (2017). Museo Archeologico Regionale 'Antonino Salinas'

L'installazione video di Marianna Christofides si affianca ai lavori di sei artisti contemporanei, appositamente realizzati per dialogare con spazi e opere della collezione permanente.[7] Per l'installazione di

5 "Marianna Christofides: 'Here Let Me Stand', 2013", disponibile all'indirizzo `https://www.onassis.org/whats-on/visual-dialogues-2013/here-let-me-stand-2013`.

6 "Marianna Christofides *Here let me stand*. Campagne Première Berlin", disponibile all'indirizzo `https://www.e-flux.com/announcements/186359/marianna-christofideshere-let-me-stand/`.

7 *Mappe e miti del Mediterraneo,* disponibile all'indirizzo `https://movio.cultura.gov.it/regsicilia/sponsorizzazionisicilia/getFile.php?id=395`.

Palermo Marianna Christofides ha ideato un'opera-testo sul tema del mito e del suo uso nella ricerca contemporanea. Il testo, stampato su una stoffa della larghezza di 1 metro e la lunghezza di circa 7, è appeso in alto e in orizzontale tra due dei sostegni delle volte del corridoio in cui si trova esposta la galleria della statuaria romana. Questa opera si accompagna a *Here Let Me Stand* che a Palermo viene installato nella sala che ospita il cosiddetto Torso dello Stagnone rinvenuto nel 1933 a largo di Mozia, una scultura mutila stilisticamente affine al linguaggio della statuaria di epoca Cipro-Arcaica. Si è notato che la pietra stessa con la quale la statua è realizzata non è locale e suggerisce che possa essere stata importata da Cipro intorno al terzo quarto del VI secolo a.C. (Falsone 1970, 57-8; Spagnoli 2021, 131). Infine, un ulteriore elemento evocativo è costituito dalla relazione di *Here Let Me Stand* con i reperti provenienti dalla collezione Robert Fagan, controverso mercante d'arte che la curatrice Valentina Bruschi ha idealmente scelto come *alter ego* di Palma di Cesnola, in un gioco di specchi e rimandi che mettono in scena le molte facce identiche dell'archeologia diplomatica e coloniale (Laffan 2000).

Here Let Me Stand è stato allestito a Torino, nella sala di apertura della mostra temporanea *Cipro. Crocevia delle civiltà* che si è tenuta ai Musei Reali nel 2021 **[fig. 3]**. Come nel caso di Palermo, anche per la mostra torinese l'opera di Marianna Christofides è chiamata a misurarsi con un itinerario archeologico. Non più genericamente mediterraneo, ma specificamente cipriota. In questo orizzonte, la videoinstallazione intendeva produrre un caleidoscopico effetto di contrasto che potesse mettere a fuoco gli effetti dell'approccio estrattivo dell'Europa occidentale alle antichità di Cipro. Le immagini del loop lento di *Here Let Me Stand* scorrevano in loop sulla parete d'ingresso della sala espositiva di apertura della mostra, in uno spazio programmaticamente dedicato alla narrazione della dimensione coloniale dell'archeologia ottocentesca (Sala tematica TH1. *From Treasure Hunting to Collections*) (Bombardieri 2021, 351, cat. 213). Le immagini delle antichità ritratte nel video si fondono indistintamente in una collezione immaginaria, creando così un forte contrasto con una copia originale del volume *Cyprus Antiquities*, esposto nella stessa sala espositiva (Bombardieri, Panero 2021b, 37).[8]

8 Cf. anche *Progettazione Mostra "Cipro. Crocevia delle Civiltà"*, disponibile all'indirizzo https://visivalab.com/it/portfolio-item/cipro-crocevia-delle-civilta/.

Figura 3 Marianna Christofides, *Here Let Me Stand*. Allestimento per la mostra temporanea *Cipro. Crocevia delle civiltà* (2021). Torino, Musei Reali

Originariamente utilizzato per descrivere un modello economico legato allo sfruttamento non controllato delle risorse naturali in tutto il Global South (Warnecke-Berger, Ickler 2023), 'estrattivismo' può apparire appropriato per delineare il modello di riferimento delle attività archeologiche a Cipro a partire dalla seconda metà del XVIII secolo e, in misura esponenziale, nel corso del secolo successivo. Il consolidarsi di questo modello rappresenta un fenomeno di lunga durata ed è guidato essenzialmente dagli interessi ideologici ed economici di musei e collezionisti occidentali e dai loro partner sull'isola.[9]

L'archeologia estrattiva, per sua natura, innesca processi di competizione tra diversi attori a vari livelli e attiva meccanismi di accumulazione, in una catena in cui gli scavatori locali riforniscono i collezionisti di antichità, i collezionisti riforniscono musei e altri collezionisti di antichità. In questo modello la 'collezione' diventa l'unità di riferimento di un processo che virtualmente non ha limiti, basato saldamente sull'equilibrio tra domanda e offerta. Con una parola: il capitalismo.

Le dimensioni del collezionismo e delle collezioni aumentano entrambe drammaticamente quando Luigi e Alessandro Palma di Cesnola sono attivi a Cipro, fianco a fianco ai loro colleghi diplomatici

9 Knapp, Antoniadou 1998; Stylianou-Lambert, Bounia 2016; Bombardieri 2024; Given 2024; Marshall 2025

e potenziali pseudo-archeologi, George Colonna Ceccaldi, Dominic Colnaghi, Luis e Charles de Maricourt (Masson 1993; Yon 2011, 42; Bonato, Emery 2010; Kiely, Ulbrich 2012). Entrambi i processi di competizione e accumulazione sono ben visibili nella formazione continua di collezioni di antichità fin dai primi anni di esplorazione (e sfruttamento) dell'isola e da allora fino a oggi, fino a trasformarsi nell'antonomasia stessa dell'archeologia in contesti di colonizzazione (Bombardieri 2024, 3-6; Kiely et al. 2025) **[fig. 4]**.

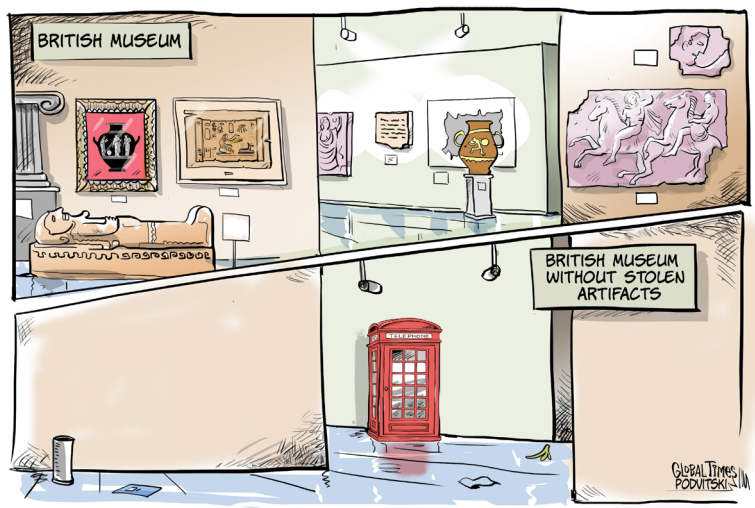

Figura 4 Vitaly Podvitski, *British Museum without Stolen Artifacts* (Cartoon disponibile su https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202311/1302786.shtml)

In questo orizzonte trova spazio anche la collezione Alessandro Palma di Cesnola, chiusa e sistemata nel suo catalogo stampato a Londra, chiusa e sistemata, sempre a Londra o nelle varie sue nuove dimore. Lì l'ha scovata e riscavata Marianna Christofides. Il loop che anima nel suo moto perpetuo *Here Let Me Stand* ci sembra assomigliare dapprima a una innocua lanterna cinese per poi deformarsi via via su una curva di inesorabilità. Ciò che appare alla nostra vista scompare poi come le antichità che dall'isola vengono estratte senza radici, lentamente e inesorabilmente sottratte per poi ripresentarsi pulite, sistemate, ordinate, classificate e morte.

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Afterword

A Land for Strangers
Non-Native Individuals and Communities in Cyprus
edited by Carlotta Brignone, Lorenzo Calvelli,
Giulia Gollo, Lorenzo Mazzotta

A Land for Strangers, A History of Encounters

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Barbarus hic ego sum, qui non intellegar ulli.
"Here *I* am the barbarian,
the one whom no one can understand".
Ov. *Tr.* 5.10.37

I first arrived in Cyprus on a hot late-summer afternoon in 1999, stepping off the plane at Larnaca Airport as a young undergraduate student in Ancient History. The terminal was still the one hastily assembled at the end of 1974, after the Turkish military invasion of the northern part of the island had forced the closure of the International Airport at Nicosia. Waiting outside in his non-air-conditioned car was my future advisor, Professor Theodoros Mavrojannis, who had graciously come to collect me in person. He drove me to Nicosia, where I was to reside at the Cyprus American Archaeological Research Institute (CAARI), an elegant British colonial house, built just outside the Venetian Renaissance walls of the capital and made even more charming by the quiet rhythm of ceiling fans and the shade of the trees that surrounded it. From the moment I set foot on the island, I felt at home. The warmth of the air, the stark Mediterranean landscape, the distinctive and harmonious mixture of architectural forms and, above all, the local hospitality made me feel welcomed, as someone who already belonged.

Luigi Silvano aptly opened this volume with a reflection on how, in Cyprus, one might feel like a stranger for a single day but soon

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become Cypriot for a lifetime. His words resonate deeply with me and recall the adaptability that has long shaped the island's history of encounters. Yet over the years – whether in Cyprus, elsewhere in the world or even in my own country – the quiet sense of being an enduring stranger has subtly surfaced from time to time. It does not announce itself. It arrives in stillness, in silence, in a glance, in the regular sound of a bell that drives you out of a library or in the quiet expiry of a card that no longer opens that beloved door. It is not a question of where you are, nor is it exile or rejection. It is a hidden feeling, lodged somewhere in your soul. A sudden shadow cast by movement – by leaving and arriving – by the mutable shape of one's own identity. If your nature is that of a voyager or of someone driven by voracious curiosity, part of your being will never be fully at rest in any single place.

It was perhaps this very feeling that brought an impatient and insatiable humanist like Cyriac of Ancona to spend a year of his life in Cyprus, as his fellow countryman and biographer Francesco Scalamonti suggests.[1] Cyriac's arrival in Cyprus as an entrusted agent of the Venetian merchant Zaccaria Contarini likely took place during 1428. From Ancona he travelled through Bari, Monopoli, Byzantium, Chios, Rhodes, Beirut and Damascus, before finally reaching Famagusta, a city that, until not long before, had ranked among the wealthiest and most cosmopolitan harbours in the world, but which in his time was held in isolation under Genoese control.[2]

Cyriac's actions in Cyprus remind us that the condition of the foreigner is often shaped by forms of negotiated hospitality and a restless intellectual drive. According to his biographer, his first temporary assignment on the island was to serve as vicar of the Genoese *podestà* in Famagusta. This appointment seems to exemplify a form of integration neither entirely official nor wholly improvised: it probably rested on fame and on a humanistic understanding of public office, shaped by civic duty and grounded in Roman law (*Romanas sibi leges et omnia iuris consultorum egregia dicta tum primum videre lectitareque non sine incremento peritiae et oblectatione contigerat*). Cyriac's subsequent administration of Contarini's private affairs enabled him to extend his stay in Cyprus and relocate to Nicosia, where he once again navigated overlapping spheres – political, intellectual and personal. There he conversed with the King Janus of Lusignan, whose impressive personality outshone the renown of

1 The edition of Scalamonti's account of Cyriac's stay in Cyprus is provided in Mitchell, Bodnar, Foss 2015, 56-67; see also Mitchell, Bodnar 1996, 51-6.

2 On Genoese Famagusta, see the essays collected in Grivaud, Nicolaou-Konnari, Schabel 2020, 69-362.

his name (*perbella praesentia clarum suum et eximiae laudis nomen superatum*).

Janus had only recently returned to Cyprus after a humiliating ten-month captivity in Cairo, following the Mamluk invasion of the island and his defeat at the Battle of Chirokitia in 1426.[3] Despite the kingdom's dire condition – ravaged by epidemics, social unrest and a massive peasant revolt[4] – Cyriac moved with remarkable ease at the Lusignan court, joining royal hunts and travelling across the countryside (*saepius inclyto cum rege ad venationes exercendas totam fere insulam exploravit*). He explored the island's ancient remains with the eye of an antiquarian and the precision of a businessman, copying ancient Latin and Byzantine inscriptions, acquiring old Greek manuscripts and documenting the cultural heritage of Cyprus amid the fragile splendour of a declining crusader kingdom.[5]

In a remote monastery (*ad vetustum quoddam monasterium*), Cyriac traded a volume of the Gospels with a monk for a time-worn manuscript of the *Iliad* (*antiquam Homeri Iliadem*). Later, in Nicosia, he obtained from another monk a copy of the *Odyssey*, several tragedies by Euripides and a work by Theodosius of Alexandria (*habuit et deinde alio a chalochiero in Leucosia Odissiam et Euripidis plerasque tragediasque ac Theodosii grammatici Alexandrini vetustatum codicem*). After travelling across regions and centuries, the *Iliad* once owned by Cyriac may now be preserved among the Harleian Manuscripts in the British Library,[6] while his *Odyssey* may have found its way to the Malatestiana Library in Cesena.[7] The fate of the manuscript of Euripides remains unknown, except for the fact that, following Cyriac's death, it came into the possession of his nephew in Ancona, as indicated by a set of much-debated handwritten

3 For the Mamluk raids in fifteenth-century Cyprus, see Irwin 1995.

4 A detailed analysis of the revolt and its aftermath is offered in Kyriacou 2022.

5 On Cyriac's search for inscriptions and manuscripts in Cyprus, see Calvelli 2008; 2009, 58-69.

6 London, British Library, Harley MS 5693. The manuscript, which once belonged to the libraries of Gaspare Zacchi (Gaspare da Volterra) and Antonio Seripandi, contains on f. 1*r-v* an *Alphabetum XXIIII litterarum secundum priscos Graecos scriptum manu Cyriaci Anconitani*. On this manuscript, see Leaf 1889; Pontani 1994, 124. A digitised version of the manuscript was accessible on the British Library website prior to the cyberattack of 28 October 2023.

7 Cesena, Biblioteca Malatestiana, Plut. D.XXVII.2. On the possibility that this copy of the *Odyssey* was the one acquired by Cyriac in Cyprus, see Pontani 1997, 1479; Fiaccadori 2006, 331-2.

annotations attributed to the humanist Cristoforo da Rieti.[8] Finally, Scalamonti's reference to Theodosius of Alexandria may also be interpreted as an allusion to a work that was incorrectly attributed to this late-antique grammarian.[9]

The history of the manuscripts acquired in Cyprus by Cyriac of Ancona bears witness to the material lives of texts – their circulation, survival and reinterpretation – as well as to the discernment of those who collected them. The intellectual and human engagements of individuals such as Cyriac across the island reflect many of the themes explored in this volume: the conditional nature of welcome; the agency of non-native individuals; the porous boundaries between commerce, antiquarianism and knowledge; and the island's enduring role as a place of arrival, departure and provisional belonging.

It is precisely this layered and variegated sense of belonging that lies at the heart of *A Land for Strangers* – a paradox that extends beyond individual lives and points towards a deeper, shared condition. The essays gathered in our volume offer a multifaceted exploration of the presence and impact of non-native individuals and communities in Cyprus across diverse historical moments. As we reflect on the past and its ongoing impact on the present, the pages of this book remind us that the concepts of 'local' and 'foreigner' are never fixed, but are constantly in flux – shaped by time, space and the evolving frameworks through which identity is understood and lived. As the opening quote from Ovid's *Tristia* – written during his exile on the shores of the Black Sea over two millennia ago – powerfully evokes, these meanings remain ever fluid.[10]

8 Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, MS Gr. 425, f. 59v: *Cum Ancone exularem vidi in bibliotheca Kiriaci Anconitani, viri omnium antiquitatum studiosissimi: Ptholomeum in astrologia volumen quidem pergrande et nobile, Grecis literis scriptum. Item et Homeri Yliaden. Item vidi et legi Esiodum, Herodotum, Pindarum Grece. Item Aristidem, Euripidem, Aristophanum et Sophoclem tragicos super fabulam Edipi. Item Ethicam et librum De anima Aristotelis. Item et nonnullos libros astrologie et geometrie.* […] *Item emi cum maximo desiderio totum Novum Testamentum et psalterium in Greco a nepote eiusdem Kiriaci. Item ab eodem emi Plutarchi Ethicam libros XIIII et emi ab eodem epistolas numero 155 in Greco scriptas* (While I was passing through Ancona, I saw in the library of Cyriac of Ancona, a man most passionate about all antiquities, a volume of Ptolemy on astrology, a truly vast and important work, written in Greek characters. I also saw Homer's *Iliad*. Likewise, I saw and read Hesiod, Herodotus and Pindar in Greek. Likewise, Aristides, Euripides, Aristophanes and Sophocles with their tragedies about the story of Oedipus. Also, Aristotle's *Ethics* and his book *On the Soul*. Likewise, also some books on astrology and geometry. […] Also, I eagerly purchased the entire *New Testament* and a Psalter in Greek from the nephew of that same Cyriac. From him, I also bought fourteen books of Plutarch's *Moralia* and I bought 155 letters written in Greek). See Pontani 1994, 103-16; Calvelli 2009, 61-3.

9 On Theodosius of Alexandria, see Robins 1993, 111-23; Dickey 2007, 83-4.

10 Ov. *Tr.* 5.10.37.

Through a variety of approaches – archaeological, historical and anthropological – the authors of this volume have unveiled the complexities of mobility and integration in a land that has always been a meeting point of cultures, a crossroads where foreignness was not an exception but an essential feature of the island's very nature. The individual case studies presented here underscore the fluidity of identity, the negotiations of belonging and the resilience of individuals and communities in adapting to new environments. They also demonstrate the importance of material culture and primary sources in reconstructing the experiences of people who moved through or settled on the island. As this book comes to a close, it is clear that the study of non-native individuals and communities in Cyprus is far from complete. There remains much to explore in the archives, in the field and in comparative frameworks that place Cyprus in dialogue with other regions of the Mediterranean and beyond.

A Land for Strangers opens the way to further inquiry into how the island's history might contribute to broader discussions on the nature of foreignness and the mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion. This volume is not only a scholarly contribution to the study of Cyprus but also a reminder that connectivity and insularity are not opposites, but interwoven dynamics that have jointly shaped Cypriot history. The island's perceived marginality has long coexisted with its role as a site of contact, exchange and entanglement, offering a valuable observatory from which to reconsider prevailing narratives of centre and periphery. I share with the other editors of this volume the sincere hope that its multifaceted perspectives will ignite future research and interdisciplinary collaboration on the experiences of strangers in lands that may feel strange – only until strangeness gives way to familiarity, thereby deepening our understanding of the complexities of movement and settlement, both within Cyprus and far beyond.

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Studi ciprioti

1. Calvelli, Lorenzo (2020). *Il tesoro di Cipro. Clodio, Catone e la conquista romana dell'isola*.

2. Amadio, Marialucia (2023). *Building in Prehistoric Cyprus. Tracing Transformations in the Built and Social Environment of Early Cypriot Communities*.

3. Bombardieri, Luca (2024). *From Exploration to Exploitation. Giovanni Mariti, Domenico Sestini, Antonio Mondaini and the Early History of Cypriote Archaeology*.

4. Graziadio, Giampaolo (2025). *The Aegean and Cyprus. Interaction Between Two Distinct Cultural Mediterranean Areas from the Third Millennium to Ca 1200 BC*.

What happens when ‘strangers’ become part of the very fabric of a place? In Cyprus, newcomers have long shaped the island’s history, enriching rather than disrupting the cohesion of local cultures. Seven interdisciplinary essays – framed by a thought-provoking preface and an introspective afterword – explore the roles and contributions of non-native individuals and communities in Cypriot society, from prehistory to the present day. Drawing on a wide range of sources and approaches, this volume offers insights into Cyprus’s identity as a site of connectivity and interaction, suggesting how its complex past may hold enduring relevance for contemporary societies.

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