CYPRUS AT THE LOUVRE

10/02 – 22/06/2026

PUBLICATION ON THE OCCASION OF THE
EXHIBITION AT THE LOUVRE MUSEUM

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LOUVRE

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DEPARTMENT OF
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CULTURE

ΤΜΗΜΑ ΑΡΧΑΙΟΤΗΤΩΝ
DEPARTMENT OF ANTIQUITIES

CYPRUS AT THE LOUVRE

This publication extends beyond a conventional exhibition catalogue, encompassing more artefacts and subjects than those displayed in the exhibition. Artefacts that were transported from Cypriot museums and exhibited in the Louvre museum are indicated with an asterisk (*).

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DEPUTY MINISTRY OF CULTURE

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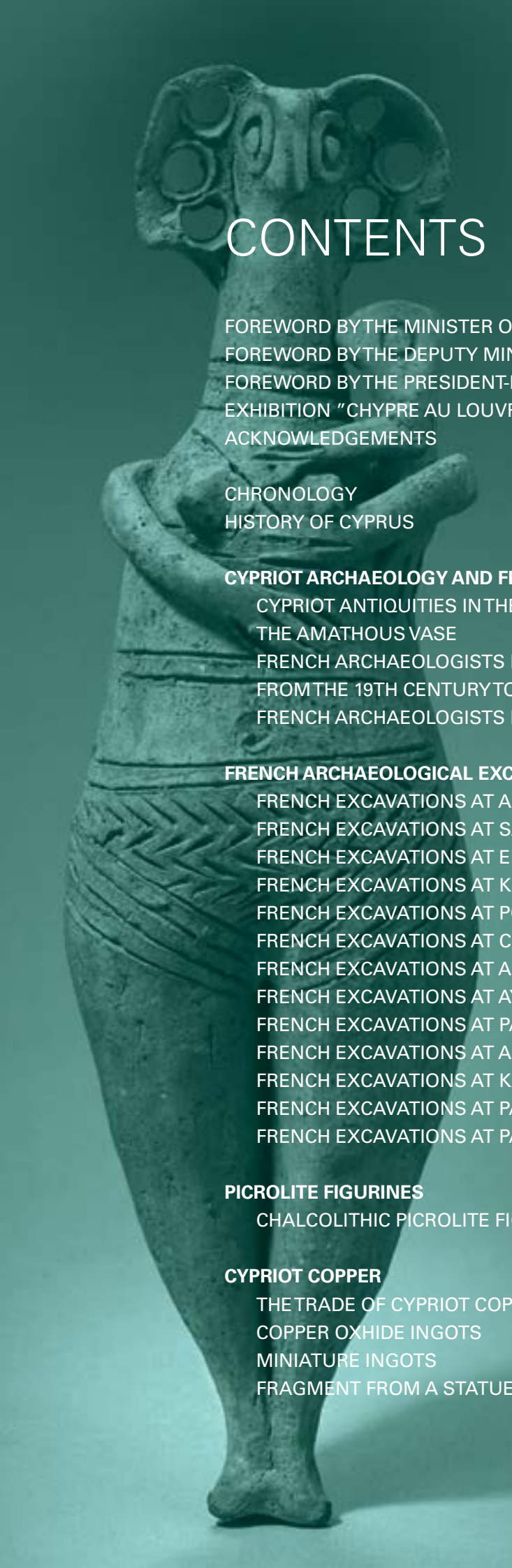

CONTENTS

Foreword by the Minister of Culture of the French Republic

I welcome the opening of the exhibition "Cyprus at the Louvre", the result of an exemplary collaboration between the Louvre Museum and the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Cyprus, the University of Cyprus, and the CYENS Center. This event comes at a highly symbolic moment: Cyprus' presidency of the Council of the European Union, which reminds us how Cyprus, on the eastern border of our continent, has exemplified an inclination towards dialogue between people for fourteen millennia.

This dialogue, woven for millennia through art, continues today through archaeology and scientific research.

This is the objective of this exhibition: to reveal the depth of the ties that unite our Mediterranean civilizations. This unique exhibition marks the first time that the Department of Oriental Antiquities of the Louvre has welcomed sixteen artworks on loan from the Republic of Cyprus to its Cypriot galleries. This dialogue between permanent collections and exceptional objects on loan reflects the vigour of the artistic and cultural exchanges between our cultures and institutions.

From the Chalcolithic to the Roman period, these masterpieces reveal how Cyprus forged a unique artistic identity while participating fully in the major cultural trends of the Eastern Mediterranean.

This exhibition also provides an opportunity to highlight the remarkable work of French archaeological missions in Cyprus, whose involvement dates back to the 19th century and the excavations of the Count of Vogüé. It brings attention to treasures, such as the famous Idalion bowls, one of which was barely saved from being melted down and is now on display for the first time since its exceptional restoration.

Beyond the objects themselves, the exhibition gives pride of place to an intangible and sensory dimension. Thanks to innovative technologies developed by the CYENS center, visitors will discover digital reconstructions, augmented reality experiences, and a journey enriched by poetry and traditional Cypriot songs.

Finally, this exhibition reminds us that culture is also a political act. It allows people to know each other and to engage in dialogue about their heritage. France defends this spirit alongside its European partners: culture is not just something we possess, it is a bond that elevates us.

I would like to express my deep gratitude to Ms. Vasiliki Kassianidou, Deputy Minister of Culture of the Republic of Cyprus, and Mr. Pavlos Kombos, Ambassador of Cyprus to France, for their determination and commitment to the realisation of this exceptional project. My thanks also go to the teams at the University of Cyprus, the CYENS center, and the Louvre Museum, whose scientific work and passion made this encounter possible. Their collaboration is the concrete embodiment of the Europe of Culture that France defends together with all its European partners.

Rachida Dati
Minister of Culture of the French Republic

Foreword by the Deputy Minister of Culture, Republic of Cyprus

It is with great pleasure that I welcome the digital publication of the catalogue for the exhibition "Cyprus at the Louvre", which is being held as part of the Cultural Program of the Cyprus Presidency of the Council of the European Union in 2026. The assumption of the Presidency is a historic moment for Cyprus and, at the same time, an excellent opportunity to showcase the island's ancient, traditional and contemporary culture at European and international level. One of the main objectives of the Cyprus Presidency is to strengthen cultural cooperation for a European Union that draws strength from our collective memory and common cultural identity.

The exhibition is hosted at the Louvre Museum, one of the most important museums in the world, which holds one of the largest collections of Cypriot antiquities outside Cyprus, numbering over 4,000 Cypriot antiquities. This exhibition presents Cyprus' rich cultural heritage to an international audience and integrates it into a broader European dialogue.

For the purposes of the Cyprus Presidency exhibition, the Cypriot antiquities from the permanent collection of the Louvre in rooms 300 and 316 are placed in creative dialogue with sixteen selected ancient objects that have travelled from Cyprus specifically for this purpose. At the same time, the exhibition is accompanied by new, scientifically documented information material, through which the antiquities are placed in their historical and cultural context, as revealed by recent archaeological research. The long and pioneering contribution of French archaeological missions in Cyprus occupies a special place in the narrative structure of the exhibition.

The visitor's experience is further enriched by innovative digital applications – 3D representations, interactive screens and augmented reality experiences – which shed light on aspects of ancient life, writing and language, cult practices, trade networks, medical knowledge and the intangible cultural heritage of our country, transforming knowledge into an existential experience.

Poems by great Greek poets, such as Giorgos Seferis, inspired by the island, as well as traditional Cypriot songs, are incorporated into the exhibition through digital technology, bridging the past with the present and inviting the public not only to observe, but also to listen and feel the cultural memory, and to realize how deep its roots are. During the exhibition, a series of public lectures will also be organized, which will contribute significantly to the dissemination of the results of archaeological research on Cyprus to a wider international audience.

This trilingual publication, an integral and organic part of the exhibition, is an important collective reference work, with contributions from thirty-seven archaeologists, historians, philologists and other scholars and scientists from different fields, who shed light on multiple aspects of the exhibition, Cypriot archaeology and the Louvre's Cypriot collection.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Minister of Culture of the French Republic, Madame Rachida Dati, for fostering the strong cultural bonds between France and Cyprus. Warm thanks also to the curators of the exhibition, the authors and all those who worked to make this demanding project happen. Special thanks are due to the Louvre Museum, the University of Cyprus, the CYENS Centre of Excellence, the Department of Contemporary Culture and the Department of Antiquities of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Cyprus, who worked intensively for months to achieve this outstanding result.

I extend my warmest thanks to the Louvre Museum for hosting us and giving us this unique opportunity to present the exhibition "Cyprus at the Louvre".

Many thanks also go to the Embassy of the Republic of Cyprus in Paris for its support and contribution to the realization of the exhibition.

The cultural heritage of Cyprus is an integral part of European and Mediterranean history and culture. Through the Cyprus Presidency, our country is reaching out to Europe and the world with a strong, coherent and creative cultural narrative that connects the past, the present and the future. I hope that the exhibition and its catalogue will serve as a meaningful invitation to get to know Cyprus through its archaeological and historical evidence, as well as through its timeless, uninterrupted, and creative continuity.

Dr Vasiliki Kassianidou
Deputy Minister of Culture
Republic of Cyprus

Foreword by the President-Director of the Louvre Museum

In 1862, the French architect and archaeologist Edmond Duthoit departed from Cyprus, having spent several months on the island on an official archaeological mission. In a letter to his mentor, the famous Eugène Viollet-Le-Duc, he expressed his hope that the mission's discoveries would "raise awareness of Cypriot art, which has been completely unknown until now and is truly worthy of study." Duthoit's enthusiasm, who would return to Cyprus a few years later, testifies to the close links between the history of the collection of Cypriot antiquities in the Louvre Museum, one of the richest in the world, and the birth of Cypriot archaeology.

It is this cultural heritage, in all its diversity, that the Louvre Museum is honouring on the occasion of Cyprus' presidency of the Council of the European Union. Until June 2026, sixteen masterpieces from the Cypriot national collections are on display in the rooms of the Department of Oriental Antiquities of the Louvre, where they interact with the museum's collections. Brought together in this way, these works, which span an immense chronological extent, illustrate the incredible cultural dynamism that was fostered on the island, at the crossroads of the trade routes of the ancient Mediterranean.

Visitors to the Louvre will have the opportunity to view two votive sculptures from Ayia Irini, exceptional witnesses of the skillfulness of Cypriot sculptors, alongside clay statuettes held by the Louvre and not far from the famous Amathous vase, as well as admire the island's iconic cruciform figurines. The exhibition, supplemented with various digital technologies, offers a true immersion into Cyprus' tangible and intangible heritage, where the works and objects on display resonate with the poetry of George Seferis, Constantine Cavafy and traditional Cypriot songs.

"Cyprus at the Louvre" is the result of an effective partnership between the Louvre Museum and the Deputy Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Cyprus. It could not have happened without the commitment of our Cypriot partners, in particular the University of Cyprus and the CYENS Centre of Excellence. I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to H.E. Pavlos Kombos, Ambassador of Cyprus to France, for his invaluable assistance, and to commend the work of the curators of this remarkable exhibition, Hélène Le Meaux, George Papasavvas and Artemis Georgiou. To quote Edmond Duthoit in the letter he sent about his discovery of the Amathous vase, I dare to believe that it will make "an eminent impression at the Louvre"!

Laurence des Cars
President-Director of the Louvre Museum

Exhibition "CHYPRE AU LOUVRE", 10 February-22 June 2026

Cyprus, an island located at the easternmost frontier of Europe, boasts a remarkably long and rich history, spanning over 14,000 years. Its rich archaeological remains tell the story of the ancient societies that shaped their own cultural trajectories, exploiting the island's natural resources, while dynamically engaging with the wider Mediterranean world.

As the Republic of Cyprus assumes the Presidency of the Council of the European Union in 2026, a special exhibition, titled "Cyprus at the Louvre", offers an opportunity to experience the island's distinctive culture and its enduring contribution to Europe's shared heritage. To celebrate this moment, Cypriot antiquities already housed in the Louvre (Rooms 300 and 316) are brought into dialogue with archaeological highlights travelling from Cyprus. The additions span a broad chronological horizon, extending from the Chalcolithic period (ca. 4000-2500 BC) to the Roman period and the first centuries of the 1st millennium AD.

The exhibition brings ancient Cyprus vividly to life through the use of innovative digital technologies. Visitors are invited to explore the ancient civilisation of Cyprus through 3D reconstructions, interactive screens and Augmented Reality experiences. These immersive tools allow audiences to engage with a wide range of themes, from ancient languages and writing systems to religious practices, trade networks, economic life and ancient approaches to medicine and healing.

In this framework, the pioneering and ongoing French archaeological missions in Cyprus are also presented, showcasing important discoveries and underscoring the connections between the two countries.

Beyond material remains, the exhibition also highlights Cyprus' rich intangible heritage. Poetry inspired by the island and its history, by George Seferis, Constantine Cavafy and Costas Montis, as well as traditional Cypriot songs recorded by the all-female, multi-voice choir *Amalgamation*, form an integral part of the visitor experience. Through digital media, stone statues and clay figurines are given a voice and are brought to life. With the contribution of immersive technologies, these ancient silent artefacts recite emblematic poems relating to the island and sing traditional Cypriot songs, whose melodies echo across centuries and can be traced back to Medieval times. In this way, the exhibition bridges past and present, inviting visitors not only to observe Cyprus' rich cultural heritage but to experience and engage with it.

George Papasavvas
University of Cyprus

Artemis Georgiou
European Research Council grantee
(ERC GA947749)

Hélène Le Meaux
Musée du Louvre

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This exhibition has been a team effort from start to finish. It began with the idea to showcase Cypriot culture in its European setting, on the occasion of the assumption of the Presidency of the Council of the European Union by the Republic of Cyprus. For this purpose, many people, mainly but not only, from Cyprus and France have collaborated under their various capacities, bringing various skills to this project, as much as their good will and determination to make this exhibition a success.

The Deputy Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Cyprus assigned the task to conceive and organise this exhibition in one of the most iconic museums of the world, the Louvre Museum, to the Archaeological Research Unit of the University of Cyprus. We extend our gratitude to the Deputy Minister, Vasiliki Kassianidou, and the director of the Department of Contemporary Culture of the Deputy Ministry, Ioanna Hadjicosti, for their trust and support. Many thanks are also due to the staff of the Deputy Ministry, and specifically to Katrin Moschovaki, Andreas Papapetrou and Skevi Christodoulou for facilitating our efforts in many respects. We also thank the Rector of the University of Cyprus, Professor Tasos Christofides for his trust in the Archaeological Research Unit.

We would also like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to the Embassy of Cyprus in France, and specifically to H.E. Ambassador Pavlos Kombos for his concern and steady support throughout this process. We are also thankful to Kyriaki Iacovidou Ricau for her valuable assistance and guidance and to all embassy members, who have contributed to the realisation of this exhibition.

A large number of people in the Louvre Museum provided assistance, consultation, as well as their expertise and experience towards the accomplishment of this exhibition. We are particularly grateful to the Direction Générale of the Louvre, Laurence des Cars (Présidente-Directrice), Matthias Grolier (Directeur de Cabinet de la Présidente-Directrice) and Pauline Bonnet de Paillerets (Conseillère chargée des affaires européennes et internationales) for their approval of the concept and planning of the exhibition and for the generous opportunity to host it in their prestigious museum. We are equally indebted to the staff of various departments of the Louvre, who devoted much care and many months of work to this project: Ariane Thomas and Jorge Vasquez from the Département des Antiquités Orientales, Aline François (Directrice) and Anne Behr (Directrice adjointe) of the Direction des Expositions et des Editions, Marie Ormevil, Carine Vuillermet and Claire Chalvet from the Service des expositions et des prêts, Clémentine Girard Nègre, Victoria Gertenbach, Philippe Leclercq and Charles Couteau from the Service de scénographie, Camille Emina and Néïs Bartalou from the Service de production numérique, Gautier Verbeke, Céline Brunet-Moret, Zoe Blumenfeld-Chiodo, Lou Seillier, Moira Filliol, Marcel Perrin and Cécile Guillermin from the Direction de la Médiation et des Direction des Publics, Anastasia Grigorieva, Lois Dintimille Pext from the Direction Financière Juridique et des moyens/Service multimedia, Carol Manzano, Véronique Koffel from the Direction de l'Architecture de la Maintenance et des Jardins/Service installation et maintenance de la signalétique, Stéphanie Hussonnois-Bouhayati, Marie Payet, Laurence Roussel, Apolline Rousseau, Isabelle Lou-Bonafonte, Margault Aubry and Fabienne Grange from the Direction des Relations Extérieures et de

la Communication, Luc Tramier, Fabrice Laurent, Dorothée Grüser, Sylvie Dupont, Marion Doireau, Jean-Louis Jasawant, Victor Almeida-Alves, Mustapha Khames and Sébastien Née from the Direction des ateliers d'art et de la présentation des collections. The exhibition "Chypre au Louvre" owes much to their commitment and effective work over the past year.

We express our gratitude to Clio Karageorghis, appointed specifically for this exhibition by the Deputy Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Cyprus, who brought her long experience to this project and has been a steady and reliable source of advice, information, solutions and ideas on a multitude of aspects on numerous occasions.

This endeavour would not have been possible without the invaluable contribution of Irene Katsouri, to whom we express our deepest gratitude. Her wide-ranging, creative and constructive involvement throughout various stages of preparation for this exhibition and for the online catalogue was truly catalytic, and we owe a great deal to her hard work, exceptional insight, commitment and professionalism.

We owe many thanks to the personnel of the Department of Antiquities, Cyprus, of the Deputy Ministry of Culture. We are grateful to the director of the Department, Giorgos Georgiou, for embracing the project and the permission to export a number of Cypriot ancient artefacts to France for this temporary exhibition; to Eftychia Zachariou, Curator of Antiquities for her valuable and unreserved support, to Anna Satraki, Archaeological Officer, for her multifold involvement in the preparation of this exhibition, to Yiannis Violaris, Archaeological Officer, for kindly facilitating on-site filming at the archaeological site of Amathous, to Eleni Loizidou, Archaeological Conservator, not only for the conservation of the antiquities that travelled to Paris but also for her constant care and concern during the past months and for keeping an eye on all necessary processes, to Ourania Makri, Senior Technician, for her work on the conservation of certain artefacts, to Aspasia Georgiadou from the Photo Archive of the Department of Antiquities for her assistance in researching the archives for images used in this exhibition, to Giorgos Masouras and Chrysanthos Chrysanthou, senior staff members of the Cyprus Museum and to all staff members in the storerooms of the Museum for their invaluable help in preparing the artefacts for departure.

We are thankful to the Cyprus Handicraft Department of the Deputy Ministry of Culture and in particular to its director, Maria Anaxagora, for her valued collaboration and creative contribution to the preparation of custom-made objects presented for sale at the Louvre Museum shop.

This exhibition would not have been possible without the collaboration and team effort of the CYENS Centre of Excellence, Cyprus. Several teams contributed their skills in the service of this project, and we are deeply grateful to them for giving life to our concept and ideas. Kleanthis Neokleous and Panayiotis Charalambous as project coordinators directed and worked with these teams, all of them with much efficiency and professionalism: Fotos Frangoudes, Kalli Koulloufidou, Alex Polydorou, Alex Baldwin for the Software Development, Andreas Lernis, Ismail Hadjri Giraldo, Maria Pavlou and Panagiotis Kyriakou for the 3D modelling and 3D animations and media production, and Myrto Aristidou, Stratis Pandelides and Pantelis Panteli for Digital Fabrication and Rapid prototyping. We are deeply indebted to all of them.

We are indebted to all archaeologists and scholars from various countries who authored the texts and catalogue entries for the exhibition and its accompanying online catalogue: Demetrios Michaelides, Maria Iacovou and Petros Papapolyviou from the University of Cyprus, Annie Caubet from the Louvre, Antoine Hermary and Nolwenn Lécuyer from the University of Aix-Marseille, Marguerite Yon, Sabine Fourrier, Anna Cannavò, Alain Le Brun and Odile Daune-Le Brun, Jean-Denis Vigne, Margot Hoffelt, Véronique François and Andreas Nicolaides, all from the Centre national de la recherche scientifique (CNRS) of France, François Briois and Jean Guilaine from the University of Toulouse-Jean Jaurès, Claire Balandier from the University of Avignon, Philippa Steele from the University of Cambridge, Diane Bolger from the University of Edinburgh, Giorgos Bourogiannis from the Open University of Cyprus, Sophocles Hadjisavvas and Demetra Aristotelous from the Department of Antiquities, Cyprus, Elizabeth Hoak-Doering from the Humboldt University of Berlin, José Ángel Zamora López from the Spanish National Research Council, Ewdoksia Papuci-Władyka from the Jagiellonian University in Warsaw, Andreas Anayiotos and Kyriacos Themistocleous from the Cyprus University of Technology, Nasos Vagenas from the University of Athens, Marina Rodosthenous-Balafa from the University of Nicosia, Iosif Hadjikyriakos from the Phivos Stavrides Foundation in Larnaca, Andreas Hadjiloucas from the Foundation of the Costas Argyrou Museum in Mazotos, Cyprus, Elizabeth Goring (independent researcher) and Nicos Orphanides, writer.

The thoughtfulness and generosity of many individuals in granting permits and copyrights were essential to the completion of this exhibition. We are particularly obliged to Daphne Krinou, granddaughter of Maro Seferi, for her permission to use the poems of George Seferis and for her comment that she was raised in Athens in a house full of stories about Cyprus, as well as to Marilena Panourgia of the Ikaros Editions, Athens. Stalo Monti-Pouagare, daughter of the poet Costas Montis, kindly granted us permission to use one of her father's poems and made all the arrangements for its translation into English (by herself) and into French (by Sylvia Ioannidou). Michel Volkovitch and the editions "Le Miel des Anges" also granted us their generous permission to use his excellent translations of George Seferis and Constantine Cavafy's poems in French.

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We also thank Princeton University Press, for allowing us to use the admirable translations of Seferis' and Cavafy's poems by Edmund Keeley and Philip Sherrard; Arcadium Productions P.C. for the use of the old recordings by Lyra Records of the poems of Seferis with the voice of the poet himself; the Cultural Foundation of the National Bank of Greece, the British Museum, London and the Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana in Florence for photographs.

The exhibition is enlivened by the voices and performances of Cypriot actors, actresses and singers. The recordings of traditional Cypriot songs, specially commissioned for this project, were performed with much talent and creativity by the all-female choir Amalgamation under its artistic director and conductor, Vasiliki Anastasiou. The choir for these recordings was composed of Leda Mappouridou, Panayiota Constanti, Argyro Christodoulou, Annita Constantinou, Maria-Andrea Socratous, Chara Zymara, Mikaella Karakondylou, Anastasia Prokopi Taki, Mikaela Tsagkari, Christina Papamichail,

Christina Skalambrinou, Vasiliki Anastasiou and Myrto Aristidou. Arrangements for the songs were made by Vasiliki Anastasiou, Andreas Panteli and Andreas Papapetrou. Sound Recordings, Mixing and Mastering were prepared by Mikaela Tsangari (The Elbow Room, Records & Productions). We thank them all.

The poems by George Seferis, Constantine Cavafy and Costas Montis were recorded specifically for this exhibition in an admirable, sensitive and most expressive manner. Special thanks to Varnavas Kyriazis and Anna Giagkiozi, who read them in Greek, Andreas Araouzos, Daphne Alexander and Christina Reis, who read the poems in English, and Catherine Louis Nikita and Matthieu Devrary, who recited them in French. Mikaela Tsangari (The Elbow Room, Records & Productions) was responsible for sound and recording.

The translations of various texts for the online catalogue were proficiently and impeccably prepared in English and Greek by Despina Pirketti (Improbable Fiction), and in French by Diamanto Stylianou (Delta Dot).

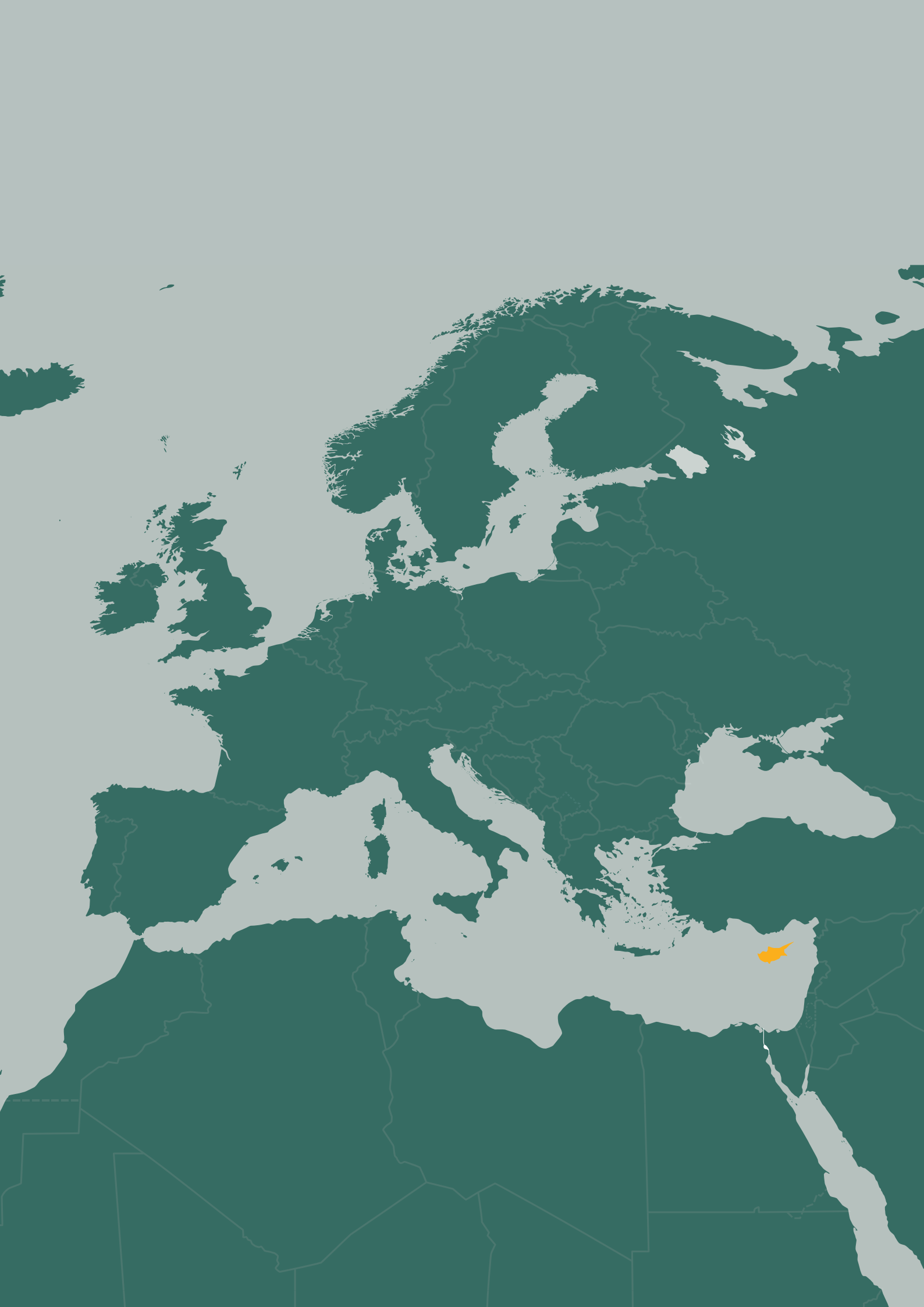
The design of the online catalogue was speedily and skillfully done by Nasia Demetriou.

We would also like to thank Alexandra Samouel and Nadia Charalambidou for their advice and guidance regarding the poems presented in the exhibition.

George Papasavvas
University of Cyprus

Artemis Georgiou
European Research Council grantee
(ERC GA947749)

Hélène Le Meaux
Musée du Louvre



CHRONOLOGY

RELATIVE CHRONOLOGY	ABSOLUTE CHRONOLOGY
LATE EPI-PALEOLITHIC	12TH-10TH MILLENNIA BC
NEOLITHIC PERIOD	10TH-5TH MILLENNIA BC
Pre-Pottery (Aceramic) Neolithic	10th-6th millennia BC
Ceramic Neolithic	5500/5000-4000/3900 BC
CHALCOLITHIC PERIOD	3900-2500 BC
BRONZE AGE	2500-1100 BC
Philia phase	2500-2400/2300 BC
Early Bronze Age	2400/2300-2000/1900 BC
Middle Bronze Age	2000/1900-1650 BC
Late Bronze Age	1650-1100 BC
CYPRO-GEOMETRIC PERIOD	1100-750 BC
CYPRO-ARCHAIC PERIOD	750-480 BC
CYPRO-CLASSICAL PERIOD	480-312/310 BC
HELLENISTIC PERIOD	312/310-58/30 BC
ROMAN PERIOD	58/30 BC-AD 395
LATE ANTIQUITY	4TH-7TH CENTURIES AD

HISTORY OF CYPRUS

Artemis Georgiou
University of Cyprus

Cyprus, the third-largest and easternmost island in the Mediterranean, has been continuously occupied since the early Holocene (12th millennium BC). The remains of human operations, ingenuity and resilience are deeply imprinted on the island's landscape.

Human presence in Cyprus begins with the **Late Epipaleolithic**, during the 12th millennium BC, when groups of hunter-gatherers visited the island seasonally and established small camps. Archaeological traces of these pioneering seafaring groups, who hunted endemic fauna (e.g. pygmy hippopotami and elephants) and sourced raw materials, can be traced at Akrotiri-*Aetokremnos*.

By the **Pre-Pottery Neolithic** (around 9000-5000 BC), permanent settlements, such as Ayios Tychonas-*Klimonas*, emerged, marking the gradual transition to agriculture and animal husbandry. The period is best represented by the settlement of Choirokoitia, characterised by circular houses, careful settlement planning and communal works. After a brief hiatus, the **Ceramic Neolithic period** (5000-4000 BC) emerged, marking the earliest introduction of pottery.

The following, **Chalcolithic period** (4000-2500 BC), ushered in the earliest experimentation with copper. Its characteristic products are cruciform figurines made of picrolite, relating to symbolic and social practices. Although still village-based, sites such as Lemba-*Lakkous* and Kissonerga-*Mosphilia*, indicate centralised management, growing social complexity and wider interregional contacts.

The transitional period to the Cypriot **Bronze Age** is known as the "Philia phase" (around 2500-2300 BC). It is characterised by the introduction of new animal species, new pottery types and the technological know-how of copper processing. During the **Early Bronze Age** (2300-1900 BC) Cypriot communities

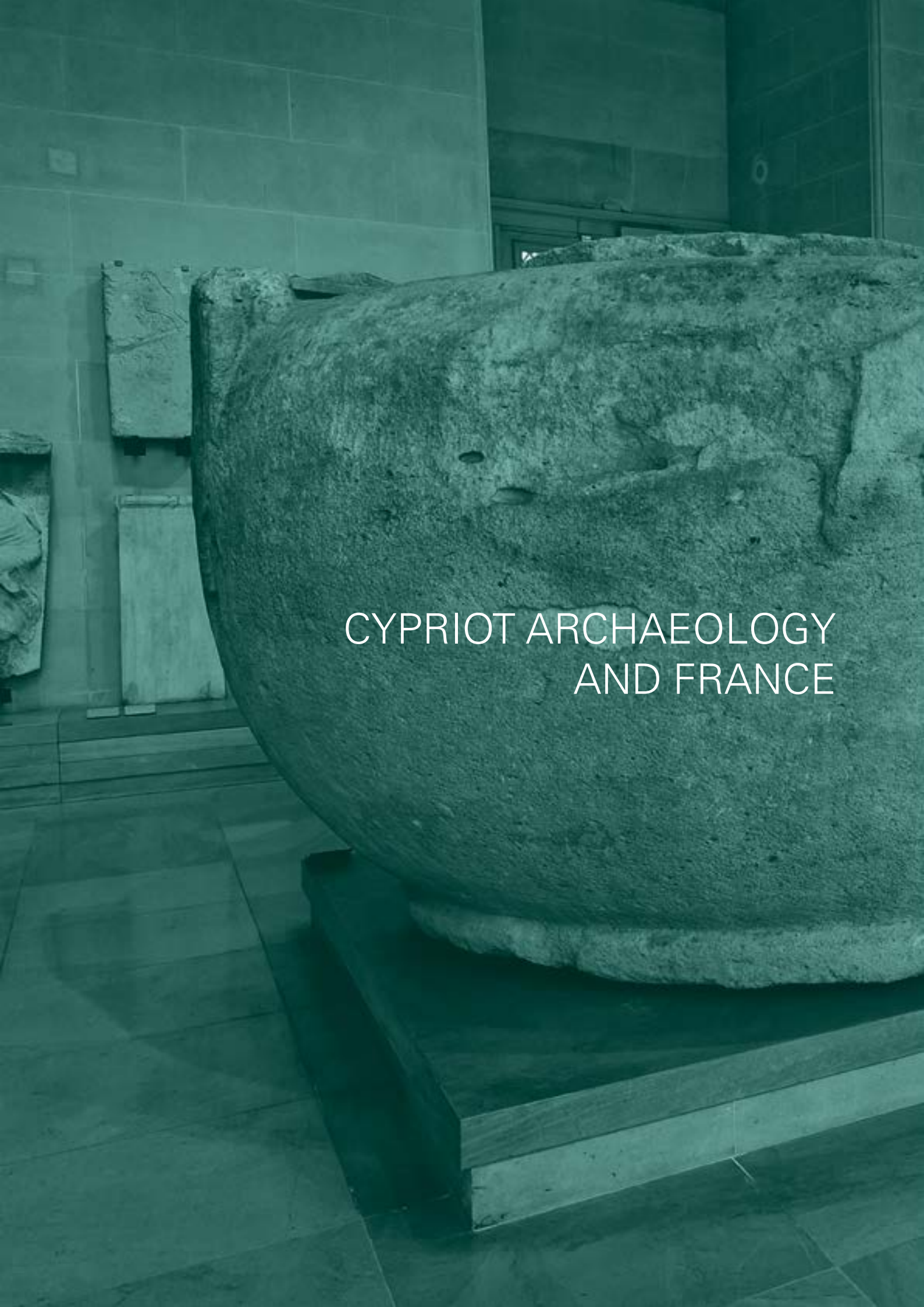
were organised in large agro-pastoral villages, such as Marki-*Alonia* and Sotira-*Kaminoudhia*, showing craft specialisation in metal-work and pottery production. In the **Middle Bronze Age** (1900-1650 BC), increased long-distance contacts suggest that societies became increasingly outward-looking.

The **Late Bronze Age** (1650-1100 BC) marked a time when Cyprus became a major producer and exporter of copper. The island was known as *Alashiya* in external records. Prosperous centres, such as Enkomi, Kition, Kalavasos and Palaepaphos, display a cosmopolitan urban culture that flourished within far-reaching maritime copper-trade networks. The period saw the earliest introduction of the potter's wheel, ashlar monumental architecture and an indigenous writing system.

The Early Iron Age ("**Cypro-Geometric**", 1100-750 BC) marks both continuities, e.g. the use of the local syllabic script, as well as transformations, such as the reorganisation of the island's urban landscape. During the **Cypro-Archaic period** (750-480 BC), the island's city-kingdoms became firmly established, each consolidating its own political structures and artistic traditions. The **Cypro-Classical era** (480-310 BC)

saw the island's polities navigating the shifting influences of the Persian Empire. Salamis, Kition, Paphos, Amathous and Kourion, among others, yielded rich archaeological testimonies (inscriptions, coinage and royal tombs) documenting political competition and a flourishing artistic production.

The independent Cypriot city-kingdoms were eradicated under the **Hellenistic** Ptolemies (310-30 BC), and Cyprus became a unified province. It was later incorporated into the **Roman** Empire (30 BC). As a Roman province, Cyprus experienced prolonged stability and prosperity. Major cities were embellished with theatres, baths and public monuments. In **Late Antiquity** (4th-7th centuries AD), Cyprus formed part of the Eastern Roman (**Byzantine**) Empire. Christianity reshaped Cypriot society, expressed through monumental basilicas, like Campanopetra in Salamis. Repeated Arab raids and the decline of urban centres by the mid-7th century AD marked the end of the island's Late Roman period and the beginning of a new era.



CYPRIOT ARCHAEOLOGY AND FRANCE

CYPRIOT ANTIQUITIES IN THE **LOUVRE**

Annie Caubet
Musée du Louvre

The Cypriot gallery of the Louvre Museum in 1910. © Musée du Louvre, Département des Antiquités orientales, Service d'études et de documentation.

The period of travellers and consuls

The assembly of the Louvre's Cypriot collections is linked to the development of archaeological research in the Levant during the second half of the 19th century. Travellers or consuls on site maintained learned correspondence with erudite Orientalists and numismatists, who were attracted to Cyprus by the inscriptions and coins brought to light there. The first items to reach the Louvre resulted from the activity of the Duke of Luynes,[1] Félicien de Saulcy,[2] and Guillaume-Rey.[3] In

[1] Inscribed tablet of Idalion, Bibliothèque Nationale: inv. bronzes 2297; silver bowl at the Louvre: AO 20134.

[2] Silver bowl, Idalion, AP 20135.

[3] Base of a statue with Phoenician dedication to Melquart, Kition: AO 4826.

The Cypriot gallery of the Louvre Museum in 1910. © Musée du Louvre, Département des Antiquités orientales, Service d'études et de documentation.

Louvre Museum, Parrot plan, Room XIX (current Room 316), View of the colossal vase from Amathous. 1960s? © Musée du Louvre, Département des Antiquités orientales, Service d'études et de documentation.

order to pursue the knowledge acquired during Ernest Renan's mission in Phoenicia, Melchior de Vogüé travelled to Cyprus in 1862 to focus on epigraphy[4] and on the monuments left by the Lusignans: the drawings of the Bellapais Abbey and the Castle of Buffavento made by the architect Edmond Duthoit were used by Camille Enlart in his monograph on the Gothic art of Cyprus.[5] Returning to the island alone in 1865, Duthoit organised the transport to France of the great stone vase from the Amathous acropolis,[6] as well as of numerous votive sculptures he discovered at Golgoi, Malloura, Trapeza and Arsos. Later, the French consul Tiburce Colonna-Ceccaldi explored the necropoleis of Idalion and located at Trikomo an archaic sanctuary[7] – from which the Louvre's most monumental goddess statue originated. His brother Georges, one of the first true specialists in Cypriot archaeology, undertook to classify the discoveries made by Hamilton Lang at Idalion and Pyla, which had entered the Louvre. As for the American consul in Larnaca from 1865 to 1876, Luigi Palma di Cesnola, he conducted intensive excavations, notably at Amathous and Kourion. The largest portion of his collections is found today in New York; nevertheless, French museums, the Louvre,[8] the Museum of Saint-Germain-en-Laye and the Borély Museum acquired some of his finds at the sale held in Paris in 1870.[9]

After the island was placed under British administration in 1878, archaeological exploration became less anarchic. Therefore, the

Louvre Museum, Parrot plan, Room XIX (current Room 316), 1960s? © Musée du Louvre, Département des Antiquités orientales, Service d'études et de documentation.

[4] Digraphic inscription of Karyx, Golgoi (AM 3381), key to the decipherment of the Cypriot Syllabary.

[5] Camille Enlart, 1999: L' Art Gothic et la Renaissance en Chypre, Paris, Ernest Leroux, 2 vol. in 8o, XXXII-756 pages, 419 fig. and 34 pl.

[6] Vase of Amathous AO 22897.

[7] Goddess of Trikomo N 3497.

[8] Artemis from the sanctuary at Pyla excavated by Hamilton Lang: MNB 357-358.

[9] Lyre player: N 3523.

Louvre obtained well-documented pieces from the excavations of Max Ohnefalsch-Richter at Marion-*Arsinoe* and Akhna.[10]

On-site, scholars from prominent local families – Pierides, Tano, Malis – kept European connoisseurs informed of the latest discoveries, sending major works to France.[11] At the Louvre, after the creation of the Department of Near Eastern Antiquities in 1881, curators produced the first systematic catalogues of Cypriot antiquities: terracotta figurines by Léon Heuzey,[12] ceramics by Edmond Pottier.[13]

Standing out among the exceptional acquisitions of this period were the first Early Cypriot figurative vases, donated by Auguste-Émile Boysset, French consul (1891-1900), to the Louvre and the Sèvres Museum,[14] and the first Chalcolithic statuettes discovered by Paul-Louis Couchoud in 1902.[15]

Modern times and scientific excavations

In the interwar years, when the Swedish expedition led by Einard Gjerstad was laying the scientific foundations of Cypriot archaeology, Claude Schaeffer resumed the excavation of Enkomi. His discoveries were divided between Cyprus, the Museum of National Antiquities of Saint-Germain-en-Laye and the Louvre's Department of Near Eastern Antiquities, directed by René Dussaud. Funerary assemblages, Mycenaean pottery,[16] bronze weapons and tools, as well as the bronze statuette of a banqueting god[17] from "Building 18". Schaeffer also explored the Early Bronze Age necropolis of Vounous, rich in decorated pottery.[18]

In 1952, the Hellenist Jean Bérard undertook to search for archaeological remains connected with the foundation legends of the Homeric heroes. In the necropolis of Ktima (Paphos) he found Cypro-Geometric I-III material, whose publication in 1963 by Jean Deshayes refined the typology established by the Swedes. That ensemble was the last sharing of antiquities between Cyprus and France.

From then on, by law, all finds remain on the island. Nevertheless, the Louvre participates in fieldwork and in the development of research by Franco-Cypriot teams.

[10] Marion: AM 77; Akhna: AM 3544.

[11] Pierides: AO 1449; Tano: AM 646, 650; Malis: AM 972.

[12] Léon Heuzey, Les figurines de terre cuite orientale, Paris 1882, 2nd edition revised by E. Pottier, 1923.

[13] Edmond Pottier, Corpus Vasorum Antiquorum, Louvre 5, France, Paris 1928.

[14] Middle Cypriot boat model AM 957.

[15] Chalcolithic statuettes: AM 1144, AM 1176.

[16] Mycenaean crater: AO 18591.

[17] Banqueter: AM 2190-2191.

[18] Red Polished Vases: AO 17512, 17513, 17517.

Hélène Le Meaux
Musée du Louvre

THE AMATHOUS VASE

General presentation

Described as a "masterpiece of archaic art" by Count Melchior de Vogüé who had directed the French archaeological mission on the island of Cyprus between 1862 and 1865, this voluminous limestone monolith, measuring more than 3 m. in diameter, almost 2 m. in height and weighing approximately 13 tonnes, is particularly interesting from a ritualistic and epigraphic perspective.

Installed within the courtyard of the sanctuary, it was not alone: a second vase, equally monumental, if not more, as testified by travellers' texts since the 16th century, had worn with time. Edmond Duthoit, the architect of the Vogüé mission, made sketches depicting the two vases on site, and quite a few travellers pictured them atop the acropolis.

Drawing on the biblical description of the "Brazen Sea" in Solomon's Temple, it is assumed that they contained water for ritual use, and it is thought, following Léon Heuzey and Georges Perrot, based on a maquette from the Cypriot Collection in the Louvre (inv. MNB 96), that the faithful accessed it by means of a ladder.

From the acropolis of Amathous to the Louvre

After hesitating between several crews and vessels for the transfer and boarding of the vase for France, the mission eventually entrusted the task to frigate captain Ernest Moret in September 1865. The operation lasted seventeen days. Fifty men worked every day for 9 hours. The vase departed for the port of Toulon on 8 October 1865 on board the sailboat Perdrix, fitted out for the purpose. This was a period marked by transports across the Mediterranean. Let us remember, among other things, the arrival of the Winged Victory of Samothrace at the Louvre in 1864.

After its removal from atop the acropolis of Amathous, the installation of this giant within the halls of the Louvre would constitute a second tour de force. On 5 May 1866, Adrien de Longpérier, Director of Antiquities at the Louvre, addressed the following letter to the Director of Museums, Count de Nieuwerkerke:

"The vase from Amathous will arrive soon, and given the considerable public curiosity it has aroused, it would be advisable to exhibit it without delay. The difficulty lies in conveying it through our galleries. Would you allow for it to be placed, temporarily […] beneath the counter between the Egyptian and Assyrian galleries? This course of action […] would give us time to seek a permanent location for a colossus that requires our immediate attention".

The letter sent by Adrien de Longpérier, Director of Antiquities at the Louvre, to Count de Nieuwerkerke, Director of the French Museums. © Archives des musées nationaux de France.

After setting up an ingenious system, as documented in the archives, the vase was probably carried between the bulls of Khorsabad, displayed in the Assyrian gallery, then into the staircase vestibule, and finally into the adjacent hall, on the side of Rivoli street, from where it has not moved in 160 years.

Drawing of the transport of the Amathous vase. © Archives des musées nationaux de France.

Epigraphic considerations

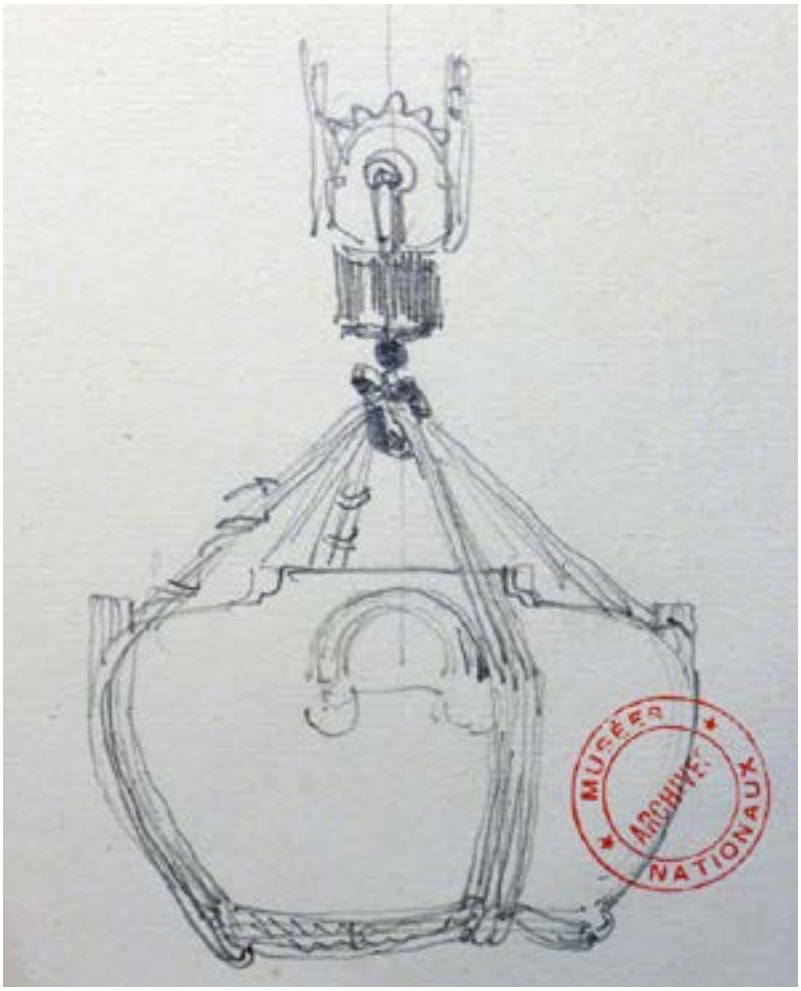
The vase features signs, at the level of one of the handles and the rim, that were interpreted as inscriptions. The drawing published in the journal *L'Illustration* en 1864 was in fact a curious assemblage bearing no relation to the vase itself. The marks identified on its rim in 1876 were misinterpreted by the curator Félix Ravaisson. The restoration conducted in 2025 made it possible to examine the entire surface of the vase and to focus more closely on the lip, revealing certain signs that remain to be deciphered.

In fact, it is on the arched moulding that surrounds one of the four handles – just above the inverted palmette, in front of the head of the bovid – that Antoine Hermary observed the presence of an inscription engraved with several syllabic signs.

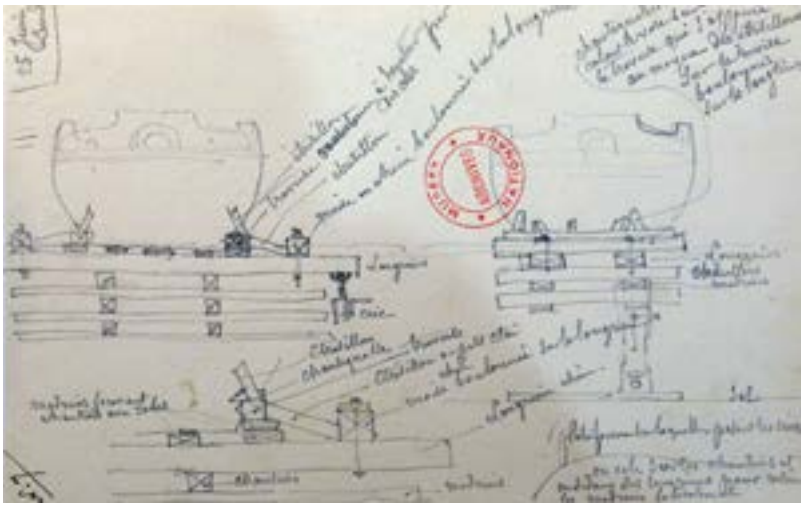
Among these signs, which must be read from the bottom of the handle upward, the epigraphist Olivier Masson identified an *a*, a *na*, a separation bar, a probable *ta*, and the traces of two additional signs.

The first "word", a-na, is attested in other Amathous inscriptions and may signify "the deity" in Eteocypriot, the local language.

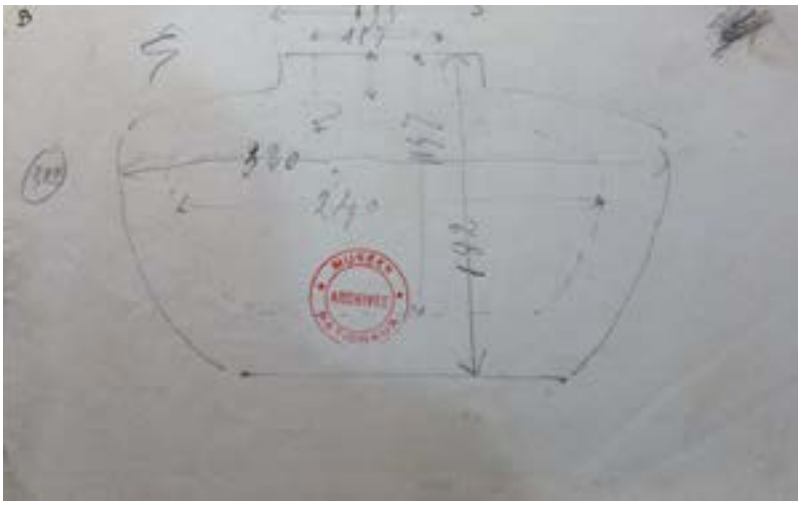
The bulls and vegetal decorations may have evoked fertility and life, in association with the local deity.



Drawing of the transport of the Amathous vase. © Archives des musées nationaux de France.



Drawing of the transport of the Amathous vase. © Archives des musées nationaux de France.



Drawing of the transport of the Amathous vase. © Archives des musées nationaux de France.

Duthoit's drawing of one of the handles of the Amathous vase.
© Archives des musées nationaux de France.

Photograph of the inscription on one of the handles of the vase.
© Musée du Louvre, Département des Antiquités orientales.

The Amathous vase AO 22897
Amathous, Cyprus
Shell limestone (local)
700-400 BC
D. 117 cm (at the mouth); H. 187 cm (handles from base of palmettes 62–66 cm); L. 30 cm (bulls); D. 320 cm (max)
Musée du Louvre, Département des Antiquités orientales
Acquired from Edmond M. Duthoit (archaeological mission)
© 2015 Musée du Louvre, Dist. GrandPalaisRmn / Philippe Fuzeau.

Click on this link to view a short video featuring drone footage of the archaeological site of Amathous and a digital reconstruction of the temple.

Miniature model of a vase, MNB 96
Idalion, Cyprus
Limestone
700-400 BC
H. 8,7 cm ; L. 13 cm ; W. 16 cm
Musée du Louvre, Département des Antiquités orientales
Acquired from George and Tiburce Colonna-Ceccaldi, 1871

A miniature model of an ancient giant water reservoir for holy purposes: **Click on this link** to discover how this miniature vase, complete with an attached staircase, relates to the monumental stone vessel from Amathous. The larger vessel's contents longer pavles with spaces on either side may have been accessed in a similar manner, perhaps with the aid of a wooden ladder.

FRENCH ARCHAEOLOGISTS IN CYPRUS, FROM THE **19TH CENTURY TO 1960**

Antoine Hermary
Aix-Marseille Université

The interest of French scholars in Cypriot antiquities is evident since the 18th century when, around 1760, the count of Caylus asked the consul Benoît Astier to send him objects to enrich his large *Collection of antiquities*. Almost a century later, two other erudite aristocrats initiated large-scale research on the ancient and medieval history of Cyprus. Count Louis de Mas Latrie, medieval historian, visited Cyprus in 1845 and 1846 and, between 1852 and 1861, published the monumental *Histoire de l' île de Chypre sous le règne des princes de la maison de Lusignan* [*History of the island of Cyprus under the reign of princes from the House of the Lusignans*]. Also, even though he never visited the island, the duke Honoré de Luynes may be ranked among the founders of Cypriot archaeology through his studies on numismatics and mainly the fact that in 1850 he acquired the famous "Idalion Tablet", the longest known inscription written in the Cypriot syllabary script (kept in the Cabinet of Medals at the National Library of France). His book, *Numismatique et inscriptions Cypriotes* [*Cypriot numismatics and inscriptions, Paris*, 1852] paved the way for modern research. A few years later (1862), another aristocrat, the marquis Melchior de Vogüé, led the first archaeological mission on the island, extended by the mission of architect Edmond Duthoit in 1865. The discovered sculptures and inscriptions were transported to the Louvre and made up the first large collection of Cypriot antiquities in Europe. In 1866 the collection was enriched with the arrival of the spectacular "Vase from Amathous". The era of the consul-archaeologists followed. Of a scale much less important than those of Luigi Palma di Cesnola, Tiburce Colonna-Ceccaldi (appointed in Larnaca from 1866 to 1869), assisted by his brother Georges, commissioned investigations that led to the discovery of numerous objects, particularly at Idalion. The most important finds were acquired by the Louvre. Twenty years later (1886-1887), under British rule, consul Eugène de Castillon Saint Victor carried out excavations of an already scientific nature in the necropolis of Kourion; in accordance with the legislation then

French diplomat, archaeologist and writer Eugène-Melchior de Vogüé (1848-1910) photographed by Nadar. © Nadar, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons.

in force, part of the found objects was assigned to the Louvre. In the last quarter of the 19th century, several researchers of the French School of Athens showed interest in Cypriot archaeology. The linguist Mondry Beaudoin and ceramologist Edmond Pottier – who would include the Cypriot vases of the Louvre in the *Corpus Vasorum Antiquorum* – undertook a study trip to the island in 1878, followed by Paul Perdrizet in 1896. In the meantime, Léon Heuzey published the Cypriot terracottas of the Louvre (1882, 2nd edition 1923) and Georges Perrot published the third volume of his monumental *Histoire de l' Art dans l' Antiquité* [*History of Art in Antiquity*], devoted to Cyprus and Phoenicia (1885): translated into English, this book would remain a key reference on the antiquities of Cyprus until the Swedish excavations (1927-1931). The end of the 19th century was marked by the remarkable work of Camille Enlart on the island's medieval and 16th century architecture: his book, *L' Art Gothique et la Renaissance en Chypre* [*Gothic Art and the Renaissance in Cyprus*, 1899, two volumes] remains a fundamental work.

Louis de Mas Latrie (1815-1897), French historian, palaeographer and diplomatist. © Reymann et Cie, photographie, Paris / Jebulon, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons.

Over the following decades, the presence of French archaeologists in Cyprus was scarce. The first major excavations were undertaken by Claude Schaeffer in 1934 at the Bronze Age site of Enkomi, in the east of the island, following more limited investigations at the Bronze Age necropolis of Vounous on the north coast. After an interruption due to the war, excavations in Cyprus resumed in 1946, and were conducted in collaboration with the Department of Antiquities from 1948 to 1958, under the direction of Porphyrios Dikaios and with Jacques-Claude Courtois playing a leading role. Important discoveries were made at this time, including "Bâtiment 18" (Building 18), which yielded beautiful Mycenaean vases and a bronze statuette now at the Louvre, as well as the "sanctuary of the ingot god" and several rich tombs. It was the only French mission active in 1960, as the excavations conducted by Jean Bérard and Jean Deshayes at Ktima-Paphos, mentioned elsewhere, had ended in 1955.

FRENCH ARCHAEOLOGISTS IN CYPRUS, **SINCE 1960**

Antoine Hermary
Aix-Marseille Université

C.F.A. Schaeffer (1898-1982).
© Maison de l'Orient et de la Méditerranée Jean Pouilloux (MOM).

When the Republic of Cyprus was established in 1960, the only French archaeological mission active on the island was the Enkomi expedition, led by Claude Schaeffer. During the same period, Olivier Masson began important research on "Cypro-Minoan" scripts and syllabic inscriptions (Greek and "Eteocypriot"). His publication *Les inscriptions chypriotes syllabiques. Recueil critique et commenté* [Cypriot syllabic inscriptions: Critical and annotated collection] published in Paris in 1961 and reedited and supplemented in 1983, remains an essential point of reference in this field. Masson subsequently produced numerous other works on Cypriot epigraphy and numismatics as well as on the history of archaeological research on the island. In 1983, alongside a small group of colleagues, he founded the *Centre d'Études Chypriotes* and its *Cahiers*, serving as director until his death in 1997. Over time, the standing of the CEC and its journal was consolidated within the scientific community under the successive leadership of Michel Amandry, Antoine Hermary and Marguerite Yon, Sabine Fourrier and Anna Cannavò. Another major milestone in French archaeological research in Cyprus was the appointment of Annie Caubet as curator at the Louvre's Department of Near Eastern Antiquities, where she became director in 1986. Until her retirement in 2007, Caubet brought significant visibility to the museum's rich Cypriot collection and was behind several publications. Today, her work, continued by Hélène Le Meaux, finds a fitting culmination in this exhibition.

Jean Pouilloux, head of the Maison de l'Orient et de la Méditerranée Jean Pouilloux (MOM) inspecting the temple of Zeus in Salamis. © Department of Antiquities, Cyprus.

In 1963, the arrival of Vassos Karageorghis at the helm of the Department of Antiquities initiated a spectacular surge in archaeological research in Cyprus. Since his marriage in 1953 to Jacqueline Girard, he had maintained close ties with archaeologists in Lyon, particularly Jean Pouilloux who, in 1964, was entrusted with directing the major excavation site in Salamis. The mission, like that at neighbouring Enkomi and that led from 1970 by Alain Le Brun at the Neolithic site of Apostolos Andreas-*Kastros*, was halted by the Turkish invasion in 1974. In 1976, the Kition-*Bamboula* mission was created under the direction of Marguerite Yon, later succeeded by Sabine Fourrier, as a replacement for the mission in Salamis. That same year, Karageorghis assigned Alain Le Brun to resume excavation at the prestigious Neolithic site of Choirokoitia, previously explored by Porphyrios Dikaios.

Moreover, the Amathous mission was established under the responsibility of the French School of Athens. Directed successively by Pierre Aupert, Antoine Hermary, Sabine Fourrier and currently Anna Cannavò, the new excavation focused primarily on the city's acropolis which had never been scientifically excavated before. Over the years, research expanded to include the port, built in the beginning of the Hellenistic Age, the northern rampart zone, part of the agora and a detailed survey of the territory. This work led to the discovery of important Pre-Pottery Neolithic sites: *Shillourokambos*, excavated under the direction of Jean Guilaine, and later *Klimonas* under Jean-Denis Vigne and François Briois. New missions followed, supported by successive directors of the Department of Antiquities. From 1996 to 2000, Brunehilde

Marguerite Yon excavating Tomb I at Salamis. © Department of Antiquities, Cyprus.

Imhaus led a research programme on inscribed tombstones from the Frankish and Venetian periods. In 2000, the mission "Potamia-*Ayios Sozomenos*: the makeup of a landscape in the Medieval Orient" (dir. Nolwenn Lécuyer and Demetrios Michaelides) was launched. Since 2008, Claire Balandier has directed the mission focused on excavations on *Fabrika* hill in Nea Paphos. In 2023, excavations began at the church of Panagia *Karmiotissa* in Limassol-Polemidia under the direction of Andreas Nicolaides. In 2025, the international programme "Baffe. History and urban topography of Paphos under Latin rule (1192-1570)" was launched in Aix-Marseille (dir. Véronique François and Kalliopi Baika).

Several French institutions have been engaged in these research projects. The Excavation Committee of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs provides financial support for most missions. The French School of Athens, responsible for the excavations at Amathous, is currently a partner in the work at *Klimonas* and Nea Paphos. Researchers largely depend on the National Centre of Scientific Research and on French universities where, in recent decades, several doctoral theses and *habilitations* to direct research relating to Ancient and Medieval Cyprus have been submitted: in Aix-Marseille, Avignon, Lyon II, Paris X-Nanterre, Rennes II, Rouen, Strasbourg.

Thanks to the continuous support of Cypriot colleagues, French archaeology stands today as one of the major contributors to research on the island's history, from prehistory through the Ottoman period.

FRENCH ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS IN CYPRUS

In the following chapters, the French excavations and archaeological sites are presented in an east-to-west sequence.

FRENCH EXCAVATIONS AT APOSTOLOS ANDREAS-***KASTROS***

Alain Le Brun

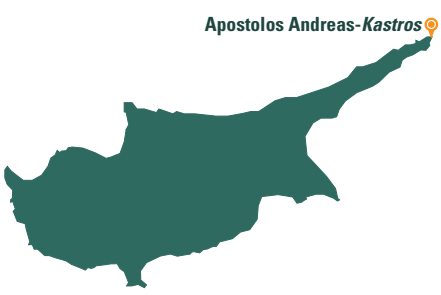
Odile Daune-Le Brun

Centre national de la recherche scientifique CNRS

Located in the north-east of the island, at the tip of the Karpasia Peninsula, the last stretch of red laterite soil sustaining thick but dry scrub vegetation, the fishing hamlet of Cape Andreas-*Kastros* (= Kastros) shares with other sites, including Choirokoitia, the characteristics of the Pre-Pottery Neolithic period in Cyprus, known as Choirokoitia Culture (7000-5500 BC): circular architecture, absence of ceramics, stone craftsmanship. However, it does have one distinctive feature, namely that it is a small community whose economy is based mainly on the exploitation of marine resources: fish, shellfish and crabs, with mammals, fallow deer, pigs, sheep and goats playing a secondary role.

The research expeditions undertaken here by the French mission in 1970 were interrupted in 1974 by the Turkish invasion and have not resumed since. The site was destroyed in 2005 by the Turkish army.

The coastal environment was only slightly different than the current one despite changes that occurred during the Holocene and a shoreline that was even lower than it is today. The settlement is located in a natural amphitheatre overlooking the sea. Of its estimated 1700 m² of surface area, only 250 m² have been explored. Less imposing than those of Choirokoitia, the buildings, also circular, have an internal diameter ranging from 2.50 to 3 metres. The walls, not very thick, are made of stones arranged in a row and set in clay mortar. The interior fittings, such as hearths and basins, are rather crude. These buildings are closely linked to unbuilt communal spaces, creating an open village layout that is a genuine hub of community life.



A truly specialised coastal site, *Kastros* stands out not only for the number of fish caught, but also for the range of the faunal spectrum, which includes at least twenty different species. The catch consisted of both coastal fish that were common in the waters near the site, such as groupers and sea breams,

The Neolithic settlement of Apostolos Andreas-Kastros, with round houses, located on the Karpasia Peninsula, Cyprus. © Department of Antiquities, Cyprus.

The archaeological site of Apostolos Andreas-Kastros, excavated by Alain Le Brun and Odile Daune-Le Brun. Image courtesy of O. Daune-Le Brun.

The archaeological site of Apostolos Andreas-Kastros, excavated by Alain Le Brun and Odile Daune-Le Brun. Image courtesy of O. Daune-Le Brun.

while pelagic or semi-pelagic fish, such as small tuna, highly migratory seasonal fish, were caught as they passed through the tip of the Karpasia Peninsula. Groupers and small tuna were also targeted by fishermen. Fishing was strictly coastal as indicated by the absence of species like swordfish that are strangers to the coastal zone. It was carried out with the help of hooks and most likely nets.

The large-scale harvesting of limpets and monodonts from the rocks provided some of the protein needed for food, while other shellfish such as dove shells and cone shells were collected to make personal ornaments.

The large quantity of fish bones – nearly 6,000 – and shells – around 13,000 shells or fragments – that were collected there gives an idea of the first coastal marine exploitation of a virgin area and reflects the ancient marine environment. For although the inhabitants of *Kastros* were not the earliest occupants of the island, as current research shows, they probably settled in a zone that was still empty of humans, at least where no traces of human habitation have been found, and whose coastline was still unexploited.

FRENCH EXCAVATIONS AT **SALAMIS**

Marguerite Yon

Sabine Fourrier

Centre national de la recherche scientifique CNRS

The mission created in 1964 by Jean Pouilloux (University of Lyon), later directed (1972) by Marguerite Yon, interrupted its fieldwork in 1974, as a result of the Turkish invasion of the island. The mission was also unable to access the discovered material, which had been deposited at the Famagusta Museum (except for metal objects deposited at the Cyprus Museum in Nicosia) or stored in the stacks of the excavation house in Salamis. Nevertheless, owing to documentation regularly reported to Lyon, studies were resumed and the results were published in the series *Salamine de Chypre* (I-XVI), of which 12 volumes appeared between 1974 and 2004.

Well-known from literary tradition and situated at the outlet of the *Mesaoria*, with a port allowing maritime exchange, the city was considered to have been founded after the end of the Trojan War (late 2nd millennium) by the hero Teucer, son of Telamon. As the capital of one of the most important kingdoms

Aerial view of Salamis, Cyprus, where archaeological excavations were carried out by the French expedition (Maison de l'Orient et de la Méditerranée Jean Pouilloux, MOM) in collaboration with the Department of Antiquities, Cyprus. © Department of Antiquities, Cyprus.

Aerial view of Salamis, Cyprus, where archaeological excavations have been carried out by the French expedition (Maison de l'Orient et de la Méditerranée Jean Pouilloux, MOM) in collaboration with the Department of Antiquities, Cyprus. © Department of Antiquities, Cyprus.

Jean Pouilloux, head of the Maison de l'Orient et de la Méditerranée Jean Pouilloux (MOM) inspecting the temple of Zeus in Salamis. © Department of Antiquities, Cyprus.

Temple of Zeus in Salamis. © Department of Antiquities, Cyprus.

of Cyprus, the city played a major role in the conflicts with the Persians (the Greco-Persian wars). It aspired to be linked to Athens, particularly under the reign of Evagoras I (410-374), whose expansionist aspirations were opposed to those of his neighbours, especially of the Cypro-Phoenicians of Kition. The kingdom disappeared after it was conquered by Alexander (333), when Cyprus became part of the Ptolemaic Empire, and later of the Roman Empire. During the 4th century AD, Salamis-*Constantia* became the powerful and wealthy Metropolitan See of the Church of Cyprus (which became autocephalous in 431). In the 7th century, insecurity caused by Arab raids led to the final abandonment of the coastal city.

The first day of excavations at the Basilica of Campanopetra. © Department of Antiquities, Cyprus.

Jean Pouilloux at the centre, with Vassos Karageorghis on the right and Sir Mortimer Wheeler on the left, at Salamis. © Department of Antiquities, Cyprus.

Marguerite Yon excavating Tomb I at Salamis. © Department of Antiquities, Cyprus.

Explored by the British (1890) and, after 1960, by Cyprus' Department of Antiquities – excavation of the necropolis (8th century BC-Roman period) and of Roman public buildings (gymnasium, theatre) – it was excavated from 1964 to 1974 by the French mission, tasked with exploring the historic city, whose archaeology had not yet yielded architectural remains preceding the Hellenistic period.

A brief history of Salamis

11th-10th centuries BC. The discovery of a tomb and the identification of the fortified coastal urban site confirm the existence of the city since the 11th century, eventually aligning with the tradition of its foundation by Teucer.

9th-4th centuries BC. No monuments or habitation sites from the archaic and classical capital – which is attested by historical and literary accounts, and by the necropolis in the West – have yet been discovered. Nevertheless, several finds (ceramics, sculptures, imports) uncovered within the city, and a *bothros* (depository) excavated outside the city at *Ay-Varnavas*, suggest the existence of a wealthy settlement, buried under the remains of the Byzantine city.

3rd century BC-4th century AD. The city, which prospered thanks to maritime trade, was expanded by the Ptolemaic kings. A vast sanctuary of Zeus, with a long esplanade leading to a peripteral temple, was built in the 2nd century, and remodeled during the Roman period to house the cult of Zeus and the Roman emperors.

4th-7th centuries AD. The city was re-founded under the name *Constantia* as the Christian Metropolis of Cyprus. A magnificent basilical complex was discovered here (Campanopetra) – access courtyard, double atrium, church, residential buildings – as well as a luxurious residence (known as the "Olive-Oil Mill") of an influential personality of the city.

FRENCH EXCAVATIONS AT **ENKOMI**

George Papasavvas
University of Cyprus

The Late Bronze Age town of Enkomi, viewed from the air. © Cypern20, CC BY-SA 4.0 International, via Wikimedia Commons.

Enkomi is one of the most prominent Late Bronze Age urban centres of the Mediterranean. Located on the eastern coast of Cyprus opposite Syria, it was a major port-of-export of Cypriot copper that flourished from 1650-1050 BC. The sizable town was enclosed within a "Cyclopean" fortification wall and laid out on a grid system, with residential, industrial and sacred areas built in quarters along straight streets. It was originally closer to the sea, but its harbour was silted from the alluvial deposits of a nearby river. Numerous rock-cut chamber tombs were dug below and between the domestic spaces and the streets. Excavations revealed evidence for a thriving economy, manifested, for instance, in the monumentality of the buildings and the prestigious artefacts found in rich tombs, as well as in the abundance of metal finds, which associate this wealth with copper production. It has been argued that, at least until the end of the 14th century BC, Enkomi was the primary centre of a politically unified island, in direct contact with surrounding empires and kingdoms. The site was gradually deserted in the course of the 11th century BC. Some of the inhabitants moved

Enkomi: Excavation by the French expedition, 1957. © Press and Information Office, Republic of Cyprus.

The French archaeological mission excavating at Enkomi. From left to right: C. F. A. Schaeffer, E. Coche de la Ferté, P. Pironin and W. Forrer. © Cyprus American Archaeological Research Institute.

The monumental, residential Building 18 excavated by the French archaeological mission at Enkomi. © Department of Antiquities, Cyprus.

to Salamis, less than 2km to the east, others moved to other places within the island. The ancient name of the settlement (named after the name of the nearest modern village) was lost forever.

After years of clandestine excavations, the British Museum, the Cyprus Museum and the Swedish Cyprus Expedition conducted in succession several excavations at the site from 1896 to 1930. All expeditions failed to realise that the impressive architectural ruins above the rich tombs, erroneously attributed to the Byzantine period, were in fact contemporary with the burials. This mistake was corrected by Claude F.A. Schaeffer who begun his excavations at Enkomi in 1934, drawn to the site by the lavish finds and their similarity to material from Ras Shamra/Ugarit on the opposite coast of Syria, also excavated by him. In 1946, Schaeffer requested the assistance of the Department of Antiquities of the British Colonial Government of Cyprus, to excavate the site. The concurrent investigation of the site by Claude F.A. Schaeffer and Porphyrios Dikaios quickly led to important discoveries, as well as to many disagreements on their interpretation. Schaeffer and the French Mission continued their excavations at the site, with intervals, until 1974, when, after the Turkish invasion, Enkomi was secluded in the occupied part of the island.

The "Bronze Ingot God" from Enkomi, depicting a warrior standing on an oxhide ingot. Excavated by the French mission at Enkomi (13th century BC). © Department of Antiquities, Cyprus.

Clay statuette of a double-headed centaur, excavated by the French expedition at the Sanctuary of the Ingot God, Enkomi (11th century BC). © Department of Antiquities, Cyprus.

FRENCH EXCAVATIONS AT **KITION**

Sabine Fourrier

Marguerite Yon

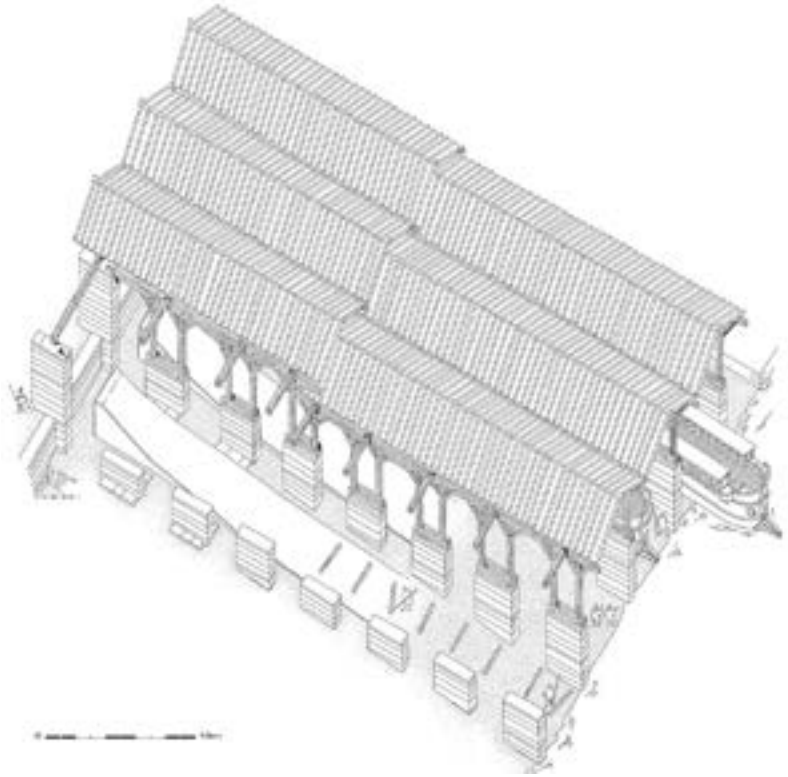
Centre national de la recherche scientifique CNRS

Kition-Bamboula. Aerial view of the remains of neosoikoi (shipsheds), 4th century BC. © Department of Antiquities, Cyprus.

After the 1974 invasion that made Salamis an inaccessible site, the mission from Lyon, directed by Marguerite Yon (and, since 2008, by Sabine Fourrier) resumed the exploration of the ancient city of Kition (present-day Larnaca), particularly the hill of *Bamboula* where, between 1929-1930, a trial trench by the Swedish expedition had unearthed the remains of a Phoenician sanctuary. Subsequent work by Cyprus' Department of Antiquities, under the direction of Vassos Karageorghis, revealed the existence of a Late Bronze Age city, enclosed by walls and possessing rich tombs, residential quarters and a sacred district with various temples.

Therefore, archaeology has shown that Kition, once considered a Phoenician colony of Tyre, was in fact established much earlier, in the 13th century BC. As a port city, open to maritime exchanges, it was uninterruptedly occupied despite the troubles that affected the Eastern Mediterranean at the end of the Bronze Age. Kition was profoundly transformed during

the 8th century BC by the arrival of Phoenician populations. From that time, Kition became a Cypro-Phoenician kingdom, where kings asserted their power, particularly during the 5th and 4th centuries BC, by expanding their territory and resisting the expansionist aspirations of the neighbouring kingdom of Salamis. The royal dynasty disappeared during the Hellenistic period when Cyprus was integrated into the Ptolemaic kingdom. Later periods are far less well-documented archaeologically, but the city is distinguished for its longevity, right down to present-day Larnaca.



Reconstruction of the shipsheds of the military port, Kition-Bamboula, 4th century BC. © O. Callot, Mission archéologique de Kition.

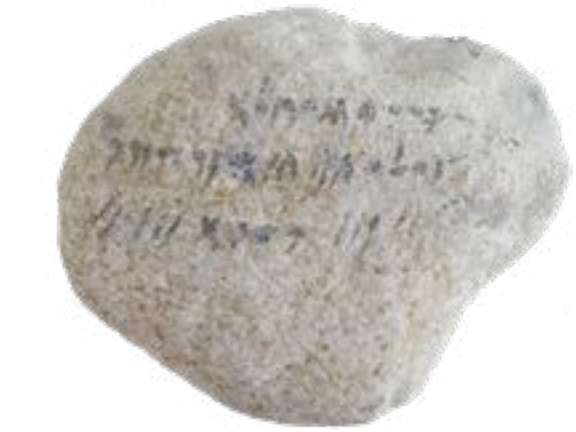
The French mission has excavated and published various contexts, dated from the 13th century BC to the 4th century AD, that provide insights into urban development. In *Bamboula*, a residential quarter shows remarkable continuity between the Late Bronze Age and the Early Iron Age levels (13th-11th centuries BC): even though most Bronze Age sites of the island are abandoned, Kition appears to have been spared (or even strengthened) by the political and economical crisis that troubled the island and, more broadly, the Eastern Mediterranean at the time. The French mission completed the excavation of the sanctuary that was partially uncovered by the Swedish, tracing its development from the earliest levels (9th century BC) until its

abandonment in the beginning of the Hellenistic period. During the Classical period (4th century BC) the sacred buildings were covered by a large terrace, against which sheds for triremes were built. This building, exceptionally well-preserved, housed the war fleet of the Cypro-Phoenician kings. Other fieldwork focused on the Western necropolis at *Pervolia*, where collective tombs dating from the 8th to the 4th century BC were explored, as well as on the rampart. Excavations continue to this day. Among the wealth of finds (ceramics, terracotta and stone statuettes, small objects of ivory, faience, or metal), there is also a remarkable series of ostraca from the late 4th century BC (fragments of pottery or stone bearing short administrative texts written in Phoenician cursive script). These artefacts are preserved in Larnaca whilst certain objects and contexts are on display at the district's archaeological museum.

Infant burial in a jar, Kition-Bamboula residential quarter, 11th century BC. © Mission archéologique de Kition.

Aerial view of the tombs cut into the rock at the Kition-Pervolia necropolis, southern region, about 800-400 BC. © Mission archéologique de Kition.

Miniature terracotta stelae imitating stone capitals decorated with the head of the Egyptian goddess Hathor, sanctuary of Kition-Bamboula, 6th century BC. © Mission archéologique de Kition.



Phoenician text written in ink on a rock, found in a landfill, Kition-Bamboula, 4th century BC. © Mission archéologique de Kition.

3D reconstruction of the military port of Kition-Bamboula.
© Larnaka Tourism Board, Youth Board of Cyprus, Archaeological Mission of Kition.

FRENCH EXCAVATIONS AT **POTAMIA**-*AYIOS SOZOMENOS*

Nolwenn Lécuyer
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Conducted between 2000 and 2007 under the auspices of the French School of Athens, the LA3M (UMR 7298, Aix-Marseille University) and the University of Cyprus, the Potamia-*Ayios Sozomenos* project aimed, through a multidisciplinary investigation, to promote a diachronic territorial approach (8th-19th centuries AD) to a representative portion, rich in well-preserved vestiges within the royal domain of Potamia, which was founded in the last third of the 14th century AD. In addition to the analysis of the hermitage and churches located in this territory, the study area was intensively surveyed, and trial trenches were opened at pertinent sites to describe the structures and establish the chronological sequence of discoveries.

These arches that stand prominently near the abandoned village of Ayios Sozomenos, belonged to the church of Ayios Mamas, whose architecture blends western and Byzantine elements. Its construction began in the 16th century, when Cyprus was ruled by Venice, but was never finished because of the conquest of the Ottomans in 1571. © dimitrisvetsikas1969, CC0 1.0 Universal, via Wikimedia Commons.

The operation confirmed that the royal manor was founded in the last third of the 14th century in a sector inhabited since the 8th century, as were the villages of Potamia and Ayios Sozomenos. For the latter, this dating is confirmed by stratigraphy and by the discovery of a monetary hoard datable between 1368 and 1373. The manor, described as a summer resort, was built of dressed stone in a quadrangular layout around an arcaded courtyard. Excavation showed that its construction was preceded shortly by the construction of a vast cistern on its western side, supplied by a *Noria* waterwheel connected to an

underground hydraulic network (qanat). The supply of water to the manor and the village through this network may be seen as the first step of land-use planning, which also included a canal supplying water to the land by gravity from a dam built on the Gialias river. Its course dictated the land division (cadastration) of the southern part of the interfluve, between Gialias and Alikos rivers, allowing for irrigated crops like cotton, which, at the end of the 14th century, may have been part of the Lusignan's economic strategy. Completed by about ten wells connected to secondary canals, it also supplied three mills within the explored territory, of which the Paleomylos mill, on the northern boundary of the Potamia estate, which has been dated to the 14th century. Therefore, the residential function of the manor is overlain by the domain's exploitation, crucial for the kingdom that was then faced with a severe financial crisis.

This agronomic programme represents a major investment which may not have been completed before the domain fell victim, in 1426, to Ottoman raids. The manor and the village of Potamia were burned, as was the Paleomylos mill, showing the Mamluks' intent to hinder exploitation of the territory. According to the assemblages collected during excavation, the manor seems to have been abandoned until the beginning of the 16th century, and settlement during the 15th century seems to have been dispersed across the landscape.

Acquired in 1521 by a Venetian nobleman, the domain entered a new phase of exploitation. The manor was partially restored to serve as an estate centre, at least two mills were returned to service and the number of *Noria* waterwheels, lined with cisterns and residential and support buildings, grew significantly. The land was mainly devoted to arboriculture, cotton and cereals, which justified the enrichment of irrigation systems and the restoration of the mills. Excavations show that the Paleomylos mill remained in use until the end of the 18th century. After the conquest in 1570, the Ottomans effectively inherited a richly equipped and functional territory. Even though the manor was destroyed again at the end of the 16th century, and was only reoccupied as the Potamia chiftlick in the 19th century, the earlier constructions and developments seem to have kept the landscape intact until the 20th century, testifying to the efficacy of medieval agronomic techniques. Beyond the strictly historical analysis of the region's occupation, the abundant ceramic assemblages revealed during survey and excavation – both local productions and imports – reflect the evolution of material culture and of Cyprus commercial relationships with the Mediterranean world across time.

This treasure of 373 silver Cypriot coins was found near the church of Ayios Mamas in the village of Ayios Sozomenos. The coins were placed in a sack and then in a small ceramic vase, which was buried in a pit. They were minted under the reigns of four kings from the French royal family of Lusignan, from the late 13th century to the mid 14th century AD. © Archives EFA.

FRENCH EXCAVATIONS AT **CHOIROKOITIA**

Alain Le Brun

Odile Daune-Le Brun

Centre national de la recherche scientifique CNRS

The village of Choirokoitia-*Vounoi* (Khirokitia) of which 4000 m² of an estimated built area of 1.5 hectares have been investigated, is located in the south of the island, inland, about 6 km as the crow flies from the present coastline, in a relatively rugged area shaped by the last undulations of the Troodos mountain range. It clings to the north and south sides of a hill, nestled within one of the meanders of the Maroni River.

Its discovery in 1934 and investigation by Porphyrios Dikaios from 1936 to 1946 confirmed the existence on the island of a Neolithic culture that ignored the art of pottery: the Pre-Pottery Neolithic. The impressive excavated architectural remains were considered at the time the earliest evidence of human presence on the island. Recent advances in prehistoric research in Cyprus have led us to revise this prestigious position and place the "Choirokoitia Culture" or Late Pre-Pottery Neolithic of Cyprus not at the beginning but at the end of a long evolution that began in the first half of the 9th millennium.

The Neolithic site of Choirokoitia, viewed from the air. © Department of Antiquities, Cyprus.

The archaeological site of Choirokoitia, excavated by Alain Le Brun and Odile Daune-Le Brun. Image courtesy of O. Daune-Le Brun.

Works for the experimental reconstruction of a Neolithic house at the site of Choirokoitia, carried out by the French archaeological mission of the National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS) and the Department of Antiquities. Image courtesy of O. Daune-Le Brun.

Modern reconstruction of the round houses of Choirokoitia. © Department of Antiquities, Cyprus.

The resumption of excavations at the site by the French mission, 1976-2009, have enabled us to reconsider the way in which this large village of farmers – herders and hunters, founded during the 7th millennium, was laid out in the landscape, and how it was organised.

The village is understood as a closed space, enclosed by an imposing wall that included carefully designed access features. Inside this enclosure the dwellings were tightly packed together. The basic architectural unit was a circular building covered with a flat roof. The construction materials used, either separately or in combination, were stone and mudbrick. A dwelling consisted of a cluster of several such structures arranged around an open area equipped with a grain-grinding installation. The village area was reserved for humans; the animals bred by the villagers – sheep, goats and pigs – were kept outside. In addition to herding, the community's economy relied on deer hunting and agriculture. Emmer wheat, einkorn,

Fragmentary Neolithic clay figurine depicting a human figure from Choirokoitia. © Department of Antiquities, Cyprus.

and to a lesser extent barley, as well as legumes such as lentils, were cultivated.

The resumption of excavations has produced rich and diverse data allowing multiple approaches that provide insight into the environment, subsistence strategies, the different crafts that were practiced, particularly stone working for which a workshop has been unearthed, but also funerary practices and the inhabitants' attitude vis-à-vis death. In fact, the dead were not separated from the living. They were interred in pits dug in the interior of the house. Sometimes, stone vessels, intentionally broken, were placed next to the deceased. Once the body was laid to rest, the pit was filled-in and the living regained ownership of the house.

Choirokoitia has produced the most important series of human remains from the Cypriot Neolithic. With at least 243 individuals, it is also one of the most significant series from the Near East's Pre-Pottery Neolithic. Therefore, the site offers an excellent opportunity to analyse the effects of insularity on a Neolithic population. The first results of the ongoing biological and paleopathological studies are promising.

After being abandoned for several centuries, the site of Choirokoitia, which in 1998 was inscribed by UNESCO on the World Heritage List, was reinhabited in the 5th millennium during the Pottery Neolithic, the so called "Sotira Culture", before being abandoned for good.

FRENCH EXCAVATIONS AT **AMATHOUS**

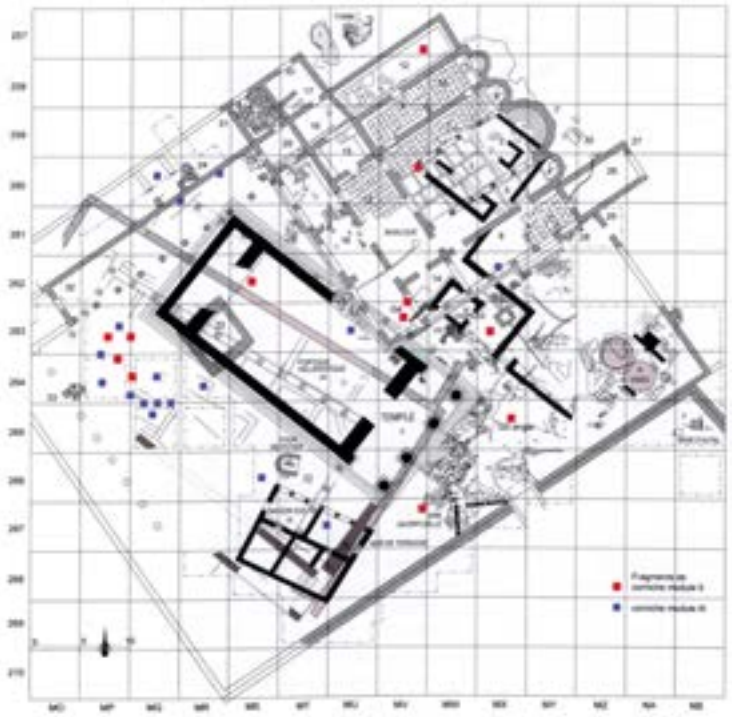
Anna Cannavò
Centre national de la recherche scientifique CNRS

The site of Amathous (on the south coast of Cyprus, to the east of Limassol), founded at the beginning of the 1st millennium BC, was one of the Cypriot Kingdoms of the Iron Age (11th-4th centuries BC). Ancient sources contain accounts of the purported autochthony of its inhabitants: their language – called "Eteocypriot", attested at the time of the kingdom – remains undeciphered.

Amathous, with the Agora in the foreground and the Acropolis in the background. © A. Cannavò, Archives EFA.

Aerial view of the Acropolis of Amathous, showing the area of the sanctuary. © P. Aupert, Archives EFA.

Aerial view of the remains, with the temple at the centre and the Christian basilica immediately to its left. © Department of Antiquities, Cyprus.



Ground plan of the sanctuary. © Archives EFA.

Sanctuary on the Acropolis of Amathous, featuring a replica of the Amathous Vase. © A. Cannavò, Archives EFA.

Engraving from a book published in 1803, illustrating the Amathous Vase before it was transported to France. © Luigi Mayer, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons.

Hathoric stela reused in an Early Christian wall, 1987. © A. Hermary, Archives EFA.

An acropolis standing tall at about 80 m., and a lower city in the south-east, make up the urban centre, with the necropoleis extending all around. Looming over the acropolis is the sanctuary of the Great Goddess *Kypria*, identified since the Classic Age with Aphrodite. The palace of the kings of Amathous was strategically situated on the southern flank of the acropolis. Since ancient times, the city was surrounded by a fortified wall, which was restored and modified several times throughout antiquity. In the beginning of the Hellenistic period, during the conflict over the possession of Cyprus, Amathous was endowed by the Antigonids with a built port, which however was never completed. Placed definitively under Ptolemaic control at the beginning of the 3rd century BC, Amathous, like other Cypriot sites, became a Hellenistic

Architectural elements from the temple on the Acropolis of Amathous. © A. Cannavò, Archives EFA.

Reconstruction of the temple, watercolour. © Fl. Babled, M. Schmid, Archives EFA.

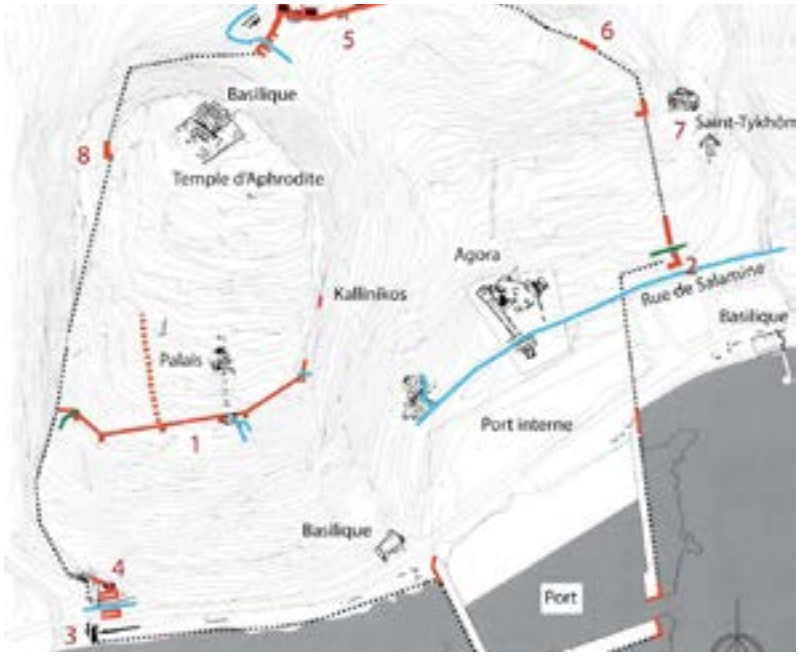
The facade of the temple. © Archives EFA.

North rampart of Amathous, below the Acropolis. © Archives EFA.

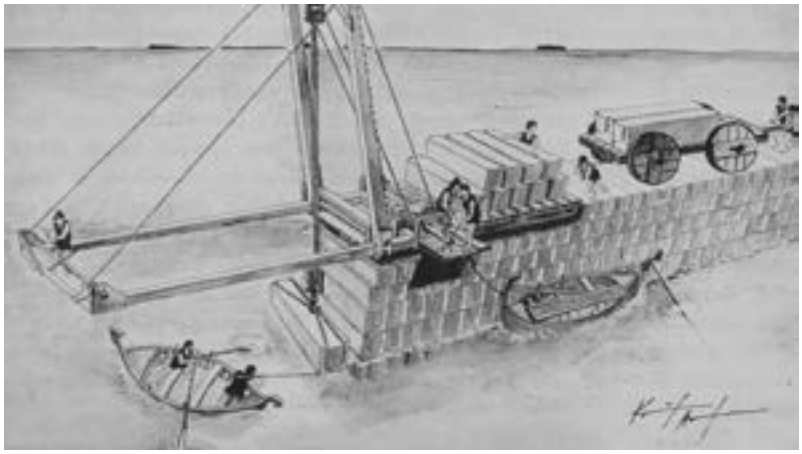
city. The monumentalisation of its public spaces, initiated during the Hellenistic period, continued into the Roman era: a limestone temple in the sanctuary of Aphrodite, porticoes, fountains and baths in the agora, aqueducts and hydraulic installations. Amathous was the seat of one of the island's bishoprics in Late Antiquity, and its numerous basilicas attest to a flourishing period during the 5th and 6th centuries AD. This was halted by the Arab raids that plagued the island during the 7th century AD. Following ultimate attempts to defend the city, traces of which are still visible on the imposing central wall of the acropolis, the site was permanently abandoned.

Amathous was known to travellers and hunters of antiquities, who explored it again and again. In 1865, the colossal limestone vase found in the sanctuary of the acropolis was transferred to the Louvre. Equally notable, the excavations of Luigi Palma di Cesnola (1874-1875) led to the discovery of several masterpieces included in the Cypriot Collection of the Metropolitan Museum in New York. Epigraphic missions (by Beaudouin and Pottier in 1878, and by Paul Perdrizet in 1896) as well as the excavations of the British Museum in the necropoleis (1893-1894), preceded the first true scientific research project carried out at the site by the Swedish Cyprus Expedition of E. Gjerstad (1930).

Aerial view of the ancient harbour of Amathous, now submerged. © Department of Antiquities, Cyprus.



General plan of the site of Amathous. © P. Aupert, T. Koželj, M. Wurch-Koželj, J. Durin, Archives EFA.



Drawing illustrating the construction of the moles at the ancient harbour of Amathous. © Archives EFA.

The archaeological mission of Amathous, under the joint scientific supervision of the French School at Athens and the French Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs, has conducted fieldwork on the ancient city and surrounding area since 1975. The mission has excavated several monumental ensembles: atop the acropolis, the sanctuary of the Great Goddess, identified with Aphrodite, including the temple of the Roman Imperial period and a small Christian basilica from Late Antiquity; a palatial complex halfway up the slope of the acropolis; the submerged port; and several sections of the ramparts.

The mission carried out other, less extended excavations as well as several research programmes and a survey of the territory. Other spots, mainly the agora and a residential quarter in the lower town, several basilicas and the necropoleis were excavated by the Cyprus' Department of Antiquities with which the mission collaborates frequently.

Engraving by Luigi Mayer, 1780: the southwestern wall of Amathous.
© P. Aupert, Archives EFA.

FRENCH EXCAVATIONS AT **AYIOS TYCHONAS**-*KLIMONAS*

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François Briois
Université Toulouse-Jean Jaurès

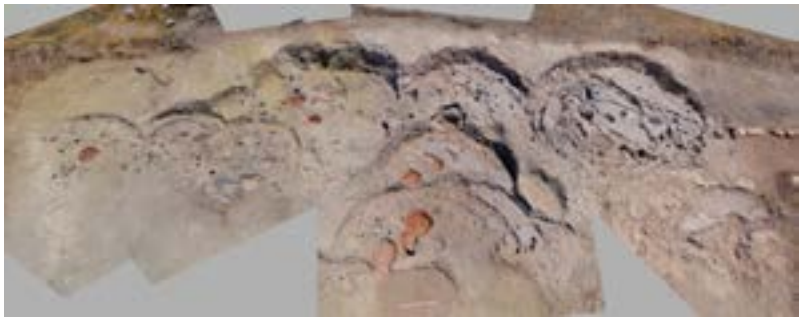
Jean Guilaine
Collège de France

Dating from 8800 BC, Ayios Tychonas-*Klimonas* is the earliest known village on an island in the Mediterranean. The site confirms that the model of the first Neolithic villages of the Levant (in the period called Pre-Pottery Neolithic A = PPNA) had been transmitted overseas to the island of Cyprus, even though for a long time it was thought that Cyprus had stayed away from Near-Eastern *neolithisation* process. *Klimonas* has significantly increased our knowledge of the very beginnings of the Neolithic in the Near East.

Excavations carried out between 2009 and 2016 unearthed a large, circular communal building with a diameter of 10 metres, comparable to those at PPNA sites in the Near East. Unlike the latter, which were often built in stone, the building rested on thick walls made of mudbrick, reinforced with wooden posts and widened at the base by internal ledges. The roof was supported by numerous thick internal pillars. Several storage spaces hidden in the floor, ledges or walls underline the high socio-symbolic value of this building, which must have been used both for crop storage as well as for various ritual activities. The great majority of human remains, that are otherwise very rare at the site, were located within this building, just like most of the dog and mouse bones, and a single cat bone. On at least three occasions over a span of several decades, the building was deliberately demolished and reconstructed atop the flattened remains of the preceding phase.

The communal building was surrounded by several dozen circular residential structures with mudbrick walls, cut into the slope and measuring between 3 and 6 metres in diameter. These allow us to estimate the extent of the village at a minimum of 5000 m². About thirty of the structures were excavated. They were all enclosed by a foundation trench and fitted with various interior installations, mainly a hearth in a hemispherical pit but also, in rare cases, a grinding stone. The entrances, sometimes

Excavation of a Neolithic village at Klimonas, near Limassol, by the French team led by Jean-Denis Vigne and François Briois. © J.-D. Vigne, CNRS.



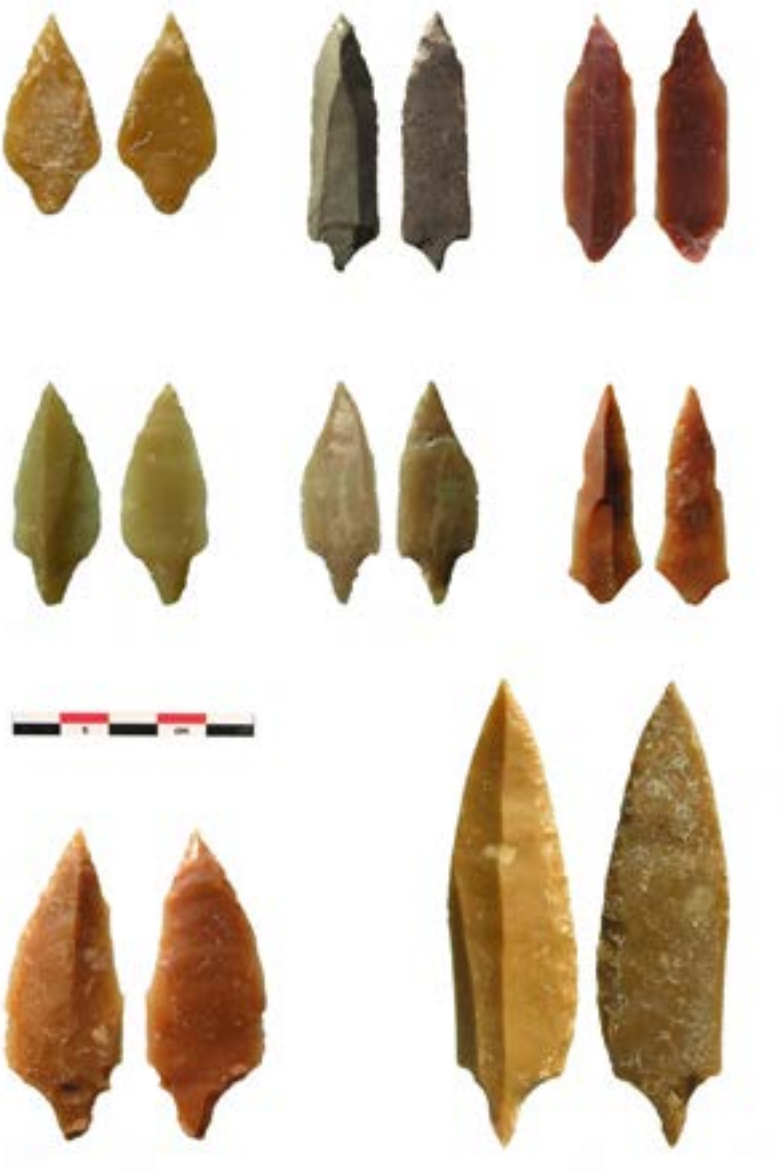
The foundations of some Neolithic, round houses at Klimonas. © J.-D. Vigne, CNRS.

equipped with a threshold stone or steps, were all orientated to the north-east, against the prevailing winds.

The lifespan of those buildings was short, as subsequent ones were often constructed on the platforms built for their predecessors.

The material assemblage associated with these constructions is very homogeneous. It is composed of several tonnes of chipped flint of excellent quality obtained from nearby deposits. Comparable to known assemblages of the same chronology in the Euphrates Valley, the knapping was unipolar and aimed primarily at producing bladelets with a central ridge, used for the manufacture of numerous arrowheads, but also sickles. Several dozen grinding or percussion tools, often made of local greenstones (diabase) attest to intensive production and significant agricultural activity. The plant remains indicate the

presence of cereals introduced from the mainland (einkorn and emmer wheat), which had not yet been greatly altered by domestication, but probably also barley native to Cyprus. Agriculture was supplemented by the gathering of wild fruit, mainly terebinth. More than 20,000 faunal remains show that meat diet rested heavily on the hunting of small wild boar, endemic to Cyprus, the only ungulate on the island at the time. Water birds and geese were also part of the hunting tally, but marine resources were excluded from the diet.



Neolithic flint arrowheads from Klimonas. © F. Briois, EHESS.

FRENCH EXCAVATIONS AT **PAREKKLISHA**-*SHILLOUROKAMBOS*

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François Briois
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Excavated between 1991 and 2004, the Neolithic site of Parekklisha-*Shillourokambos* has revealed the existence of a previously unknown phase in Cypriot prehistory, which is contemporary with and culturally close to Pre-Pottery Neolithic B (PPNB) of the Levant and Anatolia. This village, slightly bigger than a hectare, was in fact inhabited for 15 centuries, from 8500 to 7000 BC. It thus precedes the Choirokoitia Culture, which was until recently believed to have been the starting point of the Cypriot Neolithic, during the first half of the 7th millennium.

Between 8500 and 7700 BC, the earliest phases of *Shillourokambos*, despite being very eroded, yielded the most ancient wells known to this day, 6 to 7 metres deep. They revealed a lithic industry dominated by the production of large bipolar blades in fine translucent flint, very sophisticated technically and similar to that of the Levantine PPNB. Several dozen obsidian bladelets imported from central Anatolia attest

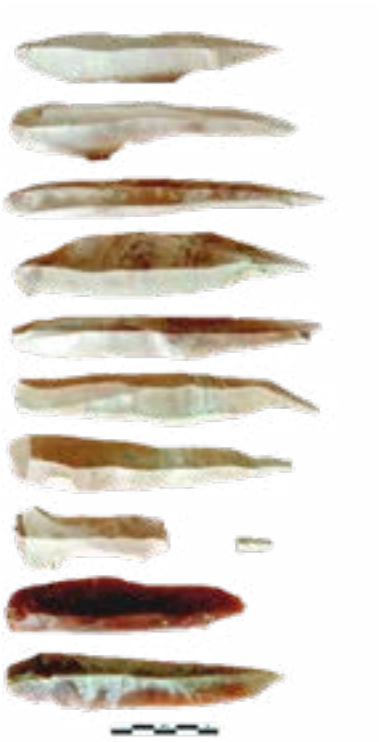
Mud brick and stone building foundations, Shillourokambos (middle and late phases of the late Pre-Pottery Neolithic B, 7500-7000 BC). © P. Gérard, Collège de France.

to strong connections with the mainland. This toolkit of knapped stones, intended for wild boar hunting, is accompanied by grinding stones and handstones made of green rocks, sickles and remains of cultivated cereals, indicating a well-established agriculture. The stone and shell ornaments, as well as the stone vessels from these early phases, also show significant similarities to those of the continental PPNB. From the earliest phases of occupation, when faunal remains were strongly dominated by wild boar bones, a few remains of goats and cattle appeared, imported from the mainland where they had only recently been domesticated. They testify to the introduction of big animals by boat, evidence of an unsuspected mastery of seafaring from that early era. The imported animals were either raised at *Shillourokambos* (cattle) or released to serve as game (goats). A little later, domesticated sheep and fallow deer, a species from Mesopotamia would also be introduced. The former would be carefully herded for their meat and milk;

Jean Guilaine (Professor Emeritus at the Collège de France) excavating a Neolithic burial at Shillourokambos. © Department of Antiquities, Cyprus.

as for the deer, they would be released as game.

Generally better preserved, the occupations of the middle and late phases yielded remains of circular dwellings and domestic and workshop installations made of stone and mudbrick, and also wells comparable to those of the earlier phases. Evidence for the development of agriculture and animal husbandry multiplied as, alongside sheep, pigs and goats were also domesticated. Cattle husbandry declined, but fallow deer hunting continued to play an important role. The excavation produced a collective burial as well as about ten individual interments. One of them includes the burial of an individual



Large projectile points made on bipolar blades, Shillourokambos (early phase of the early Pre-Pottery Neolithic B, 8500-8000 BC), flint. Arrows indicate damage left on the points when they were used as hunting tools. © Department of Antiquities, Cyprus.

associated with a cat, whose morphological traits were different than those of other cats found at the site. It is considered the earliest evidence of the domestication of a small feline, around 7200 BC, more than 3000 years before the domestication of the species in the Nile Valley. The lithic industry of the middle and final phases, knapped from opaque chert, was less and less committed from a technological point of view and tended to herald that of the Pre-Pottery Neolithic of Choirokoitia (7th millennium). By the end of the site's occupation, sheep and goat husbandry predominated. Significant accumulations of faunal remains testify to the preparation of large banquets and suggest that the site acted as a focal point where people came together.

Head of an anthropomorphic cat?, Shillourokambos (early phase of the early Pre-Pottery Neolithic B, 8500-8000 BC), serpentinite, 9 x 13 cm. © P. Gérard, Collège de France.

FRENCH EXCAVATIONS AT **ARMENOCHORI**-*PAKHTOMENA*

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Occupied during the Late Glacial period, between 13,000 and 11,000 BC, Armenochori-*Pakhtomena* is the oldest archaeological site in Cyprus. It predates the only other known Epipalaeolithic site, Akrotiri-*Aetokremnos*, by a millennium. The site attests to Epipalaeolithic presence on the island, at least during the Bølling and Allerød climatic phases, by permanent groups with deep knowledge of natural resources, who adapted their mobility to exploit them.

Surveys conducted since 2018 on the Armenochori plateau have documented karstic processes that began well before the last Pleniglacial, more than 20,000 years ago. During the Upper Pleistocene, several small "blind' valleys were deeply incised into the limestone substrate, before being gradually filled with red decalcified clays. This is the case of the *Pakhtomena* blind valley, where excavations carried out between 2021 and 2024 revealed various Epipalaeolithic stone structures situated along the bank of a paleochannel representing an ancient stream. These Epipalaeolithic remains were quickly buried by clay deposits, that continued to accumulate until

Aerial view of the limestone plateau of Armenochori and the location of the excavation of the Epipalaeolithic site of Pakhtomena (13,000-11,000 BC). © R. Hadad, EHESS.

Aerial view of the Epipalaeolithic stone-built structures at Pakhtomena (13,000-11,000 BC). © R. Hadad, EHESS.

the beginning of the Holocene. Between 9000 and 2000 BC, intense pedogenesis contributed to the final filling of the blind valley, which was later truncated by agricultural activities during antiquity and historical periods.

As a result, the Epipalaeolithic structures lie more than one and a half metres below the modern ground surface, embedded within the deep horizons of the Holocene paleosol. They mainly consist of four to five superimposed layers of well-calibrated limestones. Their contours are clearly defined, suggesting walls made of perishable materials. They are punctuated by small posts. The stone floors covered oblong areas measuring approximately 5x3 metres. They were probably hut floors built on top of each other during successive temporary occupations. The superimposition of the floors, some of which overlap the previous ones, suggests that these occupations were separated by no more than a few months or years. In addition, there is a multi-phase bowl-shaped hearth and a stone cordon, 4-5 metres long, crossing the paleochannel, which may have functioned as a dam to create a small water reservoir at the foot of the hut. The function of various other stone fillings, often accumulated in more or less deep depressions, remains uncertain.

The archaeological assemblage comprises nearly 4000 carved flints, in addition to an equal number of fragments and splinters. Although there is no flint on the Armenochori plateau, deposits are located nearby. The industry shows a clear microlithic trend, typical of the Epipalaeolithic Near East. Not highly standardised, it is very homogeneous, dominated by chisels and lacking arrowheads and geometric pieces. The development of

Holocene brown soil, followed by agricultural soils in historical periods, is probably responsible for the total disappearance of Epipalaeolithic bones. The absence of arrowheads suggests, however, that large game was not present. Occupation may have taken place after the extinction of hippopotami and dwarf elephants and before the introduction of wild boar, which would be on the menu of early Neolithic groups. Charcoal provides the first environmental data for the Cypriot Late Glacial period, revealing a landscape very different from that of the early Holocene, dominated by olive trees, probably in riparian forests, accompanied by ash trees and pistachio trees.

FRENCH EXCAVATIONS AT **KATO POLEMIDIA** (PANAGIA KARMIOTISSA)

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Three excavation campaigns have been organised at the site of Panagia Karmiotissa (Polemidia) since 2023. This multi-year project, successfully completed with the assistance of the Church Committee of the city of Polemidia, is part of a scientific partnership between the Eratosthenes Centre of Excellence (ECoE-Cyprus) and the Laboratory of Medieval and Modern Archeology in the Mediterranean (LA3M, UMR 7298-France).

The site, set at the heart of a small valley, consists of a single-nave church whose oldest components cannot date back earlier than the 14th century AD. This building is believed to have been erected at the site of the first Carmelite foundation on the Levantine island, which itself was established in the beginning of the 13th century AD.

Since the first survey campaign, occupation levels associated with several dry-stone walls were brought to light on a series of terraces located in the north-east of the valley. These levels contained a significant quantity of ceramics, whose chrono-typology points to 13th century Paphian productions, thereby attesting to the existence of a settlement predating the construction of the church still standing. The nature of these material elements, coupled with the discovery of a hearth and a water-management structure, suggests that this sector functioned as a residential area at the time.

Behind the church apse, several dozen pits, with an east-west orientation, have been identified, suggesting a burial ground associated with Christian worship. The total absence of bones raises questions about the development of specific funeral practices, marked by the methodical emptying of graves. To date, five phases of burial have been identified. One of these is contemporary with the construction of a partially excavated rock-cut staircase, the trajectory of which leads to a location beneath the apse of the church, suggesting the existence of

Burial area and rock-cut staircase. © S. Peuch, LA3M, UMR 7298.

an underlying chamber (crypt or earlier place of worship?). Fragments of painted plaster from the Byzantine period, whose origin could not be determined, were found within the backfill covering these structures.

Moreover, remains of earthen structures associated with posthole impressions betray the presence of buildings made of perishable materials, the construction of which currently represents a unicum on the island. Continued investigations will allow for a more extensive understanding of the appearance of these structures.

The complete excavation of the 13th century occupation, only partially explored so far, constitutes a major objective for the coming years. Should this occupation be confirmed as corresponding to the first Carmelite foundation on the island, the missing link between the original establishment of the Order in the Holy Land and its earliest Western convents would be restored to collective memory for the first time since its abandonment, marking a crucial step in archaeological research on the mendicant orders.

If this occupation were found to be otherwise, the study of its layout would, in any case, constitute a key milestone in the characterisation of Cypriot vernacular architecture from the Frankish period, which remains very poorly understood. Its diversity is already evident from the first unearthed elements.

Fragment of painted plaster discovered in a fill covering the burial area. © K. Themistocleous, ECoE.

FRENCH EXCAVATIONS AT **PAPHOS**-*FABRIKA*

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The site of (Nea) Paphos was inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage List in 1980. Jean Bérard was the first French to excavate here in 1952. The French archaeological mission in Paphos, created in 2008, works alongside the Department of Antiquities and the University of Cyprus, as well as the Polish, Australian and Italian missions, towards specifying the history of this great city which had begun developing around the port as of the end of the 4th century BC, perhaps at the initiative of the local king Nicocles. The city hosted a garrison and a mint from the 3rd century BC, after Ptolemy, Alexander's general who governed Egypt, proclaimed himself king and permanently took control of the island. It became the capital of Cyprus in the 2nd century BC when the Ptolemies' representative on the island was installed there, replacing old Paphos, where, however, the main sanctuary of Aphrodite, the city's patron deity, remained. Recent excavations by the French mission have shown that, at the time, the hill of *Fabrika*, until then a place of stone extraction and necropolis in the city's north-east,

Aerial view of the site of Nea Paphos. Image courtesy of C. Balandier.

View of Fabrika Hill. Image courtesy of C. Balandier.

was integrated into the urban space through the construction of the urban enclosure (research on the enclosure, initiated by the French mission, is supported today by the French School of Athens in collaboration with the Department of Antiquities and the University of Cyprus). A temple was then erected above the theatre, which was then being embellished. Underground spaces (possibly for cultic purposes) were created, one of them decorated with a shell, along with an ingenious subterranean hydraulic system modelled on that of Alexandria. The necropolis known as the Tombs of Kings in the north of the city and the grid plan may have also been inspired by the Ptolemaic capital, and may date from the 2nd century BC when Ptolemy VI made it the seat of his power, after his brother had usurped the Egyptian throne. Destroyed by an earthquake in 15 BC, the city was rebuilt with Augustus' financial support and became the seat of the Roman governor: the work of the French mission shows that it expanded towards the north and the east: dwellings decorated with painted plaster were erected north of the *Fabrika* hill, along the Hellenistic rampart. In the south-west, the big "houses" decorated with pictorial mosaics, testify to the city's prosperity just like the statues, for instance that of *Venus Genetrix*, of the 2nd-3rd century AD, discovered in the "House of Theseus", as well as numerous graves decorated with painting. Damaged by several earthquakes, the city was smaller during the Byzantine period, but was nevertheless graced with large basilicas like that of the seven-aisled Chrysopolitissa, which

The quest of the Hellenistic city-wall. Rescue excavation in 2023. Image courtesy of C. Balandier.

is the biggest on the island. Between the late 12th and the 14th centuries AD, Paphos remained an important port for the Francs and the Italians, mainly the Genovese, as evidenced by the Latin churches, the so-called "Forty Columns Castle", and the discovery by the French mission of the seal-matrix for a bishop of Bologna of the 13th century AD. Then came the turn of the Venetians to settle the city from 1489 to 1571: a linen "factory", which likely supplied the port with sails, lent its name to the toponym ("Fabrika" hill).

FRENCH EXCAVATIONS AT **PAPHOS-KTIMA**

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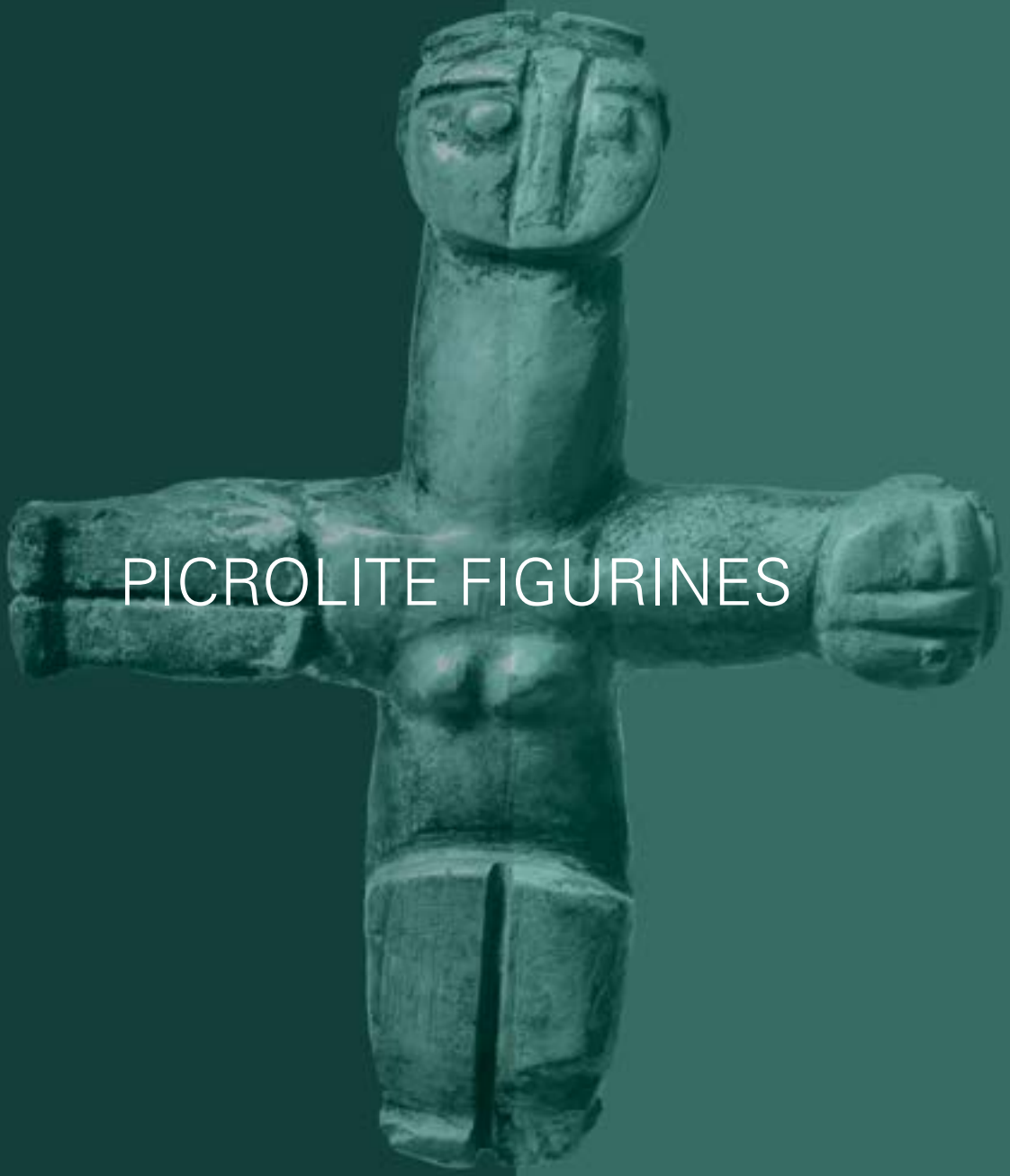
Jean Bérard (1908-1957) was the son of Victor Bérard (1864-1931), a Hellenist and archaeologist made famous for his translation of the Odyssey and his attempts to identify the stages of Ulysse's voyage in the Western Mediterranean. Following in the footsteps of his father, Jean Bérard had completed his doctoral thesis on *La colonisation grecque de l' Italie méridionale et de la Sicile dans l' Antiquité. L' histoire et la légende [The Greek colonisation of Southern Italy and Sicily in Antiquity. History and legend*,1941, 2nd ed. 1957). In the context of his research, Bérard became interested in the date of the Trojan War and the chronology of what he called the "Mycenaean colonisation" of Cyprus, which he placed in the first half of the 14th century BC, as opposed to the later date proposed by the Swedish archaeologists Furumark and Gjerstad. Even though Bérard never went to Cyprus nor did he have any contact with the archaeologists working on the island at the time, and although he suffered from an illness that had almost blinded him, he envisioned to perform trial trenching at the site of Nea Paphos in order to verify the existence there of a Mycenaean city founded by the Arcadian hero Agapenor according to an account by Strabo (XIV, 6, 3). Therefore, in 1950 he contacted Porphyrios Dikaios, Curator of the Cyprus Museum and excavator of Enkomi, and Peter Megaw, Director of the Department of Antiquities, which referred him to the epigraphist Terence Mitford, then co-director of the British excavations at Kouklia (Palaepaphos) with J. H. Iliffe. In 1952, Mitford and Bérard agreed to perform trial trenches together at Kato Paphos, with France's financial participation and the on-site collaboration of the young Jean Deshayes, member of the French School of Athens. These trial trenches revealed no occupation before the Hellenistic period. Nevertheless, Bérard and Deshayes were intrigued by the discovery, in 1939, of Geometric period graves near the modern town of Paphos-Ktima, at a place called Iskender. Excavations conducted at this site between 1953 and 1955

led to the discovery of eleven chamber graves with *dromoi*, whose use spanned from the Cypro-Geometric II (10th-9th century BC) to the Hellenistic period. Bérard died two years after the completion of these excavations, and their study was taken up entirely by Deshayes: the volume was published in Paris in 1963 under the title *La nécropole de Ktima (mission Jean Bérard, 1953-55)* [*The necropolis at Ktima* (Jean Bérard mission, 1953-55)]. The ceramic finds comprised more than 600 vases, including those from the graves discovered in 1939. In accordance with the legislation then in force, part of the found objects was assigned to the Louvre. Since the Swedish excavations had not covered this region of the island, Deshayes took it upon himself to specify and complete the terminology established by Gjerstad for the pottery of the Geometric and Archaic periods. However, he did not continue his research in Cyprus, turning instead to Neolithic and Oriental archaeology. Still, the contribution of this mission to our understanding of Paphos-Ktima before the Hellenistic period is important, and Jean Bérard remains a unique figure in the history of Cypriot archaeology.

Jean Bérard, French excavator of Paphos-Ktima (1908-1957). Since 1966, his name has been borne by a research center of the CNRS and the École française de Rome (French School of Rome). © HerremB, CC BY-SA 4.0 International, via Wikimedia Commons.



PICROLITE FIGURINES

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CHALCOLITHIC PICROLITE FIGURINES

Small cruciform figurine of pale green mottled picrolite
Kissonerga-Mosphilia, KM1052
The eyes, nose and breasts are shown in relief. The right hand, with its seven incised fingers, turns up; the left hand, with four fingers, turns down. The legs are shown schematically as flexed. Toes are incised on the ledge representing the feet. Despite the softness of the stone, there is only light surface wear. One of 26 picrolite figurines from Kissonerga-Mosphilia, it belongs to a small group with the same distinctive hand positions from beyond the site.
Ht. 7.0 cm.

These figurative objects are made of a soft, pale greenish-blue stone known as picrolite, which was used throughout prehistory in Cyprus but is best known for the manufacture of personal ornaments at sites of the Chalcolithic period (c. 4000-2500 BC). Picrolite can be cut as slabs from exposures of veins or seams in serpentinite outcrops in the central Troodos mountains or collected as unworked water-worn pebbles in riverbeds closer to the coast. While slabs were used to fashion medium to large size figurines, pebbles served as sources for smaller figurines and figurative pendants. The highly individual nature of these figurative objects makes them difficult to classify. Collectively known as "cruciforms", they are found in domestic and funerary contexts at a number of archaeological sites of the 4th and early 3rd millennia BC. Arguably the most important of these is the site of Souskiou in the southwest of the island where the earliest known extramural cemeteries have yielded dozens of well-preserved examples. Souskiou has also yielded evidence of a workshop for the manufacture of picrolite objects.

Suggested interpretations of the function of cruciform figures vary from their use in birthing rituals, with their seated/flexed postures indicating the traditional position for women during childbirth until modern times; as representations of deceased individuals – inhumations in a flexed position being the standard burial type at this time; or as symbols of personal identity worn by individuals during their lifetime before accompanying them in burials after death. Some cruciform figures, such as these examples from Kissonerga and Salamiou, which have prominent breasts, appear to represent females, while the majority of known examples lack indications of sex and hence can be regarded as gender neutral. Very few have been identified as possible males. The manufacture and use of picrolite figurines and pendants flourished during the 4th millennium BC but declined during the early centuries of the 3rd millennium when personal ornaments made of picrolite began

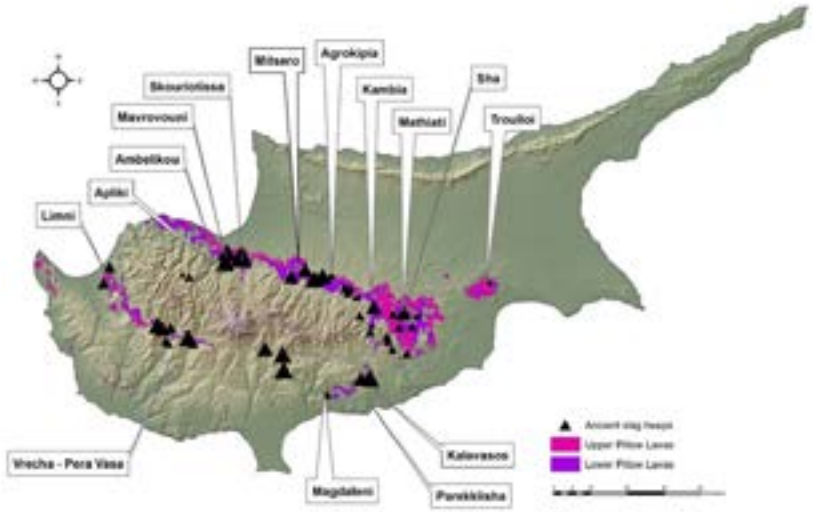
Small cruciform figurine of greyish green picrolite
Salamiou-Anefani, 1959/XI-3/6
The eyes, nose and breasts are shown in relief. Where outstretched arms would be expected, a second figurine form lies horizontally across the vertical one, its head replacing the upright figure's left hand. The legs are shown schematically as flexed. The figurine is one of a small group exhibiting the same double representation. The significance of this form is unknown.
Ht. 10.5 cm.

to be replaced by exotic materials such as bronze and faience. Their decline coincides with profound socio-economic changes on the island during the 3rd millennium as well as increasing levels of interaction between Cypriot communities and those of the surrounding mainland.

CYPRIOT COPPER

THE TRADE OF CYPRIOT COPPER

George Papasavvas
University of Cyprus



Map of Cyprus showing the Troodos mountain in the middle and the copper mines around it; the mines are located within the geological formation of the "pillow lavas" (marked in purple), so called because they were formed under the sea during the formation of Cyprus as a result of volcanic activity. Image courtesy of V. Kassianidou.

The history of Cyprus is closely linked to the production and trade of copper, the Cypriot product that served as the basis of the Cypriot economy and culture for centuries. Cyprus even gave this metal its name in modern European languages: The word for copper in Latin was *aes*. In the Roman Empire, where the provenance of circulating goods had to be specified, the term aes *cyprium* ("Cypriot copper") was used to label the metal that was imported from Cyprus. This designation was shortened to *cyprium*, which gradually changed to *cuprum*, the word that eventually prevailed and gave copper its modern name: *copper* in English, *cuivre* in French, *cobre* in Spanish and Portoguese, *Kupfer* in German, etc.

Since the beginning of the 2nd millennium BC, but mainly from the Late Bronze Age (1650-1100 BC) onwards and until Late Roman and Early Byzantine times (down to the 7th century AD), Cyprus acted as a major player in the complex, international trade networks that sustained the economies of the Great Powers across the Eastern Mediterranean and the Near East through the centuries, such as the Egyptians, Minoans, Mycenaeans, Hittites, Levantines, Assyrians and later, the Romans. Intensified external demand for Cypriot copper had a profound impact on socio-political developments on the island itself, as copper production had to develop in scale, technology and administrative complexity to rise to the

Copper oxhide ingot from Enkomi, with a stamped mark on the top rougher side; it weighs 39 kg and is 72 cm wide (1400-1200 BC; Cyprus Museum, Nicosia). © Department of Antiquities, Cyprus.

Experimental casting of molten copper in the form of an oxhide ingot. Image courtesy of V. Kassianidou.

A diver archaeologist excavating a shipwreck and its copper cargo. The ship that sank in the late 14th century BC at Uluburun, off the south coast of Asia Minor, probably on its way to the Aegean, was loaded with trade goods, including 354 copper oxhide ingots and ingots of other types, weighing 10 tons in total. The ingots were piled in rows in the ship's hold; chemical analysis has confirmed they were made with Cypriot copper. © Institute of Nautical Archaeology (INA) / Uluburun Project.

needs of international markets. Within this framework, Cyprus produced and distributed vast amounts of copper.

The enormous scale of this metal's circulation left distinct traces in the archeological record, mainly in the form of *oxhide* ingots dispersed in the Mediterranean and beyond, as well as in Near Eastern and Egyptian textual and iconographic sources, such as in the Pharaonic correspondence of the Amarna Letters and the paintings in Egyptian tombs showing ingot bearers in procession scenes. The magnitude of this circulation is captured at the ship that sunk at Uluburun (off the south coast of Anatolia) near the end of the 14th century BC, carrying the astonishing quantity of ten tons of Cypriot copper, mainly in the form of oxhide ingots, as well as several tin ingots weighing one ton. Their mixture would have produced 11 tons of bronze.

The distribution of Cypriot copper oxhide ingots in the Mediterranean and beyond. Image courtesy of V. Kassianidou.

The distribution of Cypriot copper to the east and west intensified further in the 1st millennium BC and even after. By the Roman period, copper production in Cyprus had reached a truly industrial scale. Galen, the famous doctor, visited the island in AD 161/162 and briefly described in his books his visit to the mines. The exploitation of copper ores in this period produced immense heaps of slags, the waste product of copper production. Dispersed in more than 40 locations around the foothills of the Troodos mountain, they are without doubt among the largest ancient slag heaps known in Europe, with an estimated volume of about four million tons.

Clay tablet bearing a text in the Akkadian language and in cuneiform script; it is part of the royal correspondence between the Pharaohs Amenhotep III and Akhenaten and other rulers of the Eastern Mediterranean and the Near East (the so-called Amarna Letters, from their find place). This one is a letter between the Pharaoh and the king of Cyprus (14th century BC; Vorderasiatisches Museum, Berlin). © O. S. M. Amin, CC BY-SA 4.0 International, via Wikimedia Commons.

The Ingot God from a sanctuary at Enkomi; the bronze statuette, 35 cm tall, depicts a fully armed warrior standing on an oxhide ingot, communicating the message of command and divine protection over copper production (13th century BC; Cyprus Museum, Nicosia). © Department of Antiquities, Cyprus.

Men in a procession bearing gifts to the Pharaoh; artistic reproduction of a painting from the tomb of the high official Rekhmire, Thebes; the man on the left bears a copper oxhide ingot (15th century BC). © The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1931 (Acc. No. 31.6.42). Public Domain.

Cypriot bronze four-sided stand (used to support vases in rituals); in its four sides it depicts a procession of men bearing gifts to a seated figure; this side shows an oxhide ingot bearer in front of a stylised tree (13th century BC). © The Trustees of the British Museum. Shared under a CC BY-NC-SA 4.0 licence.

George Papasavvas
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COPPER OXHIDE INGOTS

***Fragment of an oxhide ingot**
Copper
Mathiatis hoard, 1936/VII-17/9
13th century BC
Cyprus Museum, Nicosia
© Department of Antiquities, Cyprus.

Reconstruction of an oxhide ingot.

This large fragment belonged to an oxhide ingot, broken from one of its four corners, as shown in the drawing. Oxhide ingots were the form that was given to copper when it was traded and stored: Orthogonal slabs made of pure copper, with concave sides and protruding edges, like handles, are ergonomically designed to facilitate lifting and carrying on men's shoulders, as well as their piling in ship holds for overseas transport. Their length is 60 cm on average, and they weigh from 23 to 39 kg; many weigh around 28 kg, the equivalent of an ancient weight unit called talent. The liquid metal was cast in this form in open moulds. Ingots had to be fragmented in pieces, and then melted for the production of bronze artefacts. Hundreds of such ingots made of Cypriot copper have been found in a vast geographical area, stretching from Germany and Bulgaria in the North to Egypt in the South, and from Marseille in the West to Mesopotamia in the East. Some bear signs of the Cypro-Minoan script, which represents a language that has not yet been deciphered, so called because of its resemblance to the undeciphered, Linear A script, associated with Minoan Crete.

The largest concentrations of ingots were recorded in two shipwrecks excavated off the southwest coast of Asia Minor, at Gape Gelidonya and at Uluburun. The latter ship, that sunk around 1320 BC, carried the astonishing amount of ten tons of copper in the form of 354 oxhide ingots, and 127 ingots of other shapes, as well as one ton of tin ingots. The mixture of these two metals would produce 11 tons of bronze. They stand witnesses to a thriving ancient trade in copper. On terrestrial sites the three large Mediterranean islands, Cyprus, Sardinia and Crete, have produced the largest concentrations of oxhide ingots, which, as shown by chemical analyses, were in their majority produced in Cyprus. Because of their major economic and political importance in the Late Bronze Age Mediterranean, that is in a world that depended on metal production and distribution and owes its name to them, ingots had acquired a symbolic importance, as obvious in the representations of men bearing ingots and other goods in processions on Cypriot bronze artefacts and on seals, but more importantly in the

statuettes of two deities, a fully armed warrior and a nude female, each shown standing on such an oxhide ingot, perhaps as a symbol of command and divine protection over the copper industry. Their importance is also evident in their depiction in paintings in the tombs of the Egyptian nobility. However, no other place in the Mediterranean or elsewhere, has such an extensive and consistent "ingot iconography" to present as Cyprus.

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Miniature ingots

Miniature ingots reproduce the shape of the large-size oxhide ingots. They may have been used as votive objects, and the Cypro-Minoan inscriptions engraved on some of them possibly record dedications or names of deities or votaries. Two bronze statuettes from Cyprus, show a warrior and a nude female standing on such ingots, demonstrating their association with religion and cult, and the placement of copper production under divine protection. These miniature ingots also show that the shape of a purely economic and administrative form of producing, storing and trading copper as a raw material had been transformed into a symbol.

**** Inscribed miniature oxhide ingot***
Copper
Enkomi, ENK. F.E. 1053 N°3.
1650-1100 BC
Cyprus Museum, Nicosia
© Department of Antiquities, Cyprus.

George Papasavvas
University of Cyprus

FRAGMENT FROM A STATUE OF QUEEN NEFERTITI

This fragment tells the story of an Egyptian statue, broken in pieces in ancient times; one piece from its head ended up in Enkomi, Cyprus, and is presented here in association with a digital 3D printing, to give an impression of how it looked like. Its style and high quality indicate that it depicted a member of royal family of the Amarna period, a time defined by the revolutionary, religious and political transformations of Pharaoh Akhenaten (reign 1349-1332 BC), who tried to eradicate the centuries-old Egyptian religion and replace it with the belief to a single god, the Aten. After Akhenaten's death, Egyptians reverted to the old belief system and made every effort to erase the memory of this Pharaoh, destroying all buildings and monuments associated with his rule. Statues showing him and his queen, Nefertiti, were smashed to pieces and their palaces and temples were reduced to rubble.

***Fragment from the head of a statue**
Enkomi, ENK. F.E.1960/126
14th century BC, Bronze
Cyprus Museum, Nicosia © Department of Antiquities, Cyprus.

This elaborate hairstyle, called a "Nubian wig", was very popular in the court of Amarna, the royal capital. However, no other person wore it so often as Nefertiti. A small detail on this fragment reveals the identity of the person shown: A perforation above where the forehead of the figure would have been, shows that the head once accommodated an uraeus, a royal cobra, a primordial emblem of regal power, worn as a diadem only by kings, queens and deities. As this perforation is situated just above the left eyebrow, there must have been a second one on the opposite side. Therefore, this figure wore a double uraeus, made separately in a different material, perhaps gold. Only queens, however, and not all of them, bore a double uraeus, as Pharaohs only wore one. This fragment came then from a statue of a royal woman, most probably of Nefertiti herself, who often appears with this duplicated emblem. Nefertiti played an important role in Akhenaten's reforms and may have even briefly ruled as Pharaoh after the death of her husband. Her images on stone reliefs, paintings and sculptures were fiercely attacked and her name was erased from inscriptions. It was under these historical circumstances that the statue to which this fragment once belonged, was destroyed. One fragment reached Enkomi, deprived of its original meaning and splendour, and fated to be recycled for its metal.

Conjectural positioning of the bronze fragment on the head of an alabaster canopic jar from Tomb 55 of the Valley of the Kings (14th century BC, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

Hypothetical reconstruction of the head of a statue of Nefertiti, using the bronze fragment from Enkomi and elements from other Egyptian artefacts from the Grand Egyptian Museum in Cairo and the Metropolitan Museums in New York.

3D reconstruction illustrating the placement of the bronze fragment on the head of the statue of Nefertiti.

HATHOR IN CYPRUS

CYPRIOT REPRESENTATIONS OF THE EGYPTIAN **GODDESS HATHOR**

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Aix-Marseille Université

In Pharaonic Egypt, Hathor is principally associated with love, hence her assimilation with the Greek goddess Aphrodite and the Great Goddess of Cyprus who, like her, possesses a universal power. It was only natural then that the Cypriots would be inspired by representations of Hathor to evoke the island's principal divinity, particularly during the 6th and early 5th centuries BC, when Egypt's cultural influence was strongly manifested in Cyprus. Iconographic adaptations are mainly attested in the form of masks of the goddess, placed on double-faced limestone capitals or used as decoration on small ceramic vases. Of the bovine appearance of the Egyptian Hathor only the small cow's ears survive on the earliest capitals, whereas the face, framed by a hairstyle with curled lower locks, is entirely human and gradually influenced by Greek style, as seen on a big fragmentary capital found below the palace of Amathous, which has maintained part of its polychromy. In fact, Amathous takes centre stage in the goddess' Cypriot representations. The limestone capitals are attested in the sanctuary atop the acropolis – dedicated to the great local divinity called Kypria, "Of Cyprus", or Aphrodite Kypria – within the big palatial building situated halfway up the hill, or in its immediate surroundings, as well as in the lower city near the port and in the zone of the northern necropolis. Elsewhere, vases decorated with a Hathoric mask in the bichrome technique were made in local workshops in the "Amathous style". The best-preserved pieces originate from the city's necropoleis or those of Limassol (see an example found in Limassol's suburbs, at Pano Polemidia, on display in the exhibition) but numerous fragments with the same type of decoration were found in the sanctuary of the acropolis and near the northern wall. Hathoric capitals were attested from the same period at numerous other Cypriot sites, yet the contexts of their discovery were rarely known with precision. The two examples from the Vouni palace, on the northern coast of the island, are a remarkable exception.

Central courtyard of the Vouni palace, with the Hathoric capital in the middle. Image courtesy of National Museums of World Culture (SMVK), CC0 Public Domain.

The column capital Louvre AM 93 was identified in 1885 by Max Ohnefalsch-Richter at a house in the old city of Larnaca. Wholly preserved (h. 133 cm), it showcases all the characteristics of these monuments: the face, surrounded by a broad wig with curled lower locks, rests on a papyrus umbel; above the head, between two vegetal motifs, a small chapel (*naiskos*) is featured, surmounted by a winged disc wherein stands the sacred cobra (*uraeus*). Quite remarkably, this naiskos is flanked by two pilasters, each crowned with a Hathoric mask set on an Egyptian-type aegis. On the other side, the face of the goddess is destroyed, but the lower part of the *naiskos* contains a "tree of life", topped by a volute on which two sphinxes stand back to back. The style of the only preserved face allows the dating of this remarkable work towards the middle of the 6th century. It may be assumed that this capital at the Louvre, like the terracotta plaquettes displayed in the exhibition, came from the site of Kition-*Bamboula* and that it was exhibited in a prestigious building by the port – either a sanctuary of the Great Goddess or a palatial edifice. At any rate, the other Hathoric capital identified by Ohnefalsch-Richter in Larnaca in 1885, now in Berlin, appears to have originated from a necropolis, according to an old photograph recently discovered at the British Museum.

A local man called Charalambos from the village near the palace of Vouni, on whose land the palace was excavated stands next to the Hathoric capital found there. Image courtesy of National Museums of World Culture (SMVK), CC0 Public Domain.

The other capital of the Louvre (inv. AM 2755), smaller in size (h. 81 cm), is well-preserved only on one of its sides. The overall iconographic plan is the same as on the previous one, but the style of the face, reminiscent of that of Greek korai from the end of the Archaic period, point to a date near 480 BC. Through a photograph kept in the National Archives in Paris, we know that this work was acquired in "Bapho", namely Paphos, in 1865. This is a surprising provenance because we do not know of any other Hathoric capital on the south-west coast of Cyprus, and because this monument predates the foundation of Nea Paphos almost by a century and a half. It can be inferred that in the beginning of the 5th century there existed at this

site a sanctuary of the Great Goddess or a palatial edifice dependent on the kings of Palaepaphos, where this Hathoric stele must have been placed, unless it came from the tomb of a prestigious personality.

Although we ignore their precise origins, the two Hathoric capitals in the Louvre are therefore precious witnesses to a category of works that is characteristic of Cypriot art in the 6th-5th centuries BC.

Fragment of a Hathoric capital excavated at the palace of Vouni by the Swedish Cyprus Expedition; Martin Gjerstad, the son of the Swedish excavator Einar Gjerstad, is standing on the capital next to the foreman of the excavation, Lazaros. © John Lindros, CC0 1.0 Universal, via Wikimedia Commons.

Hathoric capital from Amathous exhibited in the Limassol Museum. The drawing restores the original polychromy of the capital. © Ph. Collet / Archives EFA, Y.1787 ; S. Hartmann / Archives EFA, 17895.

Hathoric capital
Limestone
Kition-Bamboula, AM 93
600-475 BC
H: 133 cm ; W: 74 cm ; D: 37 cm
Musée du Louvre, Paris
© 2015 Musée du Louvre, Dist. GrandPalaisRmn / Philippe Fuzeau.

The goddess Hathor shines in full colour: **Click on this link** to watch this Hathoric stone capital from Kition regaining an impression of its original polychromy, now barely visible to the naked eye. Using your smartphone, the subtle hues and details of this ancient artefact are revealed, offering a hypothetical glimpse of its vibrant appearance in antiquity.

Annie Caubet
Musée du Louvre

MINIATURE HATHORIC STELAE

The exhibition includes two of the eight terracotta figures found on a hearth altar of the sanctuary excavated at Kition-*Bamboula* (Larnaca) by a French archaeological mission in 1980. The face of the great goddess, in the guise of the Egyptian goddess Hathor, appears above a papyrus umbel, a plant of the Nile Delta, where the Hathoric myth unfolds. This divine image may be compared with the stone stele at the Louvre (AM 93) and the sacrificial scene painted on an amphora fragment (AM 393).

***Miniature Hathoric stelae**
Kition-Bamboula, KEF 564 and KEF 560, 6th century BC , Terracotta. Department of Antiquities, Cyprus © Department of Antiquities, Cyprus.

Demetra Aristotelous
Department of Antiquities, Cyprus

AMPHORISKOS WITH HATHORIC FIGURE

A characteristic example of the ceramic workshops of Amathous. The central panel depicts the head of the goddess Hathor flanked by two upright arrows, a schematic representation of incense burners (*thymiateria*). Her distinctive hairstyle is finely engraved and held by a ribbon at the top. Found in a chamber tomb at the locality of Polemidia, this "Amathous style" amphoriskos further attests to the extent of the kingdom's influence in the region.

***Amphoriskos of Bichrome V ceramic ware with Hathoric figure**
Kato Polemidia, T.28/42. 6th century BC. Ceramic
Department of Antiquities, Cyprus © Department of Antiquities, Cyprus.

Artemis Georgiou
University of Cyprus

FEMALE TERRACOTTA FIGURINE

The so-called "Flat-headed" (or Type B) figurines are one of the two main groups of female terracottas produced in Late Bronze Age Cyprus (ca. 1650-1100 BC), alongside the "Bird-headed" (or Type A) figurines. They are made in Base-ring ware and are typically hollow in construction. The figurines are shown with their arms either extended downwards or bent towards the chest, as in the example displayed here, found inside a tomb at Enkomi. They feature a flattened head with large flap ears, and the facial features are rendered both in relief and through painted decoration. Three horizontal painted bands in a bichrome format (black-red-black) shown on the neck may represent a necklace. The depiction of exposed breasts and an accentuated pubic triangle underscores the emphasis on female fertility.

Flat-headed figurines commonly display a curled lock of hair on either side of the head, rendered in black paint or in relief. Together with the prominent, bovine-like ears, these features recall the well-known iconography of the Egyptian goddess Hathor. In Egypt and the Levant, Hathor was closely associated with fertility and copper and was the protectress of craftsmen and miners. Drawing on these parallels, scholars have recently suggested that Flat-headed figurines may represent the depiction of a local Cypriot interpretation of Hathor, adapted to the island's cultural context. In this reading, the figurines may symbolise fertility and prosperity liked to the industry of copper, which was the lifeblood of the Cypriot economy in the Late Bronze Age.

Flat-headed female figurine
Enkomi (Tomb 19), ENK. T.19/10 (SCE)
14th-12th century BC
Terracotta, paint
Department of Antiquities, Cyprus
© Department of Antiquities, Cyprus.

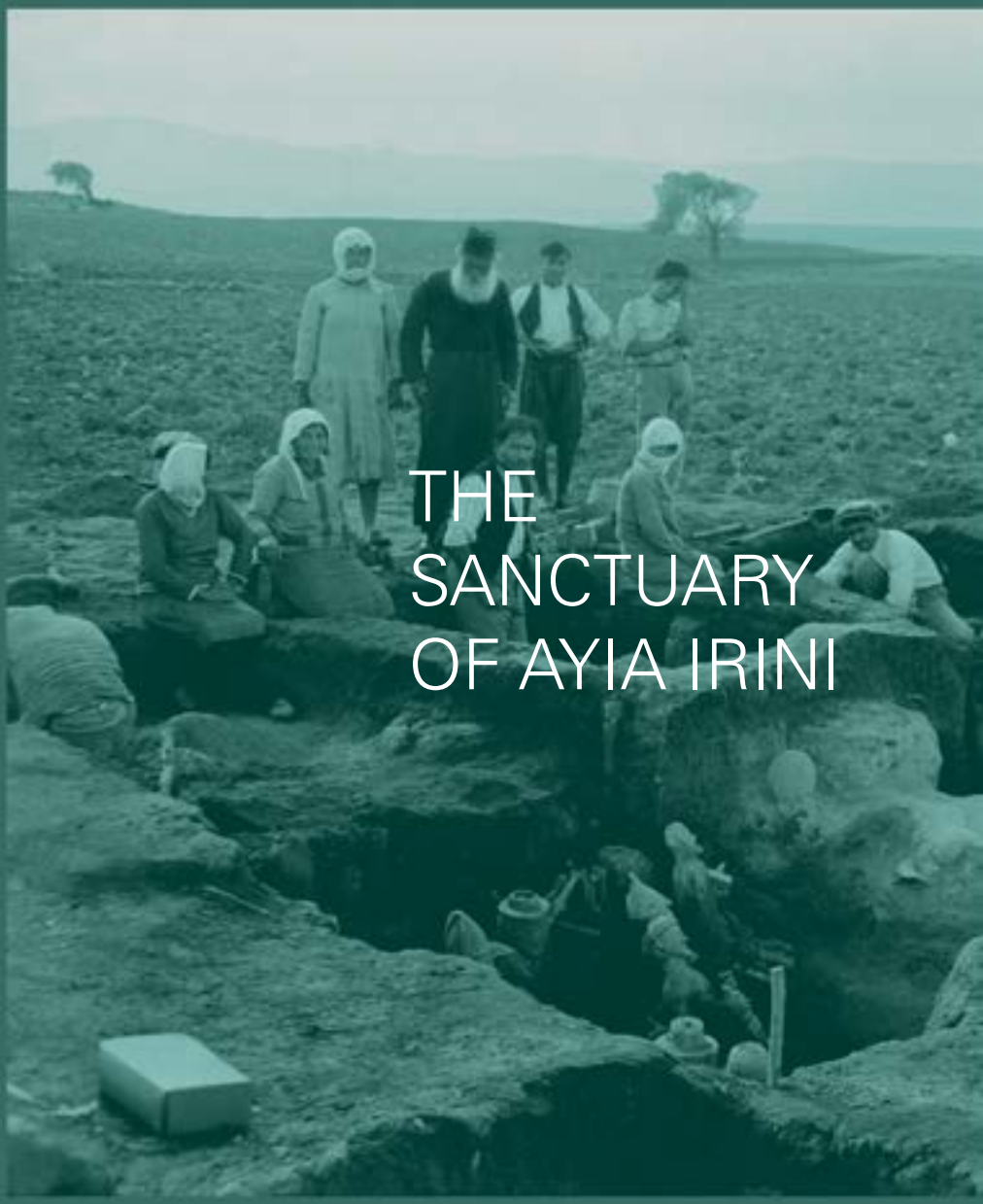
George Papasavvas
University of Cyprus

BRONZE EAR OF A STATUE

This ear was part of an assemblage of bronze objects and scrap metal destined for recycling in Antiquity. Originally, it belonged to a statue made of separate parts (head, arms, torso, etc), and different materials (metal, clay, stone, or wood) attached to each other with dowels, as it was not uncommon in the Late Bronze Age Eastern Mediterranean. The ear bears several perforations, which presumably would have held earrings, now lost, as shown by some terracotta figurines dating to the same period. The shape of the ear matches exactly that of these figurines, showing standing, nude women. Its size shows that it belonged to a larger than life-size statue of such a female figure, as shown in the drawing. The high quality of this cast ear shows that Cypriot smiths had the ability to produce such exceptional works of art.

Reconstruction of a standing female figure based on Cypriot terracotta, showing the bronze ear in place. © Photograph, Department of Antiquities, Cyprus; Illustration by I. Katsouri, University of Cyprus.

***Bronze ear from a compsite statue**
Mathiatis Hoard, VII-17.7
1400-1200 BC
Cyprus Museum, Nicosia
© Department of Antiquities, Cyprus.



THE SANCTUARY OF AYIA IRINI

AYIA IRINI SANCTUARY AND TERRACOTTAS

Giorgos Bourogiannis
Open University of Cyprus

The sanctuary of Ayia Irini is one of the most significant cultic sites of ancient Cyprus. Situated in an agricultural area near the island's north-west coast, Ayia Irini was excavated during the fall of 1929 by Erik Sjöqvist, a member of the 1927-1931 Swedish Cyprus Expedition. The sanctuary features seven periods of habitation, dated from Late Cypriot III to Cypro-Archaic II middle, c. 1200-500 BC in absolute terms, with a brief revival in the 1st century BC. The latter followed after a long idle period of almost four centuries. The most prolific phase of the sanctuary, Periods 4-6, dates to c. 700-500 BC. This time frame coincides with the consolidation of the political landscape of Iron Age Cyprus.

There are many reasons why Ayia Irini features prominently in the cultic landscape of ancient Cyprus. This iconic shrine is celebrated for its unprecedented votive corpus of c. 2,000

The Ayia Irini sanctuary from the southeast. © Medelhavsmuseet, CC0 1.0 Universal, via Wikimedia Commons.

terracotta statues and statuettes, stored today at the Cyprus Museum in Nicosia and the Medelhavsmuseet in Stockholm. They were found *in situ*, albeit in fragmentary state, facing the limestone altar and iconic cultic object, carefully positioned in a semicircular arrangement. Even though terracotta statuettes of bulls, a sacred animal to ancient Cypriots, feature prominently, especially during the earlier phases of the sanctuary, votive iconography at Ayia Irini includes mythical figures, such as centaurs and sphinxes, music and dancing scenes, quadrigas with armed warriors and, primarily, male votaries standing in strictly frontal positions, often wearing conical helmets and occasionally carrying pieces of armor. Female figures also occur but their presence is minimal in comparison to the male ones.

Swedish Cyprus Expedition, 1930, Mersinaki. From left to right: John Lindros, Alfred Westholm, Erik Sjöqvist and Einar Gjerstad. © Medelhavsmuseet, CC0 1.0 Universal, via Wikimedia Commons.

Villagers from Ayia Irini, the village next to the sanctuary, excavating for the Swedish Cyprus Expedition in 1929. © Medelhavsmuseet, CC0 1.0 Universal, via Wikimedia Commons.

Clusters of terracotta statues and statuettes arranged in a semicircle in front of the altar. © Medelhavsmuseet, CC0 1.0 Universal, via Wikimedia Commons.

Clusters of terracotta statues and statuettes arranged in a semicircle in front of the altar. © Medelhavsmuseet, CC0 1.0 Universal, via Wikimedia Commons.

Terracotta models of quadrigas as found in the sanctuary of Ayia Irini. © Medelhavsmuseet, CC0 1.0 Universal, via Wikimedia Commons.

Villagers from Ayia Irini, the village next to the sanctuary, excavating for the Swedish Cyprus Expedition (1927-1931). © Medelhavsmuseet, CC0 1.0 Universal, via Wikimedia Commons.

The size of the votive terracotta sculpture of Ayia Irini ranges from a few centimeters to life-size, creating an awe-inspiring effect to the visitor still today. The whole corpus seems to be supervised by a large-size terracotta statue of a bearded mature male, wearing a long tunic and a turban-like headdress. The latter, according to Herodotus, was worn by the kings of Cyprus.

Notably, the predominantly male anthropomorphic votive imagery of Ayia Irini became more common from c. 700 BC onwards. This iconographic change must relate to the significant political evolution that took place on Cyprus, during the consolidation of the island's main political structure, the city-kingdoms. The austere-looking male votaries of Ayia Irini, facing the shrine's most sacred objects (altar and cultic stone), seem to communicate a message that is, in essence, political. That of a hierarchical, stratified society of mature and young men, able to carry weapons and protect, if necessary, the territory and political entity with which the sanctuary was affiliated. The latter is supported also by the shrine's seemingly remote location, at the frontier between two city-kingdoms, Soloi and Lapithos, with Ayia Irini possibly marking the territory of the former.

The deity worshipped at Ayia Irini remains epigraphically elusive. Hence it can be approached through the site's votive offerings and through comparisons with other, epigraphically identified Cypriot sanctuaries, that feature similar votive iconographies. The primary deity of Ayia Irini is usually perceived, initially as a deity of fertility, nature and pastoralism, reflected by the common offering of bull statuettes.

Terracotta statues and statuettes from Ayia Irini as exhibited in the Cyprus Museum, Nicosia. © Department of Antiquities, Cyprus.

Terracotta statues and statuettes from Ayia Irini as exhibited in the Medelhavsmuseet, Stockholm. © StarTrekker, CC0 1.0 Universal, via Wikimedia Commons.

This seems to have evolved into an apotropaic god, for which centaurs were considered appropriate offerings, and ultimately into a male deity of civic and political life, a god of social order, a protector of male adolescents at the edge of adulthood, but who could also become menacing, protector of people, resources and territories. When placed within this composite religious, social and political context, Ayia Irini becomes an exceptional paradigm in the study of ancient Cyprus as a whole, that still deserves our full attention today.

Giorgos Bourogiannis
Open University of Cyprus

CLAY WARRIORS AND PRIESTS FROM THE AYIA IRINI SANCTUARY

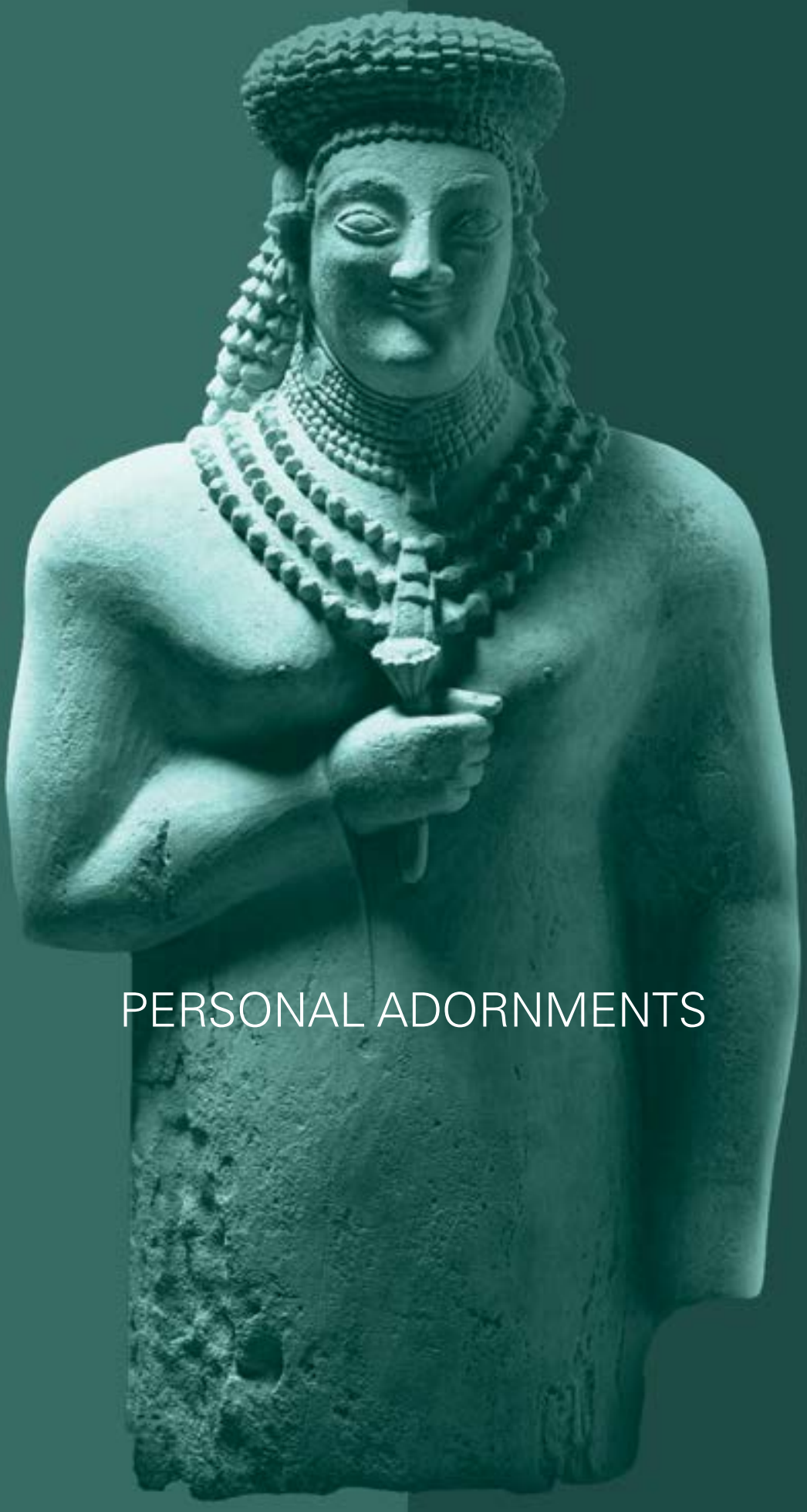
The sanctuary of Ayia Irini, one of the most significant cultic sites of ancient Cyprus, is situated in an agricultural area near the island's north-west coast. It was excavated in the fall of 1929 by the Swedish Cyprus Expedition. Its main habitation dates approximately between 1200 and 500 BC, spanning the final part of the Late Cypriot, the Cypro-Geometric and Cypro-Archaic periods. The sanctuary is celebrated for its almost 2,000 terracotta statues and statuettes, mostly of male iconography, found in situ facing the altar and the aniconic cultic object. These include bulls, mythical figures such as centaurs and sphinxes and, primarily, standing male votaries, occasionally carrying their weapons. Ayia Irini was abandoned around 500 BC. The site remained idle for centuries, before experiencing a brief revival in the 1st century BC.

****A.I. 1741:** Despite its modest size, this terracotta statuette is a fine example of a male votary from Ayia Irini. It portrays a young but possibly bearded man, wearing a chiton, fringed mantle and a modelled soft helmet with upturned cheek-pieces. His right arm is stretched along his body but his left arm is bent, with the clutched hand once holding a now missing object, perhaps a spear. The austere frontal position, the helmet and the possibility of him carrying a weapon outline a seemingly military iconography. The statuette offers a glimpse of a male presenting himself to the divinity, while subtly expressing his ability to carry weapons. Such iconography fits well the socio-political setting of Cyprus at the time of consolidation of Cypriot city-kingdoms.*
H. 38.6cm; ca. 650-560 BC

© Department of Antiquities, Cyprus.

***A.I.1796:** This terracotta statuette portrays a mature bearded male, perhaps a dignitary or priest, characterised by his turban-like headdress that differentiates him from most other male statuettes. Dressed in long chiton and mantle, his strictly frontal position and reserved facial expression are indicative of the hierarchical, well-orchestrated arrangement of Ayia Irini's terracotta corpus, and of the severe iconography of most male votive offerings. His role may have been that of supervising parts of the religious ritual.*
H. 40cm; ca. 650-560 BC

Four men go to war: **Click on this link** to hear two terracotta statues from the sanctuary of Agia Irini "sing" the Cypriot traditional song *Four and Four*, performed by the choir Amalgamation. These statuettes were given, together with hundreds of others as votive offerings to a sanctuary of a male god, associated with war, perhaps Apollo. The song tells the story of Cypriot men departing for war to meet their fate.



PERSONAL ADORNMENTS

Sophocles Hadjisavvas
Department of Antiquities, Cyprus

KITION JEWELLERY

In December 1999, an intact built tomb (M.LA 1742), known as the "Lefkaritis Tomb", was discovered in Larnaca during construction. It contained 34 objects, mostly gold jewellery, and three sacrificed horses, indicating an elite burial. The tomb's architecture and use of gypsum link it to Phoenician influence. Dated to 750-700 BC, it features vaulted chambers and parallels finds from the Phoenician period necropolis of Kition.

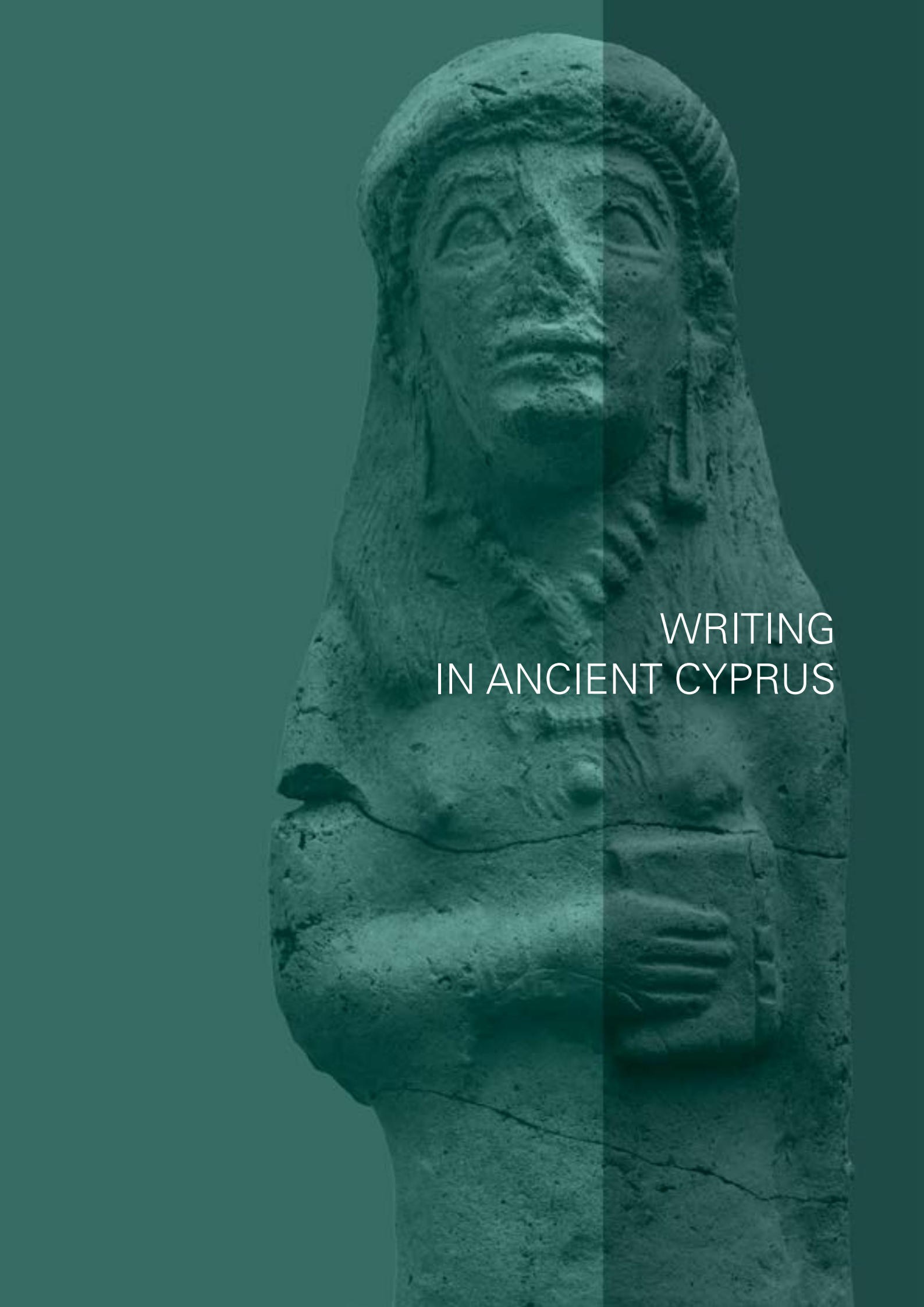
MLA 1742/19 (Inner Chamber): *Gold chain bracelet with a bezel holding a kaolinised feldspar scarab. The scarab is pierced lengthwise to allow a thick gold wire to pass through and facilitate attachment to the gold case. The wire ends in two clips just outside the case, connecting to the chain. The cylindrical chain is made of twisted thin wire. The scarab features the royal cartouche of Amenhotep III, known as "the Great" and described as "protected by [the god] Re." Average diameter of chain: 9cm.*

MLA1742/20 (Inner Chamber): *Gold bow fibula with applied rosettes at the top and sides. The spaces between the leaves of each rosette are decorated with small semiprecious stones of various colours, including amethyst, chert and kaolinised feldspar. Three small chains, each 2.8cm long, are suspended from a loop at the top of the bow, with each chain featuring a small hoop attaching three elongated bell-shaped pendants with vertically embossed linear decoration. All nine pendants are identical, resembling the flower of the Indian lotus. Beneath the rosette, there is an inscribed, as yet unidentified, double symbol. The basic design of the fibula is quite simple and can be classified as "West Asiatic and derivative forms," according to Judy Birmingham's typology. Length of cord: 6cm; Length of bow: 3.7cm; Diameter of rosettes: 12mm.*

Gold necklace from the sanctuary of Arsos
Arsos, J 100
6th century BC
© Department of Antiquities, Cyprus.

Glimmering gold: **Click on this link** to reveal on your phone the dazzling set of jewellery worn by a Cypriot woman in the 6th century BC in a hypothetical reconstruction. Similar adornments in gold appear on hundreds of statues of Cypriot women; some have been found as grave goods in tombs or as votive offerings to deities in sanctuaries.

Dame de Trikomo N III 3497
Trikomo, Cyprus
Limestone
600-550 BC
H. 97,5 cm ; W. 47 cm ; T. 24 cm
Musée du Louvre, Département des Antiquités orientales
Acquired from Georges and Tiburce Colonna-Ceccaldi, 1870
© 2001 GrandPalaisRmn (Musée du Louvre) / Franck Raux.



WRITING IN ANCIENT CYPRUS

SCRIPTS AND LANGUAGES IN **ANCIENT CYPRUS**

Philippa M. Steele
University of Cambridge

Terracotta tablet with long Cypro-Minoan inscription from Enkomi (ENK 1687). © Department of Antiquities, Cyprus.

Writing first came to be used on Cyprus in the Late Bronze Age, c.1500 BC, in a period of economic growth and increasing contact with other areas around the Mediterranean. The Cypro-Minoan script was adapted from Linear A, which is also undeciphered and was used in Crete and some of the Greek islands. Even though we do not understand what the Cypro-Minoan inscriptions say, they provide valuable evidence of literacy and appear to represent a range of functions, from economic documents to religious dedications and marks of ownership. Despite possible inspiration from writing practices elsewhere, such as the nearby Levant and Mesopotamia, the inscription types of this period are innovative and distinctively Cypriot.

Around 1,000 BC, the first surviving evidence for the use of the Greek language on Cyprus is found on a bronze spit marked "of Opheltas", found in a Paphian tomb. Speakers of the Cypriot Greek dialect went on to use the Cypriot Syllabic script (a continuation of Cypro-Minoan) for hundreds of years, throughout most of the 1st millennium BC, making Cyprus the only place where Greek was not written in the widely used Mediterranean alphabet. At the same time there are some inscriptions written in the syllabic script that we do not understand well, in one or more indigenous languages of the island which we now call Eteocypriot. Speakers of the Levantine language Phoenician had also settled on Cyprus by the 9th century BC, and wrote in their own alphabetic script.

From the 7th century BC we find royal inscriptions in Cypriot Greek, and the Eteocypriot text on the monumental Great Vase of Amathous dates to around the same time. Phoenician inscriptions increase in number around the same time. By the Classical period, we know that several Cypriot city kingdoms including Paphos, Kourion and Salamis issued their official inscriptions in syllabic Greek, while Eteocypriot was used at Amathous and Phoenician at Kition and eventually Idalion and Tamassos. Contact between speakers of each language is well established both in the wide, varied distribution of inscriptions and in the few surviving bilingual texts in either Greek and Phoenician or Greek and Eteocypriot. Indeed it was a bilingual inscription in Greek and Phoenician that allowed the decipherment of the syllabic script in the 19th century. The multilingualism of the island was matched by its hybrid forms of material culture that drew on a range of influences to create a distinctive Cypriot style.

Terracotta tablet with long Cypro-Minoan inscription from Enkomi (F.E.20.01+1193). © Department of Antiquities, Cyprus.

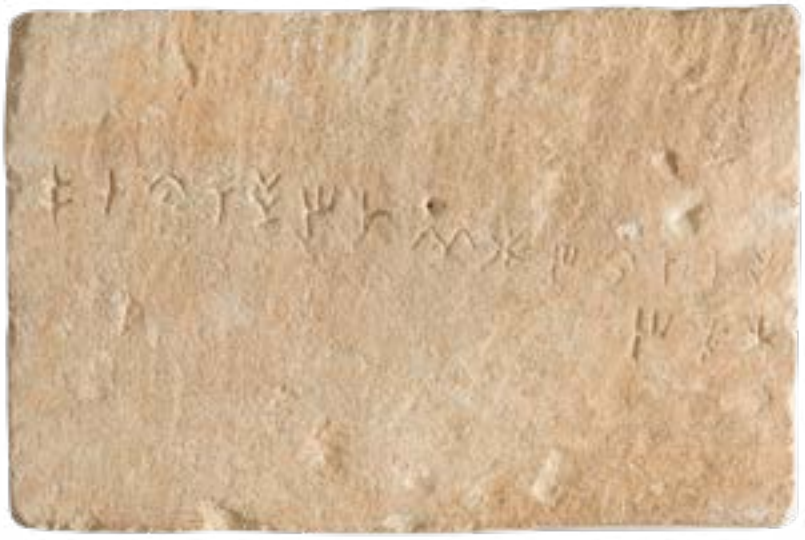
Miniature ingot with Cypro-Minoan inscription from Enkomi (ENK53-F.E.-2) © Department of Antiquities, Cyprus.

Cypriot literacy appears to have been quite widespread during the 1st millennium BC. Writing is found in a wide range of epigraphic genres, from royal inscriptions, economic records and public religious dedications to more private objects, including funerary monuments and pieces of jewellery, as well as graffiti. We have some evidence for female writers as well as male, and the wide variety of inscriptions suggests that it was not only members of the elite who could write. A considerable number of Cypriot inscriptions have been found outside the island, especially in Egypt where we find Cypriot Syllabic texts scratched on several monuments including the Great Pyramid of Khufu.

The most striking feature of Cypriot Syllabic writing is its distinctiveness, which allowed it to become an important symbol of Cypriot identity. So strong was this link that Cypriot Greek speakers had very little interest in using the Greek alphabet until the late 5th and 4th centuries BC, when the island began to be drawn into wider Mediterranean politics during and after the Persian Wars. This seems to have been a period of uncertainty as the ruling dynasties of Cypriot city kingdoms, whichever linguistic group they belonged to, had to make choices about how they acted and represented themselves in the wider world. But it was not until the end of the 4th century that things changed drastically: after the death of Alexander the Great, Cyprus was one of the prizes fought over by his generals, and eventually, after some bloodshed, Ptolemy emerged as the new ruler of the whole island.

Set of bronze obeloi (spits) from the cemetery of Kouklia-Skales (Tomb 49). © Department of Antiquities, Cyprus.

Detail of bronze obelos (spit) from Kouklia-Skales Tomb 49, showing inscription reading "of Opheltas". © Department of Antiquities, Cyprus.



Tomb-stone from Marion, inscribed in the Cypro-Syllabic script, Greek language (4th century BC) (INS.S.35). © Department of Antiquities, Cyprus

In the new era of political unification, the formerly proudly multilingual situation of Cyprus was to suffer. Alphabetic Greek, in the Koine variety spoken around the Mediterranean, became the language of official inscriptions. Eteocypriot is not attested after the 4th century, and the last Cypriot Phoenician inscriptions date to the 3rd century. A few late attestations of the Cypriot Greek dialect, still written in the syllabic script, tell us that it continued for a while in reduced domains of usage, primarily in religious practice, until at least the 2nd century BC. The distinctive Cypriot Syllabic writing system did not survive, but it has become an object of interest in scholarship today and is still sometimes used as an emblem of Cypriot identity.

Marble stone with inscriptions in the Greek alphabet and the Phoenician alphabet from Dromolaxia. Larnaca District Archaeological Museum © Department of Antiquities, Cyprus.

Limestone block from Amathous, inscribed in the Cypro-Syllabic script, Eteocypriot language (5th-4th century BC). © Gts-tg, CC BY-SA 4.0 International, via Wikimedia Commons.

Marble stone with Phoenician inscription, mentioning kings of Kition (5th century BC) (INS.PH.7). © Department of Antiquities, Cyprus.

George Papasavvas
University of Cyprus

WRITING IN ANTIQUITY: STYLI

Different implements were used to write in ancient times, in accordance with the material of the writing surface or the economic means of the holders. The commonest writing tool was the stylus, that is a thin, short shaft with a rounded section for a better grip, with a pointed end for writing (that is, incising) on a soft matrix, like wax or damp clay; the other end accommodated a flattened, chisel-shaped end for smoothening the soft surface, thereby erasing signs, lines or entire texts and preparing the surface for new ones. Styli were made in various materials, like metal, mostly bronze and iron, but also gold and silver, ivory, bone and wood. They were held firmly at the lower point with the tips of thumb, index and middle finger, in the same way that we hold a pencil today. Because of their convenient shape and size, and because they did not need any ink, styli could be easily carried around at any time, tucked in belts or folds of garments of their owners. No wonder that, according to the Roman writer Suetonius, Julius Caesar fighting for his life stabbed the arm of one of his assassins with his stylus!

Cyprus has delivered some of the earliest bronze styli in the Mediterranean and the Near East, dating back to the Late Bronze Age (1650-1100 BC) and down to the Roman times (until the early 1st millennium AD), offering an invaluable testimony to widespread literacy on the island, since the actual carriers of the inscriptions, often made in perishable material, like wood or unfired clay, have long vanished.

Two bronze styli
Enkomi, ENK. 1955/98
Kalavassos-Ayios Dhimitrios, K-AD 457
13th century BC
Length: 15.1-17.7 cm
Cyprus Museum, Nicosia and Archaeological Museum of the Larnaka District

George Papasavvas
University of Cyprus

WRITING IN ANTIQUITY: WOODEN WAX TABLETS

Wooden writing tablets were the most popular writing media in antiquity. They first appeared in the Near East and the Eastern Mediterranean in the 3rd millennium BC and remained in fashion throughout medieval times and up until the 19th century AD not only in the East but also in Western Europe – when pencils changed everything in our writing habits. Their most elaborate version was the wax tablet, also called deltos. Deltoi were composed of orthogonal wooden boards of a convenient size, furnished with a slightly recessed surface and a thin, raised frame, which accommodated a layer of beeswax. Wax, as a soft and durable material, coloured with minerals to make the incised signs more distinct, offered a plain, smooth surface for scoring letters, and at the same time made correction and erasure very easy. This was accomplished with writing tools called styli. When the wax layer became too thin by repeated erasures, a new one was poured in. In several cases, the hollowed-out areas of the tablets carried transecting grooves to help the wax adhere to the surface. When the wax layer was thin or the pressure exerted in writing too strong, the stylus would scratch the surface underneath. Some long before erased texts can thus still be read.

Digital reconstruction of a wooden, wax tablet for writing (diptych).
© I. Katsouri, University of Cyprus.

Two terracotta statuettes of women holding a closed diptych
Arsos, C.609 and C.698
7th century BC
Cyprus Museum, Nicosia
© Department of Antiquities, Cyprus.

Wax tablets could be composed of one or more boards in combination, tied or hinged together, and called accordingly diptychs, triptychs or polyptychs. The attested number of boards varies from one to twelve (i.e., twenty "pages" in total). In this form, deltoi are the precursors of modern books. Diptychs, the commonest type of writing tablets, were far more convenient than a single tablet, as they could contain longer texts, and, when folded, were thicker but not much bigger. Due to their perishable material, very few have survived in the archaeological record, mainly in the sands of Egypt or in the volcanic ashes of Pompei.

Inscribed diptychs, when folded and sealed, offered protection against curious or unauthorised eyes. Such a diptych with a hinging mechanism made of successive cylindrical hinges is shown in the hands of several terracotta statuettes from Cypriot and Aegean sanctuaries. Actual, wooden diptychs may have been dedicated to the gods, as they offered an ideal medium for inscribing a prayer in anticipation of divine benefaction or a thanking notion for a favour already granted and for establishing a private, intimate relationship between mortals and gods.

Wooden, wax tablet for writing with ivory hinges from the Uluburun shipwreck (14th century BC). © Institute of Nautical Archaeology / Uluburun Project.

THE **IDALION** ARCHIVE

José Ángel Zamora López
Spanish National Research Council

View of the archaeological site of Idalion. © Department of Antiquities, Cyprus.

Idalion was the capital of a powerful kingdom in east-central Cyprus during the 1st millennium BC, strategically located in a fertile valley near the copper-rich Troodos Mountains.

The city is mentioned in Assyrian records, indicating its early political significance. Over time, it came under Babylonian, and then Persian control. Around 450 BC, it was conquered by the Phoenician kingdom of Kition. Later, it was contested by the successors of Alexander the Great, eventually falling – along with the rest of Cyprus unauthorised under the rule of the Lagids.

Idalion featured two acropoleis, a lower city and surrounding necropoleis. Excavations conducted between 1991 and 2012 at the acropolis known as Ampileri by the Department of Antiquities of Cyprus, under the direction of Dr. Maria Hadjicosti,

led to the discovery of numerous *ostraca* (fragments of stone or pottery used as writing surfaces), mostly in Phoenician script and language. More than seven hundred documents were recovered, the remnants of a Phoenician archive dated roughly from the mid-5th century BC to the end of the 4th century BC. The texts were unevenly distributed across a wide area of a fortified palace complex, which included storage rooms, oil presses, metalworking facilities and military quarters – indicating a sophisticated and centralised administrative structure.

Beyond the difficulties posed by the condition of the pieces – many of which were reused for rewriting or as construction material – they present paleographic challenges due to the cursive ink script, which features typical ambiguities and even unusual or unattested letter forms. The texts also include units, abbreviations, numerals and symbols not previously documented. Lexical issues arise as well, since even clearly legible words are often unattested in other Phoenician inscriptions. Moreover, during the period covered by the archive, the population of Idalion was likely mixed, with a predominance of non-Phoenician inhabitants. As a result, many words – particularly personal names and toponyms – may be Phoenician transcriptions of non-Semitic names. Additionally, the texts often employ elliptical syntax, making interpretation difficult due to the lack of contextual information that made them understandable at the time they were written.

Despite these challenges, many of the texts can be interpreted or at least classified. They are primarily administrative, featuring numerical data, names, places and references to goods – especially oil – likely corresponding to inventories, receipts, deliveries, or consumption records. The presence of accounting formulas and standardised expressions suggests a highly organised system of resource management.

Many inscriptions include personal names, indicating transactions involving specific individuals. These names include well-known Phoenician anthroponyms, names specific to Cyprus and Greek names rendered in Phoenician script. In some cases, the same individuals appear in multiple documents, confirming their active roles in the administrative system. Some historical figures can also be identified: the name Milkyaton – a known king of Kition and Idalion – appears in several texts; the Diadochi Ptolemy and Antigonus (along with his son Demetrius) are also mentioned in dating formulas.

Ostracon with Phoenician inscription from the Idalion archive (ID.A. 2006-1623). © Department of Antiquities, Cyprus.

At least one document is a letter. It includes blessings from Ba'al of Kition and "all the gods of Kition". Other administrative texts mention Resheph – a deity with a known sanctuary in Idalion – and a *marzeah* – a religious feast and association – linked to Ashtart and Melqart, suggesting that religious institutions were economically active but controlled by the central administration.

The archive reflects a dynamic system. Some ostraca appear to be labels or archive management documents. Others seem to be periodic records, while some document specific events or transactions. There is evidence of revision and cancellation. Large tablets with long lists or numerical data may represent summaries or tallies.

Thus, the Phoenician archive of Idalion is a groundbreaking discovery that sheds light on the everyday life of a sophisticated and multicultural city of the ancient Mediterranean world.

Ostracon with Phoenician inscription from the Idalion archive. © פעמי-עליון CC BY-SA 4.0 International, via Wikimedia Commons.

José Ángel Zamora López
Spanish National Research Council

OSTRACON WITH PHOENICIAN ADMINISTRATIVE TEXT FROM IDALION

Fragment of a flat stone, of a type very common in the Idalion area, used as a writing surface (i.e., as an ostracon). It bears a nearly complete ink-written text in the Phoenician script and language: an administrative note in two lines. The first line records quantities of (olive) oil – measured in "quarters" – stored in a specific container or location; the second notes that a certain amount – an "eighth" – was missing.

Ostracon with inscription
Idalion-Ampileri, ID.A1993/214. 4th century BC
Limestone, ink
Department of Antiquities, Cyprus

ANCIENT MEDICINE

MEDICINE
IN ANCIENT CYPRUS

Demetrios Michaelides
University of Cyprus

Votive relief of Asclepios, placing his hands on a reclining, sick woman; behind him stands Hygeia (around 350 BC). © Ephorate of Antiquities of Piraeus and Islands-Archaeological Museum of Piraeus, Hellenic Ministry of Culture.

Marble votive relief for the cure of a bad leg, a thanking gift with a dedication to Asclepios and his daughter Hygieia (2nd century AD). © The Trustees of the British Museum. Shared under a CC BY-NC-SA 4.0 licence.

In Antiquity, Cyprus was renowned as a source of raw materials used in the preparation of medicaments. Several ancient authors – most notably Dioscorides and Galen – mention the island's rich variety of medicinal plants and minerals, as well as their healing properties. It was the abundance of these minerals and the island's long-standing medicinal tradition that prompted Galen to visit Cyprus in 161/162 AD, when he studied and collected minerals from the mines of Soloi.

Texts and inscriptions mention at least 20 physicians who either originated from or practiced on the island, while a wealth of archaeological discoveries further highlight the significant role of medicine in Cypriot society. These include inscriptions relating to the cult of Asclepios, and statues of the god and his daughter Hygeia, as well as other healing deities, such as the Phoenician Eshmun; ex-votos reflecting the diseases that

Marble votive relief from Athens, with a votary dedicating a model of his leg, in anticipation of, or thanking for a cure (late 4th century BC). Hellenic National Archaeological Museum, Athens, Photographic Archive, photographer: Irini Miari © Hellenic Ministry of Culture / Hellenic Organisation of Cultural Resources Development (H.O.C.RE.D.).

afflicted the population; surgical instruments; medical amulets; and more.

Several of these are of exceptional significance, placing Cyprus in a prominent position within the broader history of medicine. One such is the bronze Tablet of Idalion (now in the Cabinet des Médailles, Paris) written in the Cypriot syllabary in the later 5th century BC. It records an agreement between, on one side, the king of Idalion, Stasikypros, and the *Demos*, and, on the other, the doctor Onasilos, during the Persian siege of the city. Onasilos – likely a professional doctor – and his brothers were to treat the wounded free of charge. In return, they would receive silver or land, and privileges that would pass to their descendants. Aside from the wealth of diverse information it provides, the inscription is of the utmost importance as it is an early form of state-supported medical care during wartime.

Two votive stone plaques depicting ailing parts of the human body, a pair of eyes and a pair of female breasts, expressing a wish for their cure; from a Cypriot sanctuary at Athienou-Golgoi (kept in the Louvre Museum; 1st century AD). © Musée du Louvre.

Unlike Onasilos, about whom nothing further is known, another physician, Apollonios of Kition (modern Larnaca), figures prominently in both ancient and later medical traditions. Active in the 1st century BC, Apollonios was a surgeon and a prolific writer. He studied with Zopirus in Alexandria and was a follower of the Empiric School of medicine. Of his many books only his commentary on Hippocrates' "On joints" survives. In the introduction, Apollonios states that it was dedicated to king Ptolemy of Cyprus (80-58 BC), who actually commissioned it. He also states that he illustrates his methods of reduction of dislocations so that they would be understood by athletes and those who wanted to practice them. A copy of his text is preserved in a collection of manuscripts of the c. 900 AD Byzantine doctor Nicetas – now in the Laurentian Library, Florence – and contains 30 miniatures based on the original illustrations. As well as being an early commentary

The bronze "Tablet of Idalion" records a contract between the king and the city of Idalion, one of the Cypriot city-kingdoms, and the doctor Onasilos, who was commissioned to treat for free the wounded soldiers during a war. It is written in the Greek language but in the Cypriot syllabary (early 5th century BC). © Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Cabinet des Mèdailles, inv. Bronzes 2297.

Bronze surgical tools and bleeding cup from the so-called Surgeon's Tomb at Nea Paphos (late 2nd century AD). © Department of Antiquities, Cyprus.

Clay hot-water bottles shaped to fit onto the human body, filled with a warm liquid (olive oil?) and applied to the aching parts in order to cause hyperaemia and relieve pain; from Nea Paphos (1st century BC / 1st century AD). © Department of Antiquities, Cyprus.

Illustrations of Byzantine manuscript of about 900 AD, itself a copy of the book of the famous Cypriot doctor Apollonios of Kition (1st century BC), demonstrating the different methods employed for the reduction of dislocated joints (in these two images, reduction of the spine and of the shoulder); this is one of the oldest surviving commentaries on the work of Hippocrates and one of the first illustrated medical textbooks. © Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Florence.

on Hippocrates, this is the earliest surviving example of an illustrated medical text. The fame of both author and book endured through Antiquity and the Middle Ages and at least into the Renaissance. Notably, Apollonios' main reduction methods remain the same to this day.

Surgical instruments from the Roman period are not especially uncommon. However, a discovery from Nea Paphos (the Hellenistic and Roman capital of Cyprus), stands out for the richness and variety of its contents. Found in the tomb of a surgeon buried towards the late 2nd or early 3rd century AD, the *instrumentarium* includes 25 identifiable surgical instruments, as well as cylindrical bronze containers filled with powders and pills, all by-products of copper – recalling the reason for Galen's visit to the island just before this period.

The instruments, made of bronze or iron or a combination of both, include scalpels, probes, bone levers, a bleeding cup, shears, as well as a very rare double blunt hook, and a nearly unique *pyoulkos*, an instrument mentioned by Galen and

described by Heron of Alexandria. These tools clearly represent a well-equipped "clinic", and contrast with the small portable doctor's toolkit found in the Agora of Nea Paphos.

Nea Paphos has also yielded another quasi-unique discovery: sets of clay hot-water bottles in the shape of different parts of the human body – limbs, ears, thorax, male genitals. These vessels have exceptionally thin walls and, filled with a warm liquid, they were applied to the ailing part of the body in order to relieve pain. Not only do they look like the body part they were intended to treat, but their underside is moulded to fit snugly onto that particular part. While unique to Nea Paphos, one example was discovered in the *Domus del Chirurgo* in Rimini, Italy – destroyed by fire in the mid-3rd century AD, and home to the most important medical collection from the Roman world. Amongst the circa 150 instruments found there, several closely resemble those of the Paphian surgeon. This, along with the presence of the hot-water bottle, shows that medical care in Cyprus was in line with practices across the wider Roman world and comparable to centres closer to the capital.

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MARBLE STATUE OF ASCLEPIOS

The god of healing and medicine is depicted as a mature, bearded man draped in a himation that leaves his chest exposed. On his right, a snake (symbol of healing and regeneration) coils on his long staff (the Rod of Asclepios) towards an egg (symbol of life and fertility) that he holds in his extended right hand. His left arm is hidden beneath the garment.

***Marble statue of Asclepios**
Nea Paphos, Villa of Theseus, P.E. 1/67
2nd century AD
Department of Antiquities, Cyprus
H. 48 cm
© Department of Antiquities, Cyprus.

Demetrios Michaelides
University of Cyprus

CLAY HOT-WATER BOTTLE FOR THE RIGHT HAND

One of several such vessels made for different parts of the human body, found exclusively in Nea Paphos. Each depicts realistically the part of the body it was intended to treat, while the underside is moulded so as to fit snugly against it. It is believed that, filled with a warm liquid (water/olive oil?), they were applied to the ailing part to relieve pain.

Clay hot water bottle in the form of a hand
Paphos, M.P. 1941
1st century BC-1st century AD
Ceramic
Department of Antiquities, Cyprus

Demetrios Michaelides
University of Cyprus

MODERN EX-VOTOS

Ancient Cypriot ex-votos are made of limestone or clay, while modern ones are of metal (usually silver) or beeswax. Ancient examples are sculpted or consist of a terracotta plaque with painted anatomical details. Modern wax examples often resemble the ancient ones, while metal versions are small plaques with embossed features. These are dedicated as pleas to a saint (a god in Antiquity) for the healing of an organ or limb – or in thanks for a cure.

Modern Ex-votos dedicated in churches in Cyprus
Metal

MEDICAL TOOLS FROM PAPHOS

Ewdoksia Papuci-Władyka
Jagiellonian University

In 2016, a set of medical tools was found in the East Portico of the Paphos Agora Room 16. It contained five bronze tools and one iron tool. A bronze spoon was probably used for preparing medicines and applying them to wounds. It may also have served as a spatula for examining the upper respiratory tract. A bronze ear probe or *ligula* was possibly used to clean hard-to-reach spots, such as the inner part of an ear, and to apply medicine there, as well as for other treatment. The bronze tweezers/forceps have on their arms a two-ringed clamp protecting the tool from deformation and blocking it during surgical interventions. Of the two bone levers, one was made from iron and one from bronze. A bronze hook was probably used to immobilise and separate the edges of wounds, sections of tissue and blood vessels during surgery, or to lift the latter, as well as for other activities.

The set was complemented by a small stone palette, which had been used both for preparing medicines and for sharpening the blades of the tools. It is also possible that the palette constituted one of the walls of the wooden storage box decorated with bone ornaments, the fragments of which were found nearby together with a bronze lid and hinges.

In the immediate vicinity of the set in the same room and in the adjacent room 15, glass vessels and a set of bronze coins were also unearthed. It seems that all these artefacts were part of the equipment of a surgery that functioned in the East Portico of the Agora in the first quarter of the 2nd century, probably before AD 126, when an earthquake destroyed the entire area.

Surgical tools: spoon, ear probe, tweezers, bone level, hooks
PAP/FR109/2016 + PAP/FR111/2016, PAP/FR110/2016, PAP/FR112/2016, PAP/FR113/2016, PAP/FR115/2016, PAP/FR116/2016
Paphos, ca. 100-125 AD
Bronze, iron.
© Department of Antiquities, Cyprus.

CYPRIOT PAST IN MODERN TIMES

GEORGE **SEFERIS** AND HIS CYPRIOT POEMS

Nasos Vagenas
University of Athens

In 1955 George Seferis published the poetry collection titled… *Cyprus, where it was ordained for me...* – which in 1962 he renamed Log Book III – appending the following note:

"The poems of this collection were given to me in the autumn of '53 when I first travelled to Cyprus. It was the revelation of a world, and it was also the experience of a human drama which, regardless of the expediencies of everyday exchange, measures and judges our humanity. I went back to the island in '54. But even now, as I write in a very old stately home in Varoshia – a home that is becoming a plant – it seems to me that everything had been crystallised around the first raw senses of that belated autumn. The only difference is that I have since become more familiar, more idiomatic. And I'm thinking that if I happened to find so much grace in Cyprus, it is perhaps that this island gave me what it had to give within a context limited enough to keep every sense from dissipating – as in the capitals of the big world – and wide enough to

George Seferis at Saint Hilarion. George Seferis Photograpic Archive / National Bank of Greece Cultural Foundation, ELIA Photographic Archive, George Seferis Photograpic Archive, © Daphne Krinos.

The painter Adamantios Diamantis and George Seferis at Acheiropoietos. George Seferis Photograpic Archive / National Bank of Greece Cultural Foundation, ELIA Photographic Archive, George Seferis Photograpic Archive, © Daphne Krinos.

George Seferis, Lawrence Durrell, Antoinette Diamanti, Maurice Cardiff, his young son and the painter Adamantios Diamantis at Acheiropoietos. George Seferis Photograpic Archive / National Bank of Greece Cultural Foundation, ELIA Photographic Archive, George Seferis Photograpic Archive, © Daphne Krinos

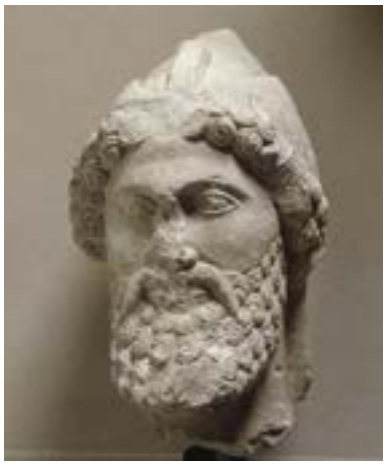
accommodate the miracle. It is odd that someone should say this today: Cyprus is a place where the miracle still works".

But what is the meaning of the poet's specific experience? With the "Cypriot" poems, Seferis certainly experiences a "retrieval of lost time" (the sense that "Cyprus is a place where the miracle still works"). Yet, this does not occur through memory as a momentary "revelatory" fusion of past and present, but as an ongoing rediscovery within a present time that operates according to the terms of the past. For Seferis, the world of Cyprus in the early 1950s is not a mnemonic substitute for his childhood world of Ionia – to which it is (as evidenced by the comparison between his Cypriot photographs and his childhood photographs) very akin, despite the long interval separating the two – the world from which the poet had been permanently "exiled" by a double severance: not only by the natural order of things (the passage of time) but also by historical reality (the Asia Minor Catastrophe). The world of Cyprus is to Seferis the Combray of childhood (the lived experience of which has become a symbol in his poetry) wherein the poet found himself once again as a grown man, not through memory but – as though wondrously – through physical presence.

With the poetic recording of his Cypriot experience, Seferis appears "to retrieve lost time" in the sense the phrase bears in Proust's *À la recherche du temps perdu* (with which Seferis had earlier "engaged" in his poem "Piazza San Nicolò"). Nevertheless, he receives it in a different way, which in fact broadens the experience. Because with this experience the retrieval is accomplished not only on an individual level, as in Proust, but also on a collective one; in the realm of human community, designated by Seferis as "the voice of the homeland", the national community. For Seferis, human experience without a sense of belonging to a homeland is an experience without roots, unanchored. Homeland is the familiar space of the human being within a community, just as one's home is the familiar, personal space of the individual.

Head of statue AM 3453
Cyprus
Limestone
450-425 BC
H. 39 cm ; L. 21 cm ; T. 30 cm
Musée du Louvre, Département des Antiquités orientales
Acquired from Jean Henri M. Hoffmann
© 2009 GrandPalaisRmn (Musée du Louvre) / Franck Raux.

Head of statue AM 2835
Athienou, Cyprus
Limestone
ca. 450 BC
H. 43 cm ; L. 26.5 cm ; T. 30 cm
Musée du Louvre, Département des Antiquités orientales
Acquired from Marquis Charles Jean Melchior de Vogüé (archaeological mission)
© 2001 GrandPalaisRmn Musée du Louvre) / Franck Raux.



Head of statue AM 2946
Malloura, Cyprus
Limestone
450-425 BC
H. 38 cm ; L. 18 cm ; T. 23 cm
Musée du Louvre, Département des Antiquités orientales
Acquired from Marquis Charles Jean Melchior de Vogüé (archaeological mission)
© 2001 GrandPalaisRmn Musée du Louvre) / Franck Raux.

Head of statue AO 22220
Cyprus
Limestone
400-350 BC
H. 30 cm ; L. 20 cm ; T. 20 cm
Musée du Louvre, Département des Antiquités orientales
Donated by Count Henri Louis Marie Martin de Boisgelin
© 2015 Musée du Louvre, Dist. GrandPalaisRmn / Philippe Fuzeau.

Head of statue AO 22213
Cyprus
Limestone
525-475 BC
H. 25,5 cm ; L. 16,5 cm ; T. 16,5 cm
Musée du Louvre, Département des Antiquités orientales
Donated by Count Henri Louis Marie Martin de Boisgelin
© 2001 GrandPalaisRmn (Musée du Louvre) / Franck Raux.

Talking Heads: **Click on this link** to watch five Cypriot stone statues reciting in three languages five of the "Cypriot Poems" by the Greek Nobel laureate poet, George Seferis, on whose life and poetry Cyprus had a strong impact. The poems refer to the ancient sites of Salamis, Enkomi and Kyrenia, as well as to Aphrodite and Helen of Troy. The voice of the poet is heard in Greek in the poems *Helen, In the Kyrenia District* and *In the Goddess' name I summon you.* This is what Seferis wrote for these poems: "The poems of this collection were given to me in the autumn of '53 when I first travelled to Cyprus. [...] It is odd that someone should say this today: Cyprus is a place where the miracle still works".

George Seferis

(English translation: Edmund Keeley and Philip Sherrard, Princeton University Press)

In the Goddess' Name I Summon You

Oil on limbs,
maybe a rancid smell
as on the chapel's
oil-press here,
as on the rough pores
of the unturning stone.

Oil on hair
wreathed in rope
and maybe other scents
unknown to us
poor and rich
and statuettes offering
small breasts with their fingers.

Oil in the sun
the leaves shuddered
when the stranger stopped
and the silence weighed
between the knees.
The coins fell:
"In the goddess' name I summon you..."

Oil on the shoulders
and the flexing waist
legs grass-dappled,
and that wound in the sun
as the bell rang for vespers
as I spoke in the churchyard
with a crippled man.

George Seferis

(English translation: Edmund Keeley and Philip Sherrard, Princeton University Press)

Helen

TEUCER: ... in sea-girt Cyprus, where it was decreed
by Apollo that I should live, giving the city
the name of Salamis in memory of my island home.

HELEN : I never went to Troy; it was a phantom.

SERVANT: What? You mean it was only for a cloud
that we struggled so much?

- EURIPIDES, HELEN

"The nightingales won't let you sleep in Platres."

Shy nightingale, in the breathing of the leaves,
you who bestow the forest's musical coolness
on the sundered bodies, on the souls
of those who know they will not return.
Blind voice, you who grope in the darkness of memory
for footsteps and gestures – I wouldn't dare say kisses –
and the bitter raving of the frenzied slave-woman.

"The nightingales won't let you sleep in Platres."

Platres: where is Platres? And this island: who knows it?
I've lived my life hearing names I've never heard before:
new countries, new idiocies of men
or of the gods;
my fate, which wavers
between the last sword of some Ajax
and another Salamis,
brought me here, to this shore.
The moon
rose from the sea like Aphrodite,
covered the Archer's stars, now moves to find
the heart of Scorpio, and alters everything.
Truth, where's the truth?
I too was an archer in the war;
my fate: that of a man who missed his target.

Lyric nightingale,
on a night like this, by the shore of Proteus,
the Spartan slave-girls heard you and began their lament,
and among them – who would have believed it? – Helen!
She whom we hunted so many years by the banks of the Scamander.
She was there, at the desert's lip; I touched her; she spoke to me:

"It isn't true, it isn't true," she cried.
"I didn't board the blue-bowed ship.
I never went to valiant Troy."

Breasts girded high, the sun in her hair, and that stature
shadows and smiles everywhere,
on shoulders, thighs and knees;
the skin alive, and her eyes
with the large eyelids,
she was there, on the banks of a Delta.
And at Troy?
At Troy, nothing: just a phantom image.
That's how the gods wanted it.
And Paris, Paris lay with a shadow as though it were a solid being;
and for ten whole years we slaughtered ourselves for Helen.

Great suffering had desolated Greece.
So many bodies thrown
into the jaws of the sea, the jaws of the earth
so many souls
fed to the millstones like grain.
And the rivers swelling, blood in their silt,
all for a linen undulation, a filmy cloud,
a butterfly's flicker, a wisp of swan's down,
an empty tunic – all for a Helen.
And my brother?
Nightingale nightingale nightingale,
what is a god? What is not a god? And what is there in between them?

"The nightingales won't let you sleep in Platres."

Tearful bird,
on sea-kissed Cyprus
consecrated to remind me of my country,
I moored alone with this fable,
if it's true that it is a fable,
if it's true that mortals will not again take up
the old deceit of the gods;
if it's true
that in future years some other Teucer,
or some Ajax or Priam or Hecuba,
or someone unknown and nameless who nevertheless saw
a Scamander overflow with corpses,
isn't fated to hear
messengers coming to tell him
that so much suffering, so much life,
went into the abyss
all for an empty tunic, all for a Helen.

George Seferis

(English translation: Edmund Keeley and Philip Sherrard, Princeton University Press)

Salamis in Cyprus

. . . and Salamis,
whose mother-city is now
the cause of our troubles.

- AESCHYLUS, THE PERSIANS

Sometimes the midday sun, sometimes handfuls of light rain
and the beach covered with fragments of ancient jars.
The columns insignificant; only the church of St Epiphanios
revealing – dark, sunken – the might of the golden Empire.

Young bodies, loved and loving, have passed by here;
throbbing breasts, shells rose-pink, feet
fearlessly skimming the water,
and arms open for the coupling of desire.
The Lord upon many waters,
here upon this crossing.

Then I heard footsteps on the stones.
I didn't see any faces; they'd gone by the time I turned.
But the voice, heavy like the tread of oxen,
remained there in the sky's veins, in the sea's roll
over the pebbles, again and again:

"Earth has no handles
for them to shoulder her and carry her off,
nor can they, however thirsty,
sweeten the sea with half a dram of water.
And those bodies,
formed of a clay they know not,
have souls.
They gather tools to change them;

they won't succeed: they'll only unmake them
if souls can be unmade.
Wheat doesn't take long to ripen,
it doesn't take much time
for the yeast of bitterness to rise,
it doesn't take much time
for evil to raise its head,
and the sick mind emptying
doesn't take much time

to fill with madness:
there is an island...“

Friends from the other war,
on this deserted and cloudy beach
I think of you as the day turns –
those who fell fighting and those who fell years after the battle,
those who saw dawn through the mist of death
or, in wild solitude under the stars,
felt upon them the huge dark eyes
of total disaster;
and those again who prayed
when flaming steel sawed the ships:
”Lord, help us to keep in mind
the causes of this slaughter:
greed, dishonesty, selfishness,
the desiccation of love;
Lord, help us to root these out...“

- Now, on this pebbled beach, it’s better to forget;
talking does no good;
who can change the attitude of those with power?
Who can make himself heard?
Each dreams separately without hearing anyone else’s nightmare.

-True. But the messenger moves swiftly,
and however long his journey, he’ll bring
to those who tried to shackle the Hellespont
the terrible news from Salamis.

Voice of the Lord upon the waters.
There is an island.

George Seferis

(English translation: Edmund Keeley and Philip Sherrard, Princeton University Press)

Enkomi

The plain was broad and level; from a distance you could see arms in motion as they dug.
In the sky, the clouds all curves, here and there
a trumpet gold and rose: the sunset.
In the thin grass and the thorns
a light after-shower breeze stirred: it had rained
there on the peaks of the mountains that now took on colour.

And I moved on toward those at work,
women and men digging with picks in trenches.
It was an ancient city; walls, streets and houses
stood out like the petrified muscles of Cyclopes,
the anatomy of spent strength under the eye
of the archaeologist, anaesthetist or surgeon.
Phantoms and fabrics, luxury and lips, buried
and the curtains of pain spread wide open
to reveal, naked and indifferent, the tomb.

And I looked up toward those at work,
the taut shoulders, the arms that struck
this dead silence with a rhythm heavy and swift
as though the wheel of fate were passing through the ruins.

Suddenly I was walking and did not walk
I looked at the flying birds, and they had stopped stone-dead
I looked at the sky's air, and it was full of wonder
I looked at the bodies labouring, and they were still
and among them a face climbing the light.
The black hair spilled over the collar, the eyebrows
had the motion of a swallow's wings, the nostrils
arched above the lips, and the body
emerged from the struggling arms stripped
with the unripe breasts o f the Virgin,
a motionless dance.

And I lowered my eyes to look all around:
girls kneaded, but they didn't touch the dough
women spun, but the spindles didn't turn
lambs were drinking, but their tongues hung still
above green waters that seemed asleep
and the herdsman transfixed with his staff poised.
And I looked again at that body ascending;
people had gathered like ants,
and they struck her with lances but didn't wound her.
Her belly now shone like the moon
and I thought the sky was the womb
that bore her and now took her back, mother and child.
Her feet were still visible, adamantine
then they vanished: an Assumption.
The world
became again as it had been, ours:
the world of time and earth.
Aromas of terebinth
began to stir on the old slopes of memory
breasts among leaves, lips moist;
and all went dry at once on the length of the plain,

in the stone's despair, in eroded power,
in that empty place with the thin grass and the thorns
where a snake slithered heedless,
where they take a long time to die.

George Seferis

(English translation: Edmund Keeley and Philip Sherrard, Princeton University Press)

In the Kyrenia District

But I 'm dying and done for
What on earth was all the fun for?
For God's sake keep that sunlight out of sight.
- John Betjeman

Homer's world, not ours.
- W . H . Auden

Sketch for an «idyll»

- I wired her flowers.
- Whisky? Gin?
- Today's her silver wedding.
- Mind the dog
doesn't jump up against your skirt:
he'll muddy it. They neglect him, he's getting too familiar.
- Gin, please. She lives in Kent now. I'll
always remember her in the church. When we came out, it was raining; a band
was playing on the pavement opposite, the Salvation Army, I think.
- Sometime in May, the year of the General Strike.
- We didn't even have newspapers.
- Look at the mountain:
when the sun finally sets it'll be one colour all over, and peaceful.
That's St Hilarion. I prefer it by moonlight.
- She writes that it has a ghost who goes about with an extinguished lamp.
- St Hilarion?
- No, her house in Kent.
- The ghost would be more appropriate here. Sometimes - I can't explain it - memory
grows harsher in this light, dough
dried by the sun ...
- What kind of dough?
I get headaches too.

- Did you meet the poet,
or whatever he was, staying here last month?
He called feeling palimpsestic libido;
most unusual; no one knows
what he means. A cynic and philhellene.
- An introverted snob.
- Amusing sometimes. Now he's taking the baths.
- In Italy I heard.
- Yes, some "spa".
He says it encourages sexual vigour.
I gave him an introduction to Horace in Rome.
- How could you, he's so shocking.
- How, indeed?
Maybe at our age one makes allowances
maybe out o f need to escape from my ordinary self
maybe it's this island that bores me like a meteor from another world.
- You're becoming sad, Margaret. But it's so beautiful:
the sun, the sea, an everlasting summer.
- Ah, this view
that questions and questions. Have you ever noticed how the mirror sometimes
makes our faces death-like? Or how that thief the sun
takes our make-up off each morning? I'd prefer
the sun's warmth without the sun; I'd look for
a sea that doesn't strip one bare: a voiceless blue
without that ill-bred daily interrogation.
The silent caress of the mist in the tassels of dream
would refresh me:
this world isn't ours, it's Homer's -
that's the best description I've heard of this place.
Quiet, Rex!
- No, please don't bother,
I know the way. I'd like to have time to buy some cloth:
thirty yards of woven stuff, for our gardener Panagi;
incredible, he says he needs that much for those old baggy trousers he wears...
As you were speaking I remembered Bill, one Saturday,
on the Thames... I gazed at his scarf all evening long.
As he rowed he was whistling, "Say it with a ukulele'.
What's become of him, I wonder?
- He was killed in Crete.
- He was handsome, so handsome... I'll expect you on Tuesday...
How softly the Thames flowed among the shadows...
Sleep well.
- It's a pity you can't stay for dinner.

CONSTANTINE P. **CAVAFY** AND CYPRUS

Nicos Orphanides
Writer

Cavafy is a Greek poet *par excellence*, insofar as he articulates the experience of Hellenic ecumenism. In this respect, he is at the same time a Greek poet of the periphery – with an ensuing yearning, the yearning of a Greek who experiences exile and diaspora. Therefore, he is also a poet of Greek yearning and of the wisdom afforded by time and distance from the passions of the metropolis.

Constantine P. Cavafy is ergo a poet of exile. Yet, he intersects with the axes of the Greek diaspora and Byzantium. Hence his Alexandrian – or rather Hellenistic – obsession and his pronounced Byzantinism.

Constantine Cavafy photographed in Alexandria, before 1933 (CC BY-SA 4.0 Cavafy Archive Onassis Foundation).

With regard to Cyprus, his verse "*waters of Cyprus, Syria and Egypt, the beloved waters of our homeland*" from the poem "Going back home from Greece", is unique inasmuch as it encapsulates Cavafy's dominant and thriving Hellenic ecumenism as well as the experience of Greeks in the periphery. Cavafy's engagement with Cyprus was extensively discussed in earlier scholarship. The text he wrote about Cyprus is historical, prompted by the work of Georgios Shakallis, lawyer and member of the Cypriot Legislative Council, titled "Cyprus and the Cyprus question". Cavafy's text, included in the volume with his prose writings, is titled "The Cyprus question". In it, Cavafy intervenes in defence of the Cypriots' right to national vindication and restitution.

An unpublished poem from 1914, "Going back home from Greece" is at the same time a poem of confession and one of existential self-definition vis-à-vis the identity and individuality of the Greeks of the periphery, exile and diaspora, as well as of Hellenic ecumenism. In the same poem we find the following lines:

> *"It's time we admitted the truth;*
> *we too are Greeks – what else are we? –*
> *but with Asian desires and longings,*
> *but with Asian desires and longings,*
> *that sometimes befuddle Hellenism".*
>
> (C. P. Cavafy, *Ανέκδοτα Ποιήματα Α'* [Unpublished Poems I] edited by G.P. Savvides, Icaros, Athens 1968, p. 76.)

Constantine Cavafy in Alexandria in 1896 (CC BY-SA 4.0 Cavafy Archive Onassis Foundation).

Therefore, the "*waters of Cyprus, Syria and Egypt*" is the other place of Greek individuality, a place and a world that is vibrant, that flourishes in the locus of history, and is received by the poet with love, almost erotically. This is the thriving ecumenical Hellenism that lives amid the indifference of the metropolis, or abandoned, but "*with desires and longings / that sometimes befuddle Hellenism*". There it is, the yearning caused by latent abandonment, but also the declared individuality of a different, ecumenical Hellenism, which oftentimes bewilders the world of the metropolis. There is another line by Cavafy: "We are an amalgam here" etc. from the poem "In the city of Osroene". (*ibid.* p. 76).

Cyprus makes part of this universe of "exiled" world. And the capital of the Greek diaspora is Alexandria – "mythical" in Cavafy's poetry – the historical, mythical and existential Cavafian Alexandria. At the centre lies the Athenian metropolis

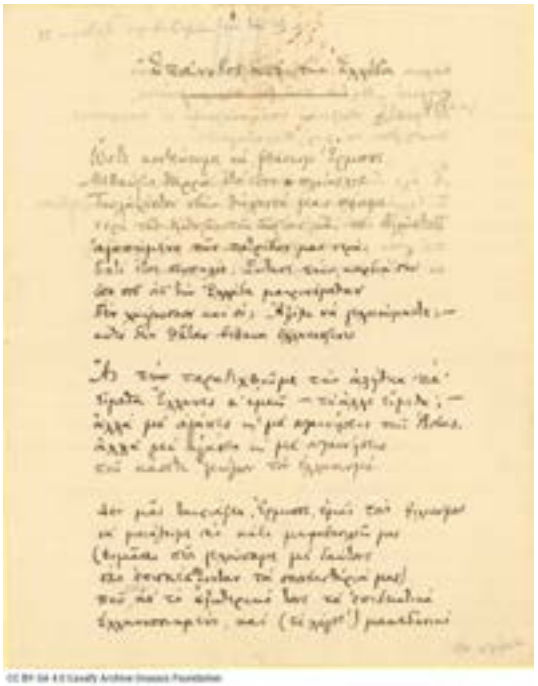
and the Helladic country from where the poet ultimately distances himself with joy, as he confesses in "Going back home from Greece":

" - Why so silent? Ask your heart,
the further we drew away from Greece,
you too weren't happy? - "

"*I'm neither Hellene nor Hellenising, but Greek*", Cavafy once said. (See Timos Malanos, *Ο ποιητής Κ. Π. Καβάφης* [The poet C.P. Cavafy] Difros, Athens 1957, p. 235.) These lines are pertinent too: "*He had also been that excellent distinction, Greek-*" from the poem "Tombstone of Antiochus, king of Commagene" (*Poems II*, p. 36.) that appear to explain the above: the poet's paradoxical joy at returning with Hermippus from Greece.

The poem was written in 1914, invoking an earlier historical era, that of the ecumenism of the Hellenistic years. Cavafy first travelled to Greece in the summer of 1901. Of particular interest are the relevant entries in his extensive diary, on what he saw and visited, on his sea voyage and his return to Alexandria on the morning of the 5th of August. (*Cavafy, Πεζά* [Prose texts] op. cit., p.300.)

Converging towards the diaspora and diverging from the metropolis. Constantine Cavafy's poem "*Going back home from Greece*" contains us, and foregrounds, among other things, the question of Cavafy's poetic encounter with Cyprus.



Manuscript of the poem Going back home from Greece by Constantine P. Cavafy (CC BY-SA 4.0 Cavafy Archive Onassis Foundation).

Constantine P. Cavafy

(English translation: Edmund Keeley and Philip Sherrard, Princeton University Press)

Going back home from Greece

Well, we're nearly there, Hermippos.
Day after tomorrow, it seems - that's what the captain said.
At least we're sailing our seas,
the waters of Cyprus, Syria, and Egypt,
the beloved waters of our home countries.
Why so silent? Ask your heart:
didn't you too feel happier
the farther we got from Greece?
What's the point of fooling ourselves?
That would hardly be properly Greek.

It's time we admitted the truth:
we are Greeks also - what else are we?-
but with Asiatic affections and feelings,
affections and feelings
sometimes alien to Hellenism.

It isn't right, Hermippos, for us philosophers
to be like some of our petty kings
(remember how we laughed at them
when they used to come to our lectures?)
who through their showy Hellenified exteriors,
Macedonian exteriors (naturally),
let a bit of Arabia peep out now and then,
a bit of Media they can't keep back.
And to what laughable lengths the fools went
trying to cover it up!

No, that's not at all right for us.
For Greeks like us that kind of pettiness won't do.
We must not be ashamed
of the Syrian and Egyptian blood in our veins;
we should really honor it, take pride in it.

COSTAS **MONTIS,** A CYPRIOT POET

Marina Rodosthenous-Balafa
University of Nicosia

Costas Montis (Famagusta 1914-Nicosia 2004) is considered one of the greatest poets of the Modern Greek literature of Cyprus. He studied Law at the University of Athens (1932-1937). For his contribution to Greek literature and culture, Montis received many accolades and awards from the Greek-speaking world and internationally. His work has been translated into many languages. He was awarded honorary doctorates by the University of Cyprus (1997) and Athens (2001) and was elected a corresponding member of the Academy of Athens (2000). Albeit a prolific poet, he also wrote in different prose genres such as short stories, novellas, novels, theatre and theatrical adaptations, notably rendering Aristophanes' plays into the Cypriot dialect. Together with partners, he founded *Lyriko*, the first professional theatre in Cyprus. He was a writer and publisher in the daily Cypriot press.

Montis was a bold innovator of language and its different forms. In 1958 he published *Stigmes* [Moments], a poetry collection in which the major typological and thematic traits of his subsequent poetic oeuvre are crystallised. The volume consists of short poems, some of them single-verse compositions. Through this epigrammatic form, Montis condenses the full range of his concerns, approaching them with a philosophical disposition: sociopolitical and historical issues, the 1955-59 fight against colonial rule, the personal and collective trauma of the 1974 war, existential anxieties, self-referential comments, History as a discipline, the Greek language, metaphysical questions, ecumenical themes as well as everyday matters, simple and insignificant, which acquire another dimension within his body of work. The poems in Stigmes are minimalist, topical and instantaneous. They employ self-sarcasm, suggestion, ambiguity, symbolism, self-cancellation, reversal, humanisation, bitter humour, irony and explicit iconoclasm. Through this epigrammatic style, the reader is invited to complete the contemplation based on their personal preoccupations and perspective vis-à-vis the poem.

The poet Costas Montis (1914-2004).

In addition to the brief poems of *Stigmes* and other poems of a few lines, Montis wrote a trilogy of extended poetic

compositions entitled: *Gramma sti mitera* (1965, *Letter to mother*); *Deftero gramma sti mitera* (1972, *Second letter to mother*) and *Trito gramma sti mitera* (1980, *Third letter to mother*). The main unifying element of these "epistolary" poetic compositions is the symbolic figure of the mother, which functions as a central axis of reference in a fragmented world.

The poem titled "Greek poets", published in 1962 in the poetic collection *Poetry of Costas Montis* is a titled Stigmi [Moment] in which his love for and devotion to the Greek language is foregrounded through a gnomic tone. The poet articulates a bitter awareness of the limited reach of his mother tongue, which is nevertheless counterbalanced by the privilege of writing in it. Montis makes no reference to the reasons why he feels such pride, instead leaving the reflection to the reader.

This practice is central to his poetics and contributes to the enduring resonance of his work.

The official website of Costas Montis:
www.costasmontis.com

GREEK POETS

Costas Montis

(English translation:
Stalo Monti-Pouagare)

Very few read us,
very few know our language,
we remain unjustified and unapplauded
in this faraway corner,
but it is compensated by the fact that we write in Greek.

"It's time we admitted the truth: we are Greeks also":
Click on this link to hear the statue recite two poems with regards to Cyprus: *Going Back Home from Greece* by the Greek poet Constantine P. Cavafy from Alexandria (1863-1933), and *Greek Poets* by Costas Montis (1914-2004) from Cyprus. The first poem reflects on the spread of Greek language and culture in a very large part of the ancient world during the Hellenistic period, as a consequence of the empire created by Alexander the Great, when Egyptians, Syrians and many others proudly identified themselves as Greeks or Greek speakers at the very least, even with some Asiatic affections. The second poem affirms the strong feelings of Cypriots for their Greek identity through the language.

Statue N III 1085
Idalion, Cyprus
Limestone 480-460 BC
H. 153 cm ; W. 40 cm ; T. 17 cm
Musée du Louvre, Département des Antiquités orientales
Donated by Baron Alban Emmanuel Guillaume-Rey

TRADITIONAL **CYPRIOT MUSIC**: A PERSPECTIVE ON HISTORICAL LAYERS, COMMUNITY AND AESTHETIC PLURALISM

Iosif Hadjikyriakos
Phivos Stavrides Foundation

Traditional music, similar to other folk arts worldwide, functions as a mirror of history, culture and the soul of communities that create and sustain it. In the case of Cyprus, such music encapsulates centuries of layered influences, from Byzantine heritage to Lusignan and Venetian Western elements, through the enduring imprint of Ottoman traditions.

The Byzantine musical tradition continued to flourish in Cyprus following the Fall of Constantinople in 1453, demonstrating a continuity of sacred chant and modal systems, while simultaneously allowing for creative innovation in local practice. Additionally, comparative computational analysis of pitch patterns in Cypriot folk music reveals structural affinities and tuning systems influenced by both Byzantine and Ottoman music traditions. These dual legacies, one Eastern Orthodox and one drawn from Ottoman makam-based systems, coexist within the Cypriot modal tradition.

Traditional Cypriot music is not monolithic. It is a mosaic of "voices" (*fonés;* i.e. tunes), each corresponding to specific localities and/or performance contexts rather than to a generic "Cypriot style". This reflects the broader reality that folk arts in Cyprus were maintained within communities, villages and regions, not governed by national codification. Indeed, a two-volume collection by Sozos Tombolis documents around 300 songs and dances, grouped thematically and musically with meticulous notation and commentary, emphasising regional distinctions in rhythm, melody and form.

Cypriot traditional songs often merge quotidian realities with mythic or metaphorical imagery: queens, heroes and survivors appear in lyrical narratives articulated in the Cypriot dialect of Greek. These images are embedded within a musical language that often resists Western staff notation, characterized instead by microtones, flexible rhythms and nuanced ornamentation.

Modal structures in Cypriot music draw on makam systems, and traditional instrumentation includes the violin, often the principal solo instrument, accompanied by the laouto (a long-necked lute) for Christian Cypriots and the *laouto* or oud for Muslim Cypriots. Additionally, in the Muslim Cypriot and Maronite communities, the davul (a large double-headed drum) and the zurna (a double-reed woodwind instrument) are also performed. This aligns strongly with modal folk practices across the Eastern Mediterranean.

Increasingly, contemporary Cypriot musicians and composers have drawn from this heritage to create works that negotiate between tradition and modernity. For instance, the edited volume *Music in Cyprus* explores, among others, the role of shared traditional music across the island, its appropriation by both Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities, and its relation to European and Ottoman art-music frameworks. This reflects what scholars term a "cosmopolitan localism", contemporary music that combines global genres (rock, metal, hip-hop) with traditional Cypriot elements, dialect and heritage idioms.

Traditional music in Cyprus is more than entertainment; it is an act of communal belonging. Songs are performed at weddings, festivals, seasonal celebrations, and social gatherings as part of an expressive tradition shared across generations and contexts. The continued practice of *tsiattistá*, an improvised lyrical/poetic duel performed in the Cypriot dialect of Greek, often to the accompaniment of the violin and the *laouto*, is a living example of oral tradition and improvisation still maintained today.

Detail of a wall painting in Saint John Cathedral in Nicosia, Cyprus (18th century). © Mediazone/A.Polyniki, Cyprus National Commission for UNESCO, 2018.

Statuettes of kourotrophic women
AM 817 and AO 2407
Cyprus
Terracotta
1400-1230 BC
H. 20,5 cm ; T. 6 cm ; W. 6,8 cm
H. 24 cm ; W. 6,8 cm
Musée du Louvre, Département des Antiquités Orientales
Acquired from Zénon Malis, 1899
Acquired from Alexandre Farah

Cypriot lullabies: **Click on this link** to hear *Lady Saint Marina* and *My Son's Wedding*, two traditional Cypriot lullabies heard in Cyprus for many centuries, performed by the choir Amalgamation, bringing to life two Bronze Age terracotta figurines (2300-1050 BC) depicting mothers with their children in their arms.

Boat model AM 972
Cyprus
Terracotta
2000-1600 BC
H. 16,7 cm ; L. 26 cm ; W. 14 cm
Musée du Louvre, Département des Antiquités orientales
Acquired from Zénon Malis, 1902.
© 2025 Musée du Louvre, Dist. GrandPalaisRmn / Raphaël Chipault.

The sorrow of my heart: **Click on this link** to hear a traditional Cypriot love song performed by the choir Amalgamation, bringing to life a Bronze Age terracotta boat model (2300-1050 BC). The song tells of a farewell between lovers, as one of them departs by sea.

Statue AM 2759
Cyprus
Limestone
450-425 BC
H. 115 cm ; W. 28,5 cm ; T. 14,5 cm
Musée du Louvre, Département des Antiquités orientales
© Musée du Louvre, Dist. GrandPalaisRmn / Maurice et Pierre Chuzeville.

Statue N III 3498
Trikomo, Cyprus
Limestone
350-300 BC
H. 113 cm ; W. 28 cm ; T. 15 cm
Musée du Louvre, Département des Antiquités orientales
Acquired from Georges and Tiburce Colonna-Ceccaldi, 1870
© 2024 Musée du Louvre, Dist. GrandPalaisRmn / Raphaël Chipault.

Click on this link to hear two statues of women "perform" three of the most renowned traditional Cypriot songs. Two are love songs: *The Jasmine*, an allegory for the purity of love and female beauty; and *The Lady from Tylliria*, sung in an encrypted form and praising the charm of a woman from the Tylliria region in northwestern Cyprus. The third song, *Arodaphnousa*, recounts the tragic fates of Jeanne L' Aleman and Queen Eleonora in the medieval French court of Cyprus, during the reign of King Peter I of Lusignan – a tale woven from love, jealousy and vengeance. The songs are performed by the Cypriot women's choir Amalgamation.

Statue AO 22208
Cyprus
Limestone
600-575 BC
H. 40 cm ; W. 11,5 cm ; T. 7,6 cm
Musée du Louvre, Département des Antiquités orientales
Donated by Count Henri Louis Marie Martin de Boisgelin
© 2009 GrandPalaisRmn (Musée du Louvre) / Franck Raux.

A man laying his eyes on his beloved: **Click on this link** to watch a stone statue of a double flute player "perform" *Aherompasman*, a traditional Cypriot song, perform by the choir Amalgamation. They sing about a young man who wanders around the neighbourhood of the woman he desires, hoping to catch a glimpse of her.

«THE DANCE OF THE ANERADES– WATER FAIRIES», MODERN SCULPTURE BY **NINA IACOVOU**

Maria Iacovou
University of Cyprus

The 1992 sculptural composition "*The dance of the Anerades*" (water fairies) by Nina Iacovou (1933-2025) consists of three *koukkoumares*, water vessels featuring women's faces. According to folklore, the Anerades, nymphs of nature and protectresses of water springs, guard the waters, the spring of life, with their static dance.

In May 2013, Vassos Karageorghis wrote about the first Cypriot sculptress of the 20th century, who was initially active in her birthplace of Famagusta [Ammochostos] and, after the 1974 Turkish invasion, continued to work for another 50 years in Larnaca:

"For over half a century, Nina Iacovou has carried on her shoulders an ancient artistic tradition that stretches from prehistoric Cyprus to the present day. […] Nina was born and raised in Famagusta. As she grew up, she saw statues of gods and heroes emerging from the land of Enkomi and Salamis, she walked the streets of Medieval Famagusta, tasted the brine of the sea and smelled the lemon blossoms of Varosi. She knew well the famed "*kouzarka*", the pottery workshops of Famagusta, until recently the bearers of an ancient ceramic tradition in eastern Cyprus. She was impressed by the anthropomorphic "koukkoumares" kept in the city's museums […]. Nina took hold of the anthropomorphic "koukkoumara" motif, analysed it, deconstructed it, recomposed it and with unique mastery, inspiration and imagination, employed it, either whole or in parts, as her very own "trademark" or *leitmotif* […].

Without copying the original folk form, without repeating her own creations in a cumbersome way, she is always searching, exploring the possibilities offered by this familiar motif in order to create diverse human figures-symbols, such as the well-known goddess with raised arms, Cassanda, the ancient mother-goddess at the moment she brings new life into the world, the goddess clasping her breasts in the shape of a pomegranate – a double symbolism".

The artist Nina Iacovou at work. Image courtesy of M. Iacovou.

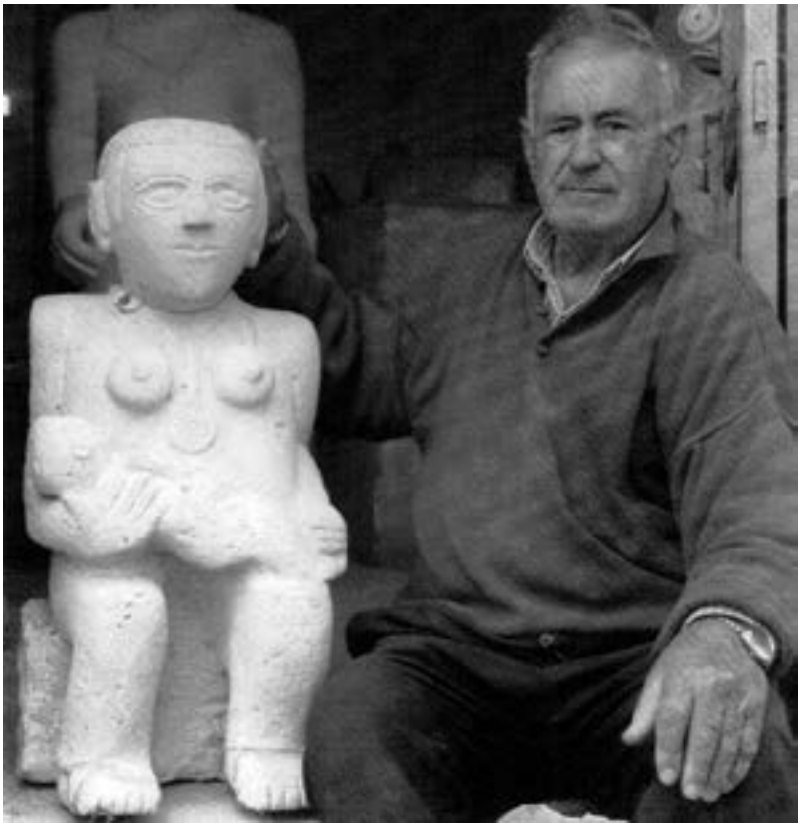
Click on this link to listen to the traditional Cypriot song *The fountain of the women of Pegeia*, referring to young women from the village of Pegeia, western Cyprus, fetching water from a fountain.

"The dance of the Anerades–water fairies"
Nina Iacovou
1992
Clay
© State Collection of Contemporary Cypriot Art, Nicosia, Cyprus.

«MOTHER AND CHILD», MODERN **SCULPTURE** BY COSTAS ARGYROU

Andreas Hadjiloucas
Costas Argyrou Museum

The work *Mother and Child* is one of the early creations of Costas Argyrou and belongs to a series of sculptures focused on the female form and, more specifically, on motherhood – one of the artist's first sources of inspiration. The choice of local stone from the Skarinou region and the simplicity of the form link the piece to the initial stages of his creative development. The female figure does not refer to a specific person; it is rendered as an archetypal, universal image of the mother, free from individual features. The few ornamental details serve as discreet references to the human form, while maintaining its strictly symbolic character.



Costas Argyrou with his sculpture Mother and Child.
© Costas Argyrou Museum.

The stillness and geometric conception of the volumes situate the work within a broader context of references to prehistoric and archaic Mediterranean models. The type of seated, nude woman emphasising the relationship with her child has a long historical lineage, extending from Neolithic figurines to the Late Bronze Age. These affinities relate not only to subject matter but also to aesthetic simplicity – the avoidance of narrative elements in favor of a condensed, essential expression of motherhood as a fundamental human experience.

The dialogue with the wider sculptural tradition extends through similarities with African examples of the 19th and 20th centuries, where the mother is likewise portrayed with comparable austerity and iconographic clarity. Without imitating specific precedents, Argyrou integrates the maternal figure into a timeless cultural continuum in which woman embodies the primordial roles of birth and care.

With its restrained and compact character, *Mother and Child* demonstrates how the artist draws inspiration from multiple layers of tradition, transforming them into a new, deeply personal sculptural language.

"Mother and Child"
Costas Argyrou
1978, Stone © Costas Argyrou Museum.

CYPRIOT STONES AND THE **SUEZ CANAL**

Elizabeth Hoak-Doering
Humboldt University of Berlin

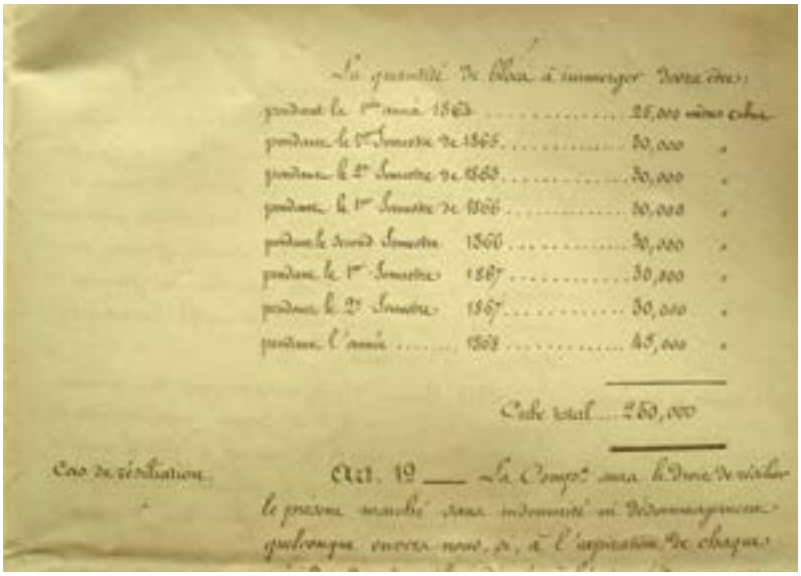
Empress Eugenie wept with relief as her yacht completed the first official crossing of the Suez Canal on November 17, 1869. According to the captain of *L' Aigle*, the canal was still too narrow and too shallow – familiar problems for Ferdinand de Lesseps and his engineers.

Engraving of the London Times Illustrated, March 1869 showing the breakwater at Port Said, and the Mediterranean entrance to the Canal. Image courtesy of E. Hoak-Doering.

The Suez Canal between Port Said in the Mediterranean sea and Suez in the Red Sea. © I. Katsouri, University of Cyprus.

Early in the project (1859-1869) Nile River silt threatened to fill in the canal's north end. The solution to this problem was decisive for the Eastern Mediterranean's architectural and archaeological history and it came from a company of French maritime engineers, the Dussaud Brothers. They proposed a jetty of moulded concrete forms projecting 5.6 km into the sea, requiring 250,000 m³ of material – or 100 Olympic-sized pools – despite the absence of local stone. They were confident that the required materials were available in coastal areas near Port Saïd, including Cyprus. The five years it took to complete the jetty created a regional market of locals finding and carting

stones to the shores, where small vessel captains purchased, then delivered them to French sub-contractors in Port Saïd. Such transactions trickled down into the present as a Cypriot legend, an archaeological footnote that the ancient stones of Famagusta and elsewhere were used to build the Suez Canal. Since the canal's embankments were not reinforced until later, many Cypriot stones probably became concrete – pulverised, incinerated – and submerged in the sea.



Concrete estimations for the construction phases of the Suez Canal, by the Dussaud brothers, owners of the French contracting company. Image courtesy of E. Hoak-Doering.

Centuries of neglect and violent earthquakes turned Cypriot architectural legacies – Venetian, Roman, Greek, Byzantine and more – into broken walls and strewn cut stones. Many contemporary witnesses expressed what French symbolist poet Arthur Rimbaud wrote to his mother (1878): "There's nothing here but a chaos of rocks…" It is difficult to know how much, or exactly where Cypriot stone was used in and around the canal, but the volume of business captured the attention of the Sublime Porte – even as it faced existential financial and military concerns. The Sultan issued two laws restraining stone export: the Ottoman Stones Law of 1869 and 1874. When the British assumed administration of Cyprus in 1878 they also tried to curb the trade. Like the Ottoman laws, the Famagusta Stones Laws of 1891, amended in 1901, arrived after (or perhaps because) a terrific amount of stone was already gone.

Some exports were freshly quarried, notably at Amathous in Limassol, and Luigi Palma di Cessnola complained about it: "… Even the hill itself is fast losing its form, while the rock of which

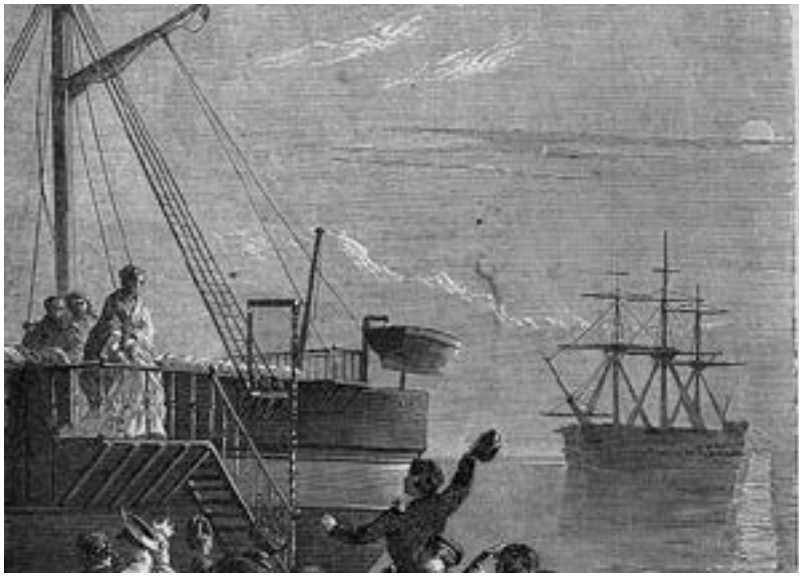
Ferdinand de Lesseps, French diplomat and planner of the Suez Canal (1860-1870). © Pierre Petit, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons.

it is composed is being cut away to be shipped to Port Saïd, bringing to the merchants of Limassol a profitable return…" This is an interesting observation considering the colossal stone jug presently at the Louvre, which Melchior De Vogüé was able to carry from Amathous during his 1862-1865 archaeological mission. Subsequent quarrying changed the shape of this hill so drastically that 21st century contractors using tractors struggled installing the replica jar, despite it being much lighter.

Building Port Saïd and Port Fuad (1879-1889) extended the voracious demand for stone and other materials. The lighthouse at Port Saïd (1869) became the world's first use of reinforced concrete – but French sculptor Frédéric Bartholdi had submitted a different lighthouse proposal – a statuesque, draped woman holding up a beacon. *Egypt Carrying the Light to Asia* was too expensive for Isma'il Pasha of Egypt, but it became the prototype for the Statue of Liberty, with Gustave Eiffel designing its interior structure. Similarly, Giuseppe Verdi declined to compose work for the inauguration. Instead, Isma'il Pasha's new Khedivial Opera House staged Rigoletto during the celebratory events of 1869. Later persuaded, Verdi composed an opera about Egypt, *Aïda*, which debuted at the Khedivial Opera House in 1871.

Commemorative medal issued for the opening of the Suez Canal, with a bust of Ferdinand de Lesseps. © Musée Carnavalet, Histoire de Paris, CC0 1.0 Universal, via Wikimedia Commons.

The Suez Canal in its first year of operation (1870). © Collectie Wereldmuseum (formerly Tropenmuseum), part of the National Museum of World Cultures, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons.



Etching showing Empress of France Eugenia (1853-870), who presided in the inauguration ceremonies of the canal in 1869. © Bernardo Rico, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons.

ARTHUR **RIMBAUD** AND CYPRUS

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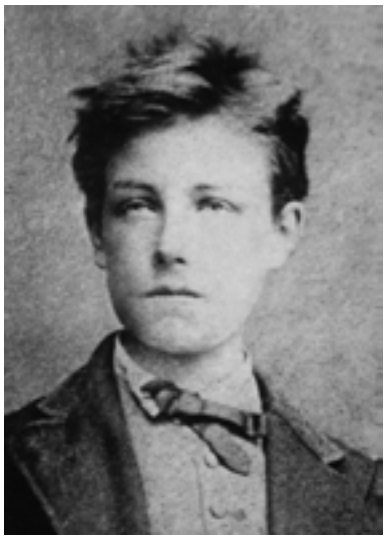
Arthur Rimbaud (1854-1891) is one of the great French writers of the 19th century who passed through Cyprus. Yet, unlike Chateaubriand or Lamartine, Rimbaud did not visit the island as a traveller en route to Jerusalem, but came to Cyprus – indeed twice – in the early years of his adventurous life, in search of work. On both occasions (1878-1879 and 1880) he stayed in Cyprus only briefly, for a total of a few months, and no one was aware of his stature as a poet. It was the beginning of British rule in the modern history of the island: in 1878, following the agreement of 4 June 1878 with the Ottoman Empire, the United Kingdom assumed the administration of Cyprus.

The British presence created new employment opportunities for the development of basic infrastructure. Rimbaud, who was in Alexandria at the time, arrived in Larnaca of Cyprus in December 1878, having signed a contract with the company Ernest Jean & Thial Fils. The 24-year-old Frenchman was a polyglot; he spoke English and had a solid knowledge of (ancient) Greek, which enabled him to secure work easily. He worked as a foreman between Larnaca-Famagusta, at a quarry near the village of Oroklini, and for the construction of a canal in the region of Potamos, Liopetri, which he described as "a desert, at the sea's edge". Like many recently arrived Europeans, he contracted typhus. After his recovery, his employers sent him back to France in May 1879. The village of Xylophagou, in the Larnaca district, where Rimbaud was treated for a few days, has preserved a vivid memory of his stay.



Portrait of Arthur Rimbaud at the age of seventeen, c. 1872 © É. Carjat, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons.

A year later, in April 1880, Rimbaud returned to Cyprus. Even though his former employers had gone bankrupt, he was immediately hired by the British administration, and appointed foreman for the construction of the summer residence of the British High Commissioner on Troodos, very near the highest peak of the Cypriot mountains (altitude: 1,952 m.). This stone building, located in one of the island's most beautiful settings, surrounded by towering pine trees, is still used today as the summer residence of the President of the Republic of

Cyprus. As of 1948, a marble tablet, affixed to the wall by the then governor, Lord Winster, has commemorated the role of Rimbaud in the construction of the cottage:

"ARTHUR RIMBAUD, POÈTE ET GÉNIE FRANÇAIS, AU MÉPRIS DE SA RENOMMÉE, CONTRIBUA DE SES PROPRES MAINS Á LA CONSTRUCTION DE CETTE MAISON – MDCCCLXXXI".

[Arthur Rimbaud, French poet and genius, despite his fame, contributed by his own hands to the construction of this house – 1881]

Again, Rimbaud's second stay in Cyprus did not bring him contentment. In a letter (dated 23 May 1880) he complained of his low wages, the high cost of food, harsh weather conditions due to the cold, and the great distance between the nearest city (Limassol) and Troodos' villages, which forced him to travel on horseback. Nevertheless, even though he had asked friends in France to send him two books, on lumbering and carpentry, promising in return "a small parcel of the renowned wine Commandaria", he left the island abruptly a few weeks later, in June 1880, departing from the port of Limassol. The next stage of his tumultuous life would be Aden.

Rimbaud's hasty departure remains controversial. In a letter, he wrote that he left after "a dispute with the general treasurer and his engineer". Other sources suggest that he may have killed a Cypriot worker, accidentally or during an altercation, and fled the island to avoid prosecution. Rimbaud's short life contains similar reversals, contributing to the myth that surrounds him. To this day, the French poet's passage through Cyprus continues to inspire men and women of letters in the country, who have written about Rimbaud's Cypriot experience.

While in Cyprus, Arthur Rimbaud worked on the construction of the stone-built summer residence of the British Governor of Cyprus, erected between 1879 and 1881 in the village of Platres on the Troodos Mountains. Today known as the Presidential Cottage, the building bears this plaque commemorating Rimbaud's contribution to its construction. Photograph by G. Papasavvas, University of Cyprus; Image of Presidential Cottage, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons.

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