

Editorial

The introduction of the euro as our new official currency as from 1 January 2008 is a historic landmark in the modern course of our Republic. It has brought about well-founded hopes for a new and promising era within the European Union. A symbol of unity, the euro is now the symbol of our common European identity.

Among the highlights of the official celebrations to welcome the euro, that brought so many European dignitaries to Cyprus, was a concert at the Municipal Theatre by the Cyprus Symphony Orchestra. The programme included traditional music played on a Cypriot lute and songs composed and interpreted by Cypriot artists Alkinos Ioannides and Katerina Mina.

The adoption of the new currency provides an ideal opportunity to explore the history of coinage in Cyprus from the earliest evidence recorded and up to the euro. The idea of coinage itself originally came from the ancient Greek world, and according to historians, its use in Cyprus preceded that of its larger eastern Mediterranean neighbours. Cypriot coinage dates back more than 2.500 years and was introduced to Cyprus by King Evelthon of Salamis who had his coins struck in his name around 560-520 BC.

In the main article of the present issue of Cyprus Today, Andreas Pitsillides, who has dedicated his life to studying and collecting coins, follows the 2.500 years history of coinage in Cyprus from the Neolithic period until independence, taking us on a long, diverse and fascinating journey.

Two more articles, Awards for Excellence and State Prizes for Literature pay tribute to outstanding personalities of Cyprus, men of letters, scientists and creators who have distinguished themselves in their field of study. The State is not simply honouring the work of these intellectuals but is rewarding their indefatigable efforts, their struggles and anxieties, and their fierce intellectual determination in the quest of truth.

CYPRUS: 2.500



Years of Coinage

By Andreas Pitsillides

The need to exchange something of which one had a surplus for something one needed emerged from the early days of man's history. The first exchanges were made in kind and involved mainly exchanges of goods between farmers and hunters. These exchanges were quantitative - a certain quantity of one product for a certain quantity of another product. For example, one bushel of barley for one deer.

However, this system of barter could not be applied on all occasions without a common denominator of the value of the exchanged goods. We learn from Homer that the first unit of value measurement in Greece was the ox (for example a warrior's golden shield in the Trojan War was said to be worth 100 oxen). This old tradition of regarding the ox as a unit of measurement left its traces on future units of weight

and value: In the 13th century B.C. copper ingots were exported from Cyprus in the form of a talanton (talent: a unit of weight and value), which resembled an ox-hide stretched for drying up. One such talanton can be seen at the Cyprus Museum.

In the British Museum there is also a bronze stand (1200 – 1100 B.C.), on one side of which there is a human figure carrying a talanton on his shoulders; this was depicted on the five mils coin in 1955. It is also interesting to note that the English word «pecuniary» comes from the latin «pecus», which means ox.

In order for trade to develop, however, it was also necessary to have a means of exchange. Precious metals, mainly gold and silver, but also copper (which was abundant in Cyprus) were used as the first means of exchange, because of their advantages of a) concentrating higher value on small-



Talanton, c. 1200 B.C.

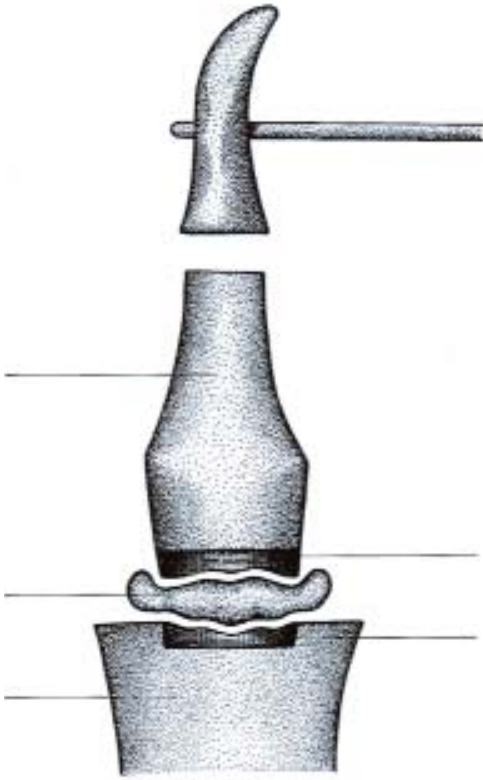


Diagram showing Greek method of coining

er volume, b) not being perishable, c) being divisible and d) being relatively scarce. A sack of gold and a very accurate set of scales were the common equipment of the merchant and trader.

Thus, the first «money» was in the form of rings or pieces of gold, silver or copper which were used not only for local transactions but also for transactions between neighbouring countries in the Mediterranean. In Cyprus they were first used from the 16th century B.C., as evidenced by findings on archaeological sites.

However, coins in the shape that we know them today were used in Lydia and Ionia in the 7th century B.C. and their use gradual-

ly spread to all Mediterranean countries, most of which were, in those days, Greek colonies.

Although the spread of coinage was comparatively rapid and most of the more important Mediterranean cities were minting by the end of the 7th century B.C. some time must have elapsed before the use of coins for all normal purposes was fully established. It seems probable that coins were made at first for specific and limited purposes, such as for payments to mercenary soldiers or to their widows and their use later spread for general trade or daily shopping.

Relative values were determined by weight. For coins used in the city of their origin the relative value would be known and agreed. A coin normally possessed an extra value as legal tender in its own territory, enabling the issuing authority to cover the cost of production and even to make a profit on the issue. A coin deprived of its character as legal tender by being exported or demonetised would revert to its metal value, sometimes with the result that it was worth restriking as a new coin.

The technical methods employed for the production of ancient coins were essentially very simple and involved nothing but hand-work. This procedure changed very little until the seventeenth century when for the first time minting machinery began to be used in Europe.

First, there was the preparation of the flan, or blank piece of metal, and then the conversion of this blank into a coin by striking it between two dies or metal negatives on which designs had been cut. The earlier coins did not even have a design on both

sides, the reverse being stamped with a more or less rough punch. The metal to be made into blanks was first heated to a molten state and then cast in moulds into suitably shaped pieces for striking. At the same time the weight was adjusted.

On occasions, it was not necessary to make new blanks, as existing coins, usually of other cities but also of previous rulers, might be available for restriking which would partially or wholly obliterate the former design.

An interesting aspect was the method employed to detect forged coins. This was done by cutting a small piece off the coin or a hole through it to see that it was all out of gold or silver and not just the outside. Such coins, both genuine and fake, bearing test cuts, have been found in numismatic hoards.

Neolithic and Chalcolithic Ages (7000-2500 B.C.) and Bronze Age (2500-1050 B.C.)

In Cyprus, the oldest known settlement (Khirokitia) dates back to around 7000 B.C. The first inhabitants lived in houses with domed and flat roofs in well organized societies and engaged in farming, hunting and perhaps herding. The main products were sheep, goats, fallow deer, barley and, a little later, grapes and olives,

as well as pottery, which were exchanged through a system of barter. In the chalcolithic period metal first appeared and started to be used, but was still uncommon.

The Bronze Age has a special significance for Cyprus, which is well known for its copper mines. A thriving economy, an emerging metallurgical industry and a flourishing export trade with the Near East and the Aegean were among the main characteristics of these years. By this time the development of harbours and industrial centres as well as free communication throughout the island facilitated the expansion of trade. Precious metals as well as



cooper started to be used for trade, as the first «money».

During the Late Bronze Age (1600-1050 B.C.) the talanton was used as a unit of measurement. A talanton weighed about 39 kilos and, for obvious reasons, was used as a common denominator rather than exchanged.

Towards the end of the era, the Achaeans, attracted by the wealth and culture of Cyprus, settled on the island and Hellenised it.



Silver coin of Evelthon (obverse), c. 560 – 525 B.C.

Geometric, Archaic and Classical Periods: The City Kingdoms (1050-325 B.C.)

During this period Cyprus was divided into various independent city kingdoms: Salamis, Amathus, Kition, Idalion, Kourion, Paphos, Soloi, Tamassos, Golgoi, Kerynia, Marion and Lapithos.

The years from 700 to 350 B.C. saw successive invasions by Assyrians, Egyptians and Persians. The kingdoms of Cyprus finally recognised Persian hegemony and helped King Cyrus occupy Babylon.



Gold coin of Evagoras (obverse), 411 – 373 B.C.

The first Cypriot coin was a silver one, struck by Evelthon, King of Salamis, in 538 B.C. The first monetary system adopted was similar to the Persian and remained in use until Evagoras I, King of Salamis, adopted the Attico-Boeotian system and later on the Rhodian system.

The issue of coins was a privilege of all the kings of Cyprus, indicating some kind of autonomy, and remained so until the occupation of Cyprus by Ptolemy of Egypt. However, no coins are attributed to the kingdoms of Kerynia and Tamassos.

All coins were in silver, but Evagoras I (411-373 B.C.) was the first to mint a gold coin which was seen by some as a declaration of independence since only the Great King of



Silver coin of Salamis, showing Ankh (reverse)

Persia had the privilege of issuing gold coins. The reason, however, could only be financial.

The symbols used on the coins were originally of Eastern origin (e.g. ankh. (Egyptian symbol of life), star, ram, etc.) but never the portrait of the Persian King. In some cities, for example Lapithos, Greek deities were used, such as Athena, since the beginning of the 5th century B.C.

King Evagoras, following a philhellenic policy, replaced all eastern symbols with Greek ones, such as Heracles, Apollo and Athena. At the same time he replaced gradually the Cypriot syllabary with alphabetical Greek.



Silver tetradrachm of Nicocreon, c. 332 – 311 B.C.

ot kings declared their support for him and co-operated in his military operations. Cyprus was then included in the Alexandrian monetary system.

The years between 331 B.C. and 294 B.C., when Ptolemy finally occupied Cyprus and abolished the independent kingdoms, were full of squabbles between the successors of Alexander the Great (Ptolemy and Antigonos), who used Cyprus as a battleground in their struggle to inherit the fragmented empire. This is also reflected in the minting of coins.

In Paphos, we had the tetradrachms of Alexander and the wonderful coins of Nicocles, depicting, on the obverse, the portrait of Aphrodite and, on the reverse, Apollo sitting on an «omphalos» (navel) with the inscription «Nicocleous Paphion»). The reverse was later copied by the Seleucids.

We also have the coins of Nicocreon who was



Silver Tetradrachm of Alexander the Great from Paphos mint, c. 330 – 320 B.C.

Hellenistic Period (325-30 B.C.)

During the Hellenistic period the vast eastward expansion of the Greek world through Alexander the Great's conquests had its counterpart in the prolific coinage of the various empires established by his successors. At that time the practice of portrait coins exhibiting the features of individual rulers was generalised, thus taking us a step nearer to the character of coinage as we know it today.

During the reign of Alexander the Great, the king of Salamis Pnytagoras and other Cypri-



Silver tetradrachm of Demetrios Polioretas, c. 330 – 295 B.C.

appointed «Strategos» (General) of all Cyprus in 312 B.C. and the coins of Menelaos, brother of Ptolemy, who led the operations against Antigonos in Cyprus and became Strategos of the island after Nicocreon's death in 310 B.C.

After the occupation of Cyprus by Demetrios Poliorcetes (The Besieger), coins were minted with designs similar to Macedonian coins. Notable are the coins depicting Poseidon and Nike.

The coins minted after 294 B.C. belong to the series of Ptolemaic coins. The great activity of the Cypriot mints in the Ptolemaic years may have been the result of the mining of silver in Cyprus. Ancient writers refer to the existence of silver deposits in Paphos.

The Ptolemies' chief interest in Cyprus was as a source of supply of copper, corn and timber and as a shipbuilding centre.

In 58 B.C. Cyprus was first annexed by Rome but Julius Caesar later gave the island to his mistress, Cleopatra. In 36 B.C. this transfer was confirmed by Mark Anthony, Cleopatra's husband. With the conquest of Alexandria by Augustus in 30 B.C., Cyprus reverted to Rome, becoming a Senatorial Province in 22 B.C.

The coins issued by Cleopatra were the last of the Ptolemaic period.

Roman Period (30 B.C. – 330 A.D.)

The first Cypriot coins of this period were issued by Augustus in 27 B.C. From Augustus to Elagabalus (218-222 A.D.) we have an important series of coins referring to Cyprus. Coins bearing the inscription «KOINON KYTIPIΩN» (CONFEDERACY OF THE CYPRIOTS) appeared for the first time during the reign of Emperor Claudius (14-54 A.D.).

From these years on, KOINON KYTIPIΩN was responsible for the minting of all bronze coins, whereas coins made out of precious metals could only be minted by the Central Government.

It is interesting to digress here for a while and refer to the institution of «KOINON KYTIPIΩN», which dates back to the 2nd century B.C. It consisted of representatives from all the cities in Cyprus, who assembled mainly for religious purposes or to honour benefactors of the island or other prominent citizens, or for other matters of common interest. It was a kind of a league of the several Cypriot cities and operated on a democratic basis.





*Silver tetradrachm of Vespasian (obverse),
69 – 79 B.C.*



*Silver tetradrachm of Vespasian (reverse),
69 – 79 A.D.*

The existence of this institution is very important, because it symbolises the unity of the people of Cyprus. Before that time, because of the existence of separate kingdoms in each city, there was no similar link; every activity was confined within the narrow local boundaries.

One such coin, bearing the inscription «KOINON KYPIQION», has been adopted by the Bank of Cyprus as its emblem.

During the last years of the reign of Vespasian (76-79 A.D.) and the first years of the reign of Titus, (79-81 A.D.) we have a series of beautiful silver coins, as a continuation of the series of coins minted at the Antiochian mint, which was transferred to Cyprus in 76/7 A.D. The reasons for the transfer are unknown, but it is probable that they related to the measures taken for relieving

Cyprus following the earthquakes that hit the island at that time.

The most common type of Cypriot coin of the Roman period depicts, on the reverse, the Temple of Aphrodite in Paphos or Zeus of Salamis, who were the most important deities worshipped in Cyprus at the time. On the obverse, there was always the portrait of the Emperor of Rome, as was the tradition at the time, in continuation of the Hellenistic period. This tradition laid further foundations for future European coinage.

With the issue of coins by Caracallas and Elagavalus it seems that the Cyprus mint was shut and the coins circulating in Cyprus were the coins of the Roman Empire, issued in Rome or elsewhere.



Bronze coin of Heraclius, 626/27 A.D.

Byzantine Period (330-1191)

The Byzantine era can be said to begin with the reign of Constantine the Great, who transferred the capital of the Roman Empire to Constantinople in 330 and allowed the Christians freedom of worship. With the partition of the Roman Empire in 395 A.D. between the two sons of Emperor Theodosius, Cyprus was finally integrated in the Byzantine Empire.



Bronze coin of Isaakios Komnenos, 1184 – 1191 A.D.

Four hundred years elapsed before coins were minted in Cyprus again. This happened during the revolt of Heraclius, Exarch of Africa and his son Heraclius, future Emperor, against Emperor Focas from the summer of 608 to November 610.

It is evidenced by coins that Cyprus was in the hands of the rebels in 610, a few months before Heraclius reached Constantinople. These coins depict the two Heracliuses and on the reverse we find the value, the date and the mint.

A few years later that mint operated again and the last known Cypriot coin of the Byzantine era was minted in 628/9 A.D. In 1184 the Byzantines lost Cyprus for ever, after Isaakios Komnenos, the Byzantine Governor, declared himself independent ruler of Cyprus. The coins issued by Komnenos were modelled on the Byzantine coins and in the few years that he remained in power he issued a number of coins of various types from debased gold alloy, silver washed or bronze, aspra trachea in flat tetartera or cup shape.

The Frankish Period (1191-1571)

In 1191, Richard the Lionheart, King of England, who took part in the 3rd Crusade captured the island and sold it first to the Knights Templars and then to Guy de Lusignan, ex-King of Jerusalem, starting a 300-year dynasty. A coin is attributed to Richard Lionheart.

When Guy de Lusignan became master of Cyprus in 1192, he introduced the monetary system of the Kingdom of Jerusalem. He issued bronze coins and deniers from base silver but also continued the issue of white bezants.

He died in 1194 and was succeeded by his brother Aimery. In the years up to 1267 there were no important developments as far as coinage is concerned.

Hugh III became king in 1267 and was a very active and able monarch. He did all that the meagre resources of his kingdom allowed him in order to prevent the advance of the Saracens in Syria and fought on the side of



Billon denier of Guy de Lusignan, 1192- 1194 A.D.



Electrum bezant of Guy de Lusignan, 1192 – 1194 A.D.



Billon denier of Hugh III, 1267 – 1284 A.D.



Silver gros of Henry II, 1285 – 1306 A.D.

the king of England during the 7th Crusade. He died in Tyre in 1284.

During his reign he issued deniers and bezants, replacing the Latin inscriptions on the deniers with French and adding his new title of King of Jerusalem. This is a completely new type of coin and the first Cypriot coin to depict the Lusignan emblem for Cyprus (a lion rampant).

King Henry II (1285-1304) brought about drastic changes in the monetary system of Cyprus. During his rule, the minting of bezants was discontinued, the name, however, was still used for accounting purposes. In order to adapt the Cypriot coins to those circulating in Europe, a new coin, the grosso (which the Cypriots used to call γρόσι, a word used in later centuries for piastres) was introduced, which became the official money of Cyprus and remained so until the end of the Frankish rule. Two grossos were equivalent to one bezant.

In 1291, with the loss of the Latin possessions in Syria, the kingdom of Cyprus acquired greater importance. The refugees settled in Famagusta, which became a very important trade centre in the Mediterranean. Cyprus thus became the last political, naval and commercial base of the Western world in the East. The continuous growth in production, both agricultural (with sugar, salt and cotton as the main products) and industrial (mainly weaving), as well as the expansion of external trade necessitated the minting of a continuously greater number of coins.

King Henry's rule was cut short by his brother Amaury, prince of Tyre, who usurped his throne in 1306. The years of his reign (1306-

1310) give us some of the most beautiful coins of the Lusignans. The various symbols on the coins of Henry's second reign (1310-1324) show an attempt at quality control.

King Henry was succeeded by his nephew Hugh IV, during whose reign (1324-1358) Cyprus reached high levels of prosperity and wealth. It is estimated by experts that during his reign some 9-10 million gros and half-gros were minted.

Hugh's coins are the most common of those minted by the Lusignans. The minting of the deniers was discontinued, a fact indicating the reduction in their purchasing power. Hugh's military operations against the Turks were very costly and his son Peter I, despite the wealth that flowed into Cyprus through commerce, found the royal vaults almost empty.

Peter I (1358-1369) was probably the most warlike and daring Lusignan king. His coins reflect his personality and for the first time the king is shown holding an unsheathed sword instead of a scepter. Among his exploits are the occupation of Attalia, the siege of the Castle of Korykos and the capture and looting of Alexandria. During his reign a greater number of Cypriots who were serfs acquired the status of freemen by paying a lump sum, thus helping the king to finance his wars. With Peter's assassination in 1369 the decline of the Lusignan kingdom of Cyprus began.

His young son, Peter II (1369-82), under the guardianship of his uncle and his mother, watched indifferently the fall of Famagusta, the richest town and the main port, to the Genoese. The raids and lootings by



Silver gros of Amaury, usurper of the throne, 1306 - 1310



Silver gros of Peter I, 1358 - 1369 A.D.



Silver gros of James II, 1464 - 1473 A.D.



Silver gros of Catherine Cornaro, 1474 - 1489 A.D.



Carzi di Cipro of Doge Mark Antonio Trevisano, 1553 – 54 A.D.



Famagusta siege piece, 1570 A.D.

the Genoese all over the island and the huge compensation money which they extorted brought about the collapse of the island's economy.

The disasters during the rule of Peter II are reflected in the devaluation of the currency. The Venetian Ducat was exchanged against 8 grossos instead of 7½. New deniers (Kharja = coppers), were minted, out of almost pure copper.

Cyprus never completely recovered. The ensuing years are characterised by disasters, heavy taxes and the payment of tribute to the Genoese and the Mamelukes. The devaluation of the currency continued and within a century its value was reduced by half.

We learn from the chronicler G. Boustronios that King James II (1460-1473), in order to meet the needs of the island in currency, minted a great number of copper coins (sezins) drawing copper from bath boilers and other kitchen utensils. Later on he issued silver coins.

In 1473 Catherine Cornaro, wife of James II, became Queen of Cyprus, initially under the guardianship of the Venetians. Later on she was forced to resign and the island fell into the hands of the Venetians in 1489.

The last coins of the Lusignan rule of Cyprus were those issued by Catherine Cornaro.

The Venetians used Cyprus as a fortified base against the Turks. Trade and culture languished and heavy taxes were imposed to pay for the fortifications.

Venice gradually introduced its currency into Cyprus. There is evidence however, from manuscripts in Venice that apart from the Venetian coins, there was a plethora of other coins circulating on the island.

At the beginning of the 16th century all the gold and silver coins circulating in Cyprus were officially stamped and a great number of small bronze coins were minted to cater for the daily needs of the population. Initially these coins did not bear the Venetian emblem, but depicted on one side the Lion of Cyprus and on the other the Cross of Jerusalem. Those issued by Duke Mark Antonio Trevisano (1553-54) were the first to bear the name of the Duke.

With the declaration of war by the Turks in 1570 all coins disappeared from circulation, as often happens in times of crisis. The Venetian Governor-General of Cyprus, Marcantonio Bragadino ordered the minting of necessity coins for the emergency, made out

of copper and having a nominal value of one bezant. These he promised to exchange for gold or silver at the end of the crisis. As a guarantee he inscribed them «Venetorum Fides Inviolabilis» (the inviolable credit of the Venetians). In point of fact these were credit (fiduciary) money, the paper money of the era.

With the tragic death of Bragadino and the capture of Famagusta by the Turks in 1571 the Venetian rule came to an end.

Turkish Domination (1571-1878)

The period of Turkish domination of the island was very dark. Most coins in circulation were those minted by the Ottoman Treasury, although a small number of coins of the 17th century indicate the existence of a mint in Cyprus, issuing silver coins of small value. The basic unit of currency was the «akche», a small silver coin, called «aspro» (white) by the Greeks because of its colour.

The basic characteristic of the period, as far as coinage was concerned, was the continuous devaluation of the Empire's currency as a result of the issue of coins of smaller value than the nominal. This was a way of financing the huge deficits caused by the frequent wars.

British Rule (1878-1960)

In 1878 Great Britain and Turkey entered into an agreement whereby Turkey transferred administration on Cyprus to Great Britain in exchange for help in the event of Russian hostility. In 1914 the British formally



1879 British Administration first bronze coin set of one, half and quarter piastre

annexed Cyprus from the Turks, after the latter had entered the Great War against Great Britain.

In connection with the taking over of the administration of Cyprus, Britain agreed to pay the Sultan the average net annual income which she used to derive from Cyprus by means of a special tax. This was estimated to be 22,936 poungia (purses) – one poungi being equal to 500 Turkish piastres, nominally equal to 5 Turkish liras or 4½ English



1901 first silver coin



1928 silver 45 piastres commemorative coin

pounds. This amount was in fact retained by the British Treasury on account of the Sultan's debts to British bond holders.

The first British troops brought with them two mule-loads of 6-pence silver coins for the purpose of paying the overdue salaries of the employees of the Ottoman Civil Service. Almost immediately afterwards other silver coins of a total value of £67,100 were shipped to the island, followed by bronze coins of smaller denominations.

During the first year of the British Administration a great variety of coins, both British and Turkish, but also foreign, were in circulation. By a series of Royal Proclamations all non-British coins were gradually withdrawn from circulation and the new Cyprus currency system was finally established.

The first bronze Cypriot coins of the British Administration, (1, 1/2 and 1/4 piastres) were put into circulation in 1879, replacing the British pennies and other coins in circulation.

In 1901 Cypriot silver coins, with the head of Queen Victoria on one side, were intro-

duced on the island and replaced the British ones. These were of the following denominations: 3, 4 1/2, 9 and 18 piastres. The last three were also called half, one and two shillings respectively.

More coins were minted during the reigns of King Edward VII (1902-1910), King George V (1910-1936) and King George VI (1937-1952).

In 1928, in order to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the British Administration, 80,000 silver coins of 45 piastres denomination were put into circulation, the only case in which coins of this denomination were minted.



1955 mils coinage set

In 1947 the term «shilling» was inscribed on Cypriot coins for the first time, to be repeated once again in 1949; the public, however, continued to use the term «shilling».

In 1955, during the reign of Queen Elizabeth II, the piastres and shillings were abolished and a new subdivision of the Cyprus pound, the mil, was introduced. Coins of 3,5, 25, 50 and 100 mils were minted. In addition notes of 250 and 500 mils and 1 pound and 5 pounds were issued. The designs on the coins reflected the long history and civilisation of Cyprus.

In 1957, 500,000 coins of 100 mils were

minted but only a small quantity was put into circulation in view of the pending declaration of the independence of Cyprus. These were melted down and their metal was used for the minting of other coins of the Republic of Cyprus.

Independence (1960)

After the declaration of independence on 16.8.1960 the first coins of the new Republic were issued in 1963, with almost the same denominations as the coins of the British Administration, but bearing the emblem of the new Republic on one side. (The first notes



of the Cyprus Republic were issued in 1961). More issues of coins took place from 1968 to 2004.

During the last forty-four years certain commemorative coins have also been issued, based on designs by Cypriot artists, thus creating a very rich series. These include the issue for

FAO in 1970, Heracles in 1975, Refugees in 1976, Human Rights in 1978, Olympic Games in 1980, FAO in 1981, Forests in 1985, FAO in 1986 and Seoul Olympic Games in 1988.

On 1st October, 1983, a new subdivision of the Cyprus pound, the cent, was introduced. New coins with nominal values of 1/2, 1, 2, 5, 10 and 20 cents were put into circulation, replacing gradually the mils, which were finally withdrawn from circulation and ceased to be legal tender by 1st May, 1985. The designs on the new coins of 1983 are taken from the flora and fauna and the long civilisation of Cyprus.



1963 Republic first coin set

Note: All the coins featured in the present article belong to the Numismatic Collection of the Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation.

1983 cent coinage set

State Prizes for Literature

"The art of writing has ancient origins on our island and constituted a fundamental factor in our national self-awareness. Tangible proof is the archaeologist's pick that brought to light written words that are dated to around the middle of the 2nd millennium B.C. The powerful literary temperament of Cypriots never ceased to be expressed throughout the ages either as eponymous or popular / folk works. From Euklos to Kinyras, from Stasinus to Zenon of Kition, from the Akritic songs to the Middle Ages Love Verses, from Vassilis Michaelides to Lipertis and from Nicos Nicolaides to Montis."

"Our literature existed and exists as an expression and affirmation of liberty: One of the most valuable possessions of our struggling homeland. For what is a more fundamental provision for a people except liberty and language?"

With these words, the Director of the Cultural Services of the Ministry of Education and Culture, Dr Eleni Nikita opened this year's ceremony for the State Prizes for Literature, held at the Famagusta Gate Cultural

Centre on 23 January 2008. The State Prizes for books published in 2006 were presented by the former Minister of Education and Culture, Akis Cleanthous.

"We are not just honouring the work of five of our top writers," Dr Eleni Nikita pointed out, "but their entire career to date, their toils and anxieties which are mirrored in these award-winning works. We even honour their endless isolation, the isolation of creativity. With them we honour all our other writers, from ancient times until today, who have contributed through their work to maintaining our cultural identity, an identity which exists because our language – the Greek language – exists."

Dr Nikita considered it necessary on this important day for Cypriot letters to make an appraisal of what the Ministry of Education and Culture is doing in the field of letters and especially literature. She reviewed the different decisions taken within the framework of the Strategic Plan for Culture:

- The creation of a National Centre for the Book with the targeted policy of supporting and promoting intellectual creativity and reading especially among the younger age groups.
- The creation of a Literary Archive and Museum of Literature with the aim of collecting, preserving, salvaging, storing, developing and promoting literary works. It will also function as a Research Centre.
- The implementation of two translation programmes: the translation of works by Cypriot writers into European lan-





guages and the translation of works by Greek Cypriot writers into Turkish and the works of Turkish Cypriots writers into Greek for a better understanding amongst the two communities.

- The cooperation with Professors in the Modern Greek Chairs at Universities abroad for the purpose of organising lectures and acquainting them with Cypriot writers.
- The cooperation with the Cyprus Association of Publishers and the programme of exhibitions "Opening Books" initiated in 2007, held in open spaces of the three major towns.
- The exhibition – sale of Cypriot books to be organised at the House of Cyprus in Athens.
- The promotion of the connection of the Cypriot bibliography prepared by the Cypriot Library with Biblionet. This programme of the Greek Book Centre comprises the bibliographic database for the location of all the books published in Greece.
- The institution of the Theatrical Writing Week - a new series of this seminar, which also includes a Theatrical competition.
- The organisation of seminars and dedications to important Cypriot writers: the seminars on Costas Montis and Nicos

Nicolaides in 2007, on Vassilis Michaelides and on Demetris Lipertis for the 90 years and 70 years anniversary of their deaths respectively.

Concluding, Dr Nikita congratulated the recipients and reiterated the fact that the Ministry of Education and Culture will honour its duty to support our intellectual creators in every possible way as literature has an important role to play within the framework of the enlarged Europe.

The Advisory Committee for Letters which, in accordance with regulations undertook the task of selecting the award-winning books in the category of poetry, short story, novel, literary studies, new writer consisted of Pavlos Paraskevas, Senior Cultural Officer as Chairman, Maria Karsera, Yiorgos Frangos, Yiorgos Myiaris and Eratosthenis Kapsomenos.

The Advisory Committee for Children's and Youth Literature consisted of Niki Menelaou, Cultural Officer as Chairperson, Evridiki Pericleous Papadopoulou, Maria Pylitou, Kika Poulcheriou, and Costas Katsonis.

The Advisory Committee for Illustrations for Children's and Youth Books consisted of Niki Menelaou, Cultural Officer, Chairperson, Stelios Karamanllakis, Yianna Gantsidou, Rhea Afantitou and Yiorgos Koumouros.

State Prizes for Literature - for books published in 2006

- **Poetry**

Dina Payiasi Katsouri: *Of Aphrodite and Adonis*, (ANEV Publications)

- **Novel**

Yianni Theodorou Melesios: *The Son of the Storm*, (Epiphaniou Publications)

- **Short Story**

Antonis Georgiou: *Sweet Bloody Life*, (Rodakio Publicatios)

- **Children's Literature**

Elena Pericleous: *Green Knights on Secret Mission*, (Parga Publications)

- **Youth Literature**

Kyriakos Margaritis: *Toledo's Gang* (Psichoyios Publications)

- **Book Illustration**

Hambis Tsangaris: *Kalikandjari - Cypriot Tales*

"Of Adonis and Aphrodite"

This anthology of poems is distinguished by its intense sensuality and its philosophical mood. The poet uses the language consummately and distinguishes herself in her ability to structure and develop her poetry towards a perfect aesthetic outcome.

Dina Payiasi Katsouri was born in Famagusta. She studied journalism in Athens. On her return to Cyprus, in 1962, she started collaborating with newspapers and magazines as well as with the Cyprus Broadcasting Corporation. Between 1966 and 1968 she was Press Officer at the Public Information Office

(now Press and Information Office). In 1969 she was appointed at the Cyprus Broadcasting Corporation where she served as a producer of cultural and youth programmes until 2000.



Dina Payiasi Katsouri

Publications:

Poetry: *Poems* (Nicosia 1964), *Compositions* (Nicosia 1966), *The Leader* (Athens 1969), *Memorials* (Nicosia 1978) awarded the State Prize for Poetry, *Anti-thesis* (Athens 1987) State Prize for Poetry, *Can You Hear Me* (Nicosia 1996), *Prose et Poesie*, Institut d'Etudes Neo-Helleniques de l'Universite de Nancy, France

Short-Stories: *Between God and the Angel* (Athens 2001)

Translations: *African Short Story Writers* (Athens 1979), *Contemporary Palestinian Short Story Writers* (Athens 1983)

Her poems have been translated into English, German, Romanian, Bulgarian, Serbian, Russian and Dutch.

Since 2001, she has been the Chief Editor of the literary review "Anev".

Aphrodite and Parliament

Aphrodite dared to do it.
She went to the Parliament.
And there she ascertained
in despair
that the benches
emitted no eroticism.
As for the capital D
unapproachable, immune,
 uninvolved
no sensuous ebb and flow.
And the members
colourless and apathetic
in the canteen
rotating
between private placements
and statements of means
wandering around
without a trace of sensitivity
or day dreaming
and in particular
without even one word
about the colour of her eyes
which makes you shiver
about the touch of her hands
which makes your heart leap
about her smile
which holds within it
all the rainbows of the world
about her body
on which grow
thousands of flowers.
The next day
the Speaker
found on his desk
a bunch of red roses.

Aphrodite and Eternity

Eternity is your gaze
which looks at me absent-mindedly,
eternity is your step
poised on the stair,
eternity is the rocking chair
and the half-open book in your hands,
eternity is the peg
with your velvet jacket on it,
eternity is the ginger cat
who chews your slipper,
eternity is your watch
which stopped at midnight precisely.
eternity is a hair from your beard
which remained on my pillow,
eternity is your good morning and your good night.

Aphrodite and the Poet

Aphrodite went and found the Poet.
And she confessed to him
that she felt her beauty was spent
and that he must do his utmost
to write a poem
which would raise her morale.
When she returned in a few days
to collect it
he gave her a single sheet of paper
with a single word on it:
Aphrodite.

Translated by Christine Georgiades



"The Son of the Storm"

A remarkable novel with very good narrative techniques and rich descriptive language. It has a historical background based on events and facts of Cyprus' recent history which he develops, achieving a poignant presentation of the discord between generations in an elaborate manner.

Yiannis Melesios is the Pen-name of Yiannis Theodorou. He was born in Pachna in the Limassol district in 1948. He studied Political Sciences in the former Soviet Union. He also attended the Russian Language section of the University.

Publications:

- "*Kappa*" (2004), "*The Son of the Storm*" (Epiphaniou Publications 2006).
- Feature reports and studies in the daily press.
- Translated essays and humorous literature from Russian.

He is also an amateur painter and has participated in group exhibitions.

He speaks Russian English and Spanish.



Yiannis Melesios

"'Where are you going Uncle?' I ask him. 'Wait first for reinforcements to come, to push them back a bit, and then we'll go down.' He said something to me in Cypriot. I didn't understand a word. He gave a gesture and went down. They took time to get wind of him. The Germans made embroidery of the rock. He only just managed to take cover."

"Come on lads, shoot and push them back." The captain began firing furiously, taking the position where Vassilis had been. Behind them the private opened the case of ammunition. He quickly handed out bullets.

Father Yerasimos was gambling with his life or rather consciously sacrificing himself to save the young man. Was it not for this that he had come? Was it not his choice, so that his wounded soul could find expiation? Why should he live the rest of his life burdened with fetters, his mother's curse and people's disrespect? Life as it had become wearied him. It no longer had meaning or content. One desire remained to him but that too was unfulfilled: to see his son before he died, to fall at his feet and beg forgiveness on his knees. It did not matter to him whether his son forgave him or not. The important thing was to unburden his heart, to heave a sigh of relief, to close his eyes with the satisfaction that he had sacrificed his life paying for his sin.

God was magnanimous, however. He saw the man's suffering. He pitied him because He saw that his repentance was sincere, straight from his heart. He brought him

to a conjunction of time and place, to a crossroads where he could carry out the decision which he had struggled so hard to take, because the decision for sacrifice is a difficult one.

The priest felt no pain at all as he tumbled down over the sharp gravel that pierced his sides. He reached the bottom of the rock in no time at all. How small the distance which separated them had become! Dear God!

"Where have you been hit, son?" He tugged at the bloodstained shirt with his big hands and ripped it into two. The buttons popped like bullets.

"Here." He brought his hand to his chest with a grimace of pain.

Father Yerasimos moved his hand aside and looked. Three gold coins, exactly like Christina's, on a chain round his neck shone on his bloody chest. Next to his right nipple the wound was bleeding profusely. Vassilis was slowly fading away.

"Hold on, lad. Hold on. Be patient and I'll bandage the wound and we'll get out of here."

Father Yerasimos took off the shirt and tore it into strips. He tore the vest and folded a piece and plugged the wound with it. He began to bind it up, using the strips as a bandage. Vassilis winced with pain. A red thread hung from the shell of his lips.

"Uncle, it's a waste of effort," he said in fading voice. "Let me surrender at my leisure." He gave a bitter smile.

"No. We either leave together or die together, lad. From now on our destinies go hand in hand." He bound the last strip tightly.

"Uncle, you don't owe me anything. Leave, I say, and escape."

"I told you. We leave together or die together."

"But who are you? What am I to you that you should sacrifice your life?" Vassilis was sinking further into a glassy darkness.

"Say that I'm your father. Wouldn't he have done the same?" He began to weep heartbrokenly. "Say that I'm Almyros who ..."

Father Yerasimos stopped suddenly. He saw him open his eyes full of puzzlement, revive, conquer for a moment even death. Their eyes met, caught on two suspended moments of an eloquent silence. Vassilis moved his lips for a little as if he was reading in surprise the unforeseen epilogue to his life. Then he let go and let himself fall into the maelstrom of the darkness which immediately swallowed him up, leaving as a relic a sweet, happy smile to float caught on a broken word, "Father ..."



"Sweet Bloody Life"

Short stories revealing imagination and wealthy emotional ambience as well as the writer's narrative skills. His writing has a remarkable aesthetic quality. Personal experiences are depicted through a creative transformation. The book is full of sensitive and fresh leaps of a promising new writer.

Antonis Georgiou was born in Limassol, in 1969. He studied Law in Moscow. He is a member of the Administrative Board of the Theatrical Course (an amateur theatre association) and of the Editorial Board of the literary review "Anev".

Publications:

"*Full Moon But One*" (Poems), Gavrielides Publications, Athens 2006

"*Sweet Bloody Life*" (Short Stories), Rodakio Publications, Athens 2006, awarded the State Prize for Literature for the year 2006 publications.

The play "*My Beloved Washing Machine*" was presented the Cyprus Theatre Organisation Award in 2005. It was staged at the THOC Experimental Theatre in January 2008, directed by Monica Vassiliou. In 2008,

the play received the THOC Playwright Award.

He participated also in the playwright group of the THOC Experimental Stage (devised theatre) production *ON/Off (Life Cuts)*, stage directed by Lea Maleni.



Antonis Georgiou

God Willing

Among the first to arrive at the small houses at the edge of the Ayios Ioannis refugee settlement in Limassol was Mr. Christodoulos from Varosha with Kyria Katerina, his wife. They quickly installed their few meagre possessions and zealously set about arranging their small garden. Kyria Katerina single-handedly planted two lemon trees and an orange tree, immobile as she normally was, bound to her invalid chair. Mr. Christodoulos beseeched her to allow him, but to no avail. She climbed off the chair, crawled and rolled in the soil, gasping, finding it difficult to breathe from fatigue. I don't know how she managed, since after that day she lay ill in bed for a week, but she planted that orange tree and those lemon trees by herself. She truly admired them lovingly as they grew, as if she were watching the lemon trees that they had left behind. When Mr. Christodoulos would finish the household chores and keep her company on their veranda, she would express her great concern about those trees in Varosha and would ask 'I wonder whether someone looks after them over there...or if they have been left unattended and have withered...and now, you see with the drought they need watering and constant care'.

Their neighbour, Mr. Takis from Marathovouno, proved from the first moment to be the loudmouth of the neighbourhood. Kind and naïve but also belligerent, he always had an issue with everyone and everything, especially with his wife, Kyria Panayiota who for many years

now was also disabled, and would sit for hours on the small veranda or in the kitchen, wasting away, getting old and listening to his outcries. The disagreement was always about money, you see, Mr. Takis was illiterate and so she handled the finances of the household, as she was slightly more educated and was tight with money. It was not always so, but now she had her reasons. They had no children and were all alone in the world, except for some distant relatives. 'Who will stand by us tomorrow if something happened to us Takis?' she would say to him, and her thought continued, tomorrow when they would return to their village, who knows in what state they would find their house and whether it is abandoned and if it needs repairing. 'We are alone Takis, alone, and if the house needs fixing, who would have to cope, if not us?' He could not comprehend such things and he complained and shouted and asked for money for a colour television and a video and a mobile phone which he did not know how to use and all sorts of other things.

'Why are you saving, neighbour?' Kyria Chrystalla from Varosha would ask 'we saved and gathered there too, until one day we lost everything, so what was the point of it' she continued, for she practiced what she preached. She saved nothing and what little she saved from her work she spent on children and grandchildren.

Another neighbour also from Varosha, also by the name of Kyria Panayiota also had a soft spot for her children and grandchildren. Chatty and restless, she always had something to say, but mostly she spoke about her sons and daughters, their studies, their work, their marriages, their children, her grand-

children whom she adored. It gave her much joy to see them progress, 'to take their place in society' as she would say, even though they were all scattered here and there, others in Cyprus and others in England. It is enough that they are happy, wherever they are, 'that is enough for me', she would repeat continuously even though she missed them so, even though deep down something troubled her. Honestly, what will they do, tomorrow, when they can 'God willing', return? Will they return? Will they leave their jobs and the other houses that they built over here? And her grandchildren, most of them born as refugees, were at school and made friends. But if the young do not return how will the town come back to life and how would... She knew that when they returned they would not re-open her late-husband's coffee shop, 'Of course not... but they must return!' Otherwise how would Varosha come back to life, how would the town revive without its young?

She thought about these things constantly, but with her neighbours she preferred to discuss other things, like their daily problems and only now and then, with Kyria Chrystalla they discussed more 'serious' matters. 'You see, Chrystalla, the American said so, Varosha must be opened, it's about time. The



Russian says the same. I praise my maker. The Turks must back down, everyone said so...and the President has gone to America, something will come of it, they will sign, you'll see...' She literally devoured all the news stories about Varosha from the radio and from the television and rebroadcast them to all those around her. It was, for her, always a matter of days for their town to open, for them to go home.

Mr. Parthenis did not talk about politics. Generally he did not speak much, nor did he stay home much or in the neighbourhood. A party animal in his youth, tall, solid, he was a dashing man with a large well-groomed moustache, always dressed to the nines, simple, but elegant. Every afternoon you would see him, with a white shirt, corduroy trousers, sometimes with a tie and jacket, he would take his hat, say 'goodbye' and leave. He looked like he had sprung out of an old photograph. He was often absent because he had fallen in love, at the age of seventy and for the first time since his wife had passed away; so in the afternoons he would go to the neighbouring settlement where his 'lady', as he called her, lived, and 'thank God' she too was a refugee, from the same area, from a village close to his own, so they would go back together when 'with luck' it was time to return.

As much as a dandy, as was Mr. Parthenis, so delicate, almost ethereal was Mr. Yiannis the cheese maker's wife Kyria Anthousa from Lefkoniko. Tall, slim, with a long, pale face, she would attend to the few vegetables in their garden, but she looked more like a spirit than a human of flesh and bone. In their village, before the war she ruled the roost, raised four children, helped out at the cheese-makers, always in the forefront, with

out resentment, here however, so fragile. As though she was still back there in Lefkoniko and as though only some small, very small part of her had left and had come here as a refugee. She was a stranger in a strange world; perhaps this is why she was in such haste to leave?

She was the first to die. Mr. Yiannis was left alone. Tall and thin as well, but with a darker face and always serious, he was in the habit, for as long as the years would allow, of getting around on an old bicycle. Kyria Anthousa was his entire life and until his own end he carried the same sorrow. He would not forgive himself for leaving their village, that they had become refugees, that he became an unknown in a refugee settlement, he who was one of the leading home-makers in the village, a hard worker and a proper family man. He was ashamed of this, of the hardships his family endured, that he didn't protect his wife, his children, from 'the disaster'. He felt so bitter, so much pain it was as if he was personally responsible for everything that had happened. Time passed and his eye sight faded, his hearing diminished and he would tire all the more easily. He now usually sat on his small veranda. Alone. And he began to forget and to sink into another world; his own. He would converse with the deceased Kyria Anthousa, with his children, with his fellow-villagers, with customers from the cheese-dairy of which most had passed away years ago. If he ever got up, it was to look for the neighbours to talk to them about his village; he could narrate stories about Lefkoniko for hours. A little before his end he was found a few times, lost, wandering distant neighbourhoods in search for the road to his Lefkoniko.

Mr. Christodoulos died a year after his wife. They had, meanwhile, managed to eat lemons from the lemon trees which with much effort had been planted by Kyria Katerina, but they departed with the same sorrow for their trees in Varosha, you see, God no longer rains anymore. Mr. Parthenis also passed away, so unexpectedly and bizarrely. It was said, he fell from a ladder, was injured and died, and so never managed to return with his lady.

Kyria Panayiota the 'restless' died not only far from her Varosha but also from her temporary home. She slipped and broke her leg. Her children, for an initial period and given that she needed special care, took her to a nursing home. She died there within the first week. It seems that she did not want to trouble them anymore, the years had also passed and it seemed that the American and the Russian were not inclined to do something to open the town...

Kyria Chrystalla is there and waits, just like the new tenants of the houses that are left vacant. Mr. Takis from Marathovouno and Kyria Panayiota are also there; she fell seriously ill this last month and she spent some time in the hospital, fortunately it was only something transient. During her absence, Mr. Takis naturally continued complaining and shouting, but at night he would sleep in the yard despite the cold; he didn't want, he said, to sleep alone in the empty house.

Kyria Georgoulla, the widow from Varosha, arrived recently. She too lives alone. Her youngest son recently became engaged to a girl from a village further up from the settlement. Soon they will start building their house, building their life...

Kyriakos Margaritis

"Toledo's Gang"

A well written crime novel, with a rich content and a significant educational value. The work's hallmarks are originality and creative imagination.



Kyriakos Margaritis was born in Paphos in 1982. He studied Classical Philology at the University of Athens.

Publications:

"Georgakis from Karpasia", historic novel, Nicosia 1998, commended by the Women's Literary Society

"The Village of Bedsheets", children's novel, 1st Prize of the Cyprus Association for Children's Novels

"Small Love Dirges", short stories, State Prize for Youth Literature awarded by the Ministry of Education and Culture, 2002

"The Tin Knight", children's novel, 2004

"Toledo's Gang", crime novel, State Prize for Literature awarded by the Ministry of Education and Culture, 2006.



"Kalikangiari-Cypriot Tales"

An extremely artistic publication with an indisputably valuable contribution to the preservation of our cultural and folklore heritage. The personal seal of the artist – publisher – creator is apparent with its high artistic level. The illustrations tie in perfectly with the text and the figures consummately portray the movements, expressions and atmosphere in which they exist.

Hambis Tsangaris was born at Kontea in 1957. When he was 24 he had the good fortune to be invited to Athens where the engraver A. Tassou had his studio and there he received lessons in engraving from Tassou himself. He studied graphic arts at the Surikov Institute in Moscow, with particular interest in engraving.

He has received an IBBY diploma and a BIB diploma at the Bratislava Biennale as well as State Prizes for Illustration.

His main aim in his art is to express his country with its history, its tribulations and its joys, its beauties and its traditions.

Publications:

"*Spanos and the Forty Dragons*", 1986, "*The Prince of Venice*", 1994, "*Hambis, 25 Years of Engraving*", 1995, "*The Fairy*", 1998, "*Kalikangiari and the Game*", 2005, "*Kalikangiari – Cypriot Tales*", 2006.

He has illustrated a great number of books by Cypriot writers.

Since 1995 he has been giving free instruction in the art of engraving to anyone who is interested, every August at Platanistassa, in memory of his great teacher A. Tassou, who did the same for him.

Hambis Tsangaris

The Flying Donkey

This tale was related to my mother by my great grandmother and my mother later related it to me.

It was dodecameron. My great grandparents sat to dinner. They fetched the demi-john to drink wine but it was empty. My great grandfather picked the demi-john up and told his wife:

"Stay here and I will go to the shop, fetch some wine, and then will sit down to dinner."

He left. On his way he saw a man riding a donkey.

"Where are you going?", he asked him.

"I am going to fetch some wine."

"Come and I'll give you a ride to the shop to buy your wine."

He mounted the donkey but as soon as he mounted it, it started racing, then flying! It flew over mountains and seas. He was so frightened that he crossed his legs tightly under the donkey's girth so he would not fall over. After a while it arrived at Jaffa where he saw many orange trees laden with oranges.

As they were flying past, he gathered some oranges and held them in his arms. After a good tour of Jaffa, the stranger brought him back to his house at the village. He





dismounted. By then it was daylight and the Kalikangiaros disappeared.

He entered the house and his wife asked him:

"Do you know what the time is? Where have you been drinking?"

"If only you knew where I have been and returned! And what is more, look what I've brought! I've brought oranges from Jaffa!" And he showed her the oranges he brought from Jaffa.

My mother always believed that her grandfather had really gone to Jaffa and back.

Katerina Nicolaou Yipsou



Elena Pericleous

"Green Knights on a Secret Mission"

A descriptive text that arouses a child's imagination and has an undisputable educational value. Fluent writing, original and rich story, clever structure. The denouement brings an optimistic message.

Elena Pericleous was born at Pendayia, in 1970.

She graduated the Pedagogical Academy, proceeded with further studies at the University of Cyprus and then obtained a MSc Degree in Environmental Education at the University of London.

Publications:

"Red Thread Wound up on a Computer", 1st Prize of the Cyprus Association for the Children's and Youth Books, 1997

"The Boy who was the Earth Star", 1st Prize of the Women's Literary Society, Athens 2001

"Happiness is Blue", short story, 2nd Prize of the Ministry of Education and Culture Competition and the Association of Children with Special Needs, 2001

"Through the Eyes of a Dog", 1st State Prize

for Literature awarded by the Ministry of Education and Culture, Cyprus 2002

"Us", novel commended by the Cyprus Association for the Children's and Youth Books, 2004





Awards for Excellence in Letters, Arts and Science



From left to right Marinus Mitellas, Kyriakos Charalambides, Panos Ioannides, former President Tassos Papadopoulos and far right Akis Cleanthous, former Minister of Education and Culture

On 4 February 2008 this year's Awards for Excellence in Letters, Arts and Sciences were presented by the former President of the Republic, Tassos Papadopoulos at a ceremony in the Strovolos Municipal Theatre, which was packed to its full capacity.

The Letters, Arts and Sciences Awards were established in 1993. They represent the state's most prestigious honour bestowed to outstanding creators in recognition of their work. In his opening address, former Education Minister, Akis Cleanthous extolled the winners' valuable services in their field of expertise and wished them even better achievements.

The recipients of this year's awards are as follows:

Letters: *Panos Ioannides and Kyriakos Charalambides*

Arts: *Marinus Mitellas, Nicos Shiafkalis and Valentinos Charalambous*

Sciences: *Andreas Kazamias, Christoforos Pissarides and Helen Soteriou*

PANOS IOANNIDES

Panos Ioannides has recorded an important chapter in Modern Greek letters. He was one of the avant-garde in the field of prose and play-writing, introducing innovations to literature.

He was born in Famagusta in 1935. He studied Mass Media Communication and Sociology in the United States and Canada and worked for many years at the Cyprus Broadcasting Corporation, retiring as Head of Programmes. He founded and ran the Kinyras, Alasia and Armida Publishing Houses. He was one of the instigators and founders of the Union of Art Lovers of Cyprus, the Association of Playwrights of Cyprus and of the House of Arts, and collaborated closely with the magazine "Kypriaka Grammata". Cyprus PEN, of which he is President, was founded on his initiative in 1979. He has worked in all the genres of literary discourse: poetry, prose and playwriting.

Panos Ioannides' work draws its inspiration from the history of the country but at the same



time is animated by an ecumenical and contemporary spirit. The language he uses, without lyrical adornment, plain and lucid, conveys the inner conflicts of his heroes by revealing the contradictory aspects of life, the hidden depth of reality and truth. The pithy style, balanced dialectic of time and place, faultless technique and psychological probing of the heroes are the chief virtues of his writing. His work includes novels, plays, poetry, television scripts and in the recent period of his creativity he has introduced an innovation by opening a dialogue with the third realm of nature, the animal kingdom.

With the wealth of his activity as President of Cyprus PEN and as editor of the English language magazine *In Focus*, he has made an important contribution to the projection of Cyprus internationally and to the promotion abroad of the work of many Cypriot writers. Thanks to his systematic endeavours, his personal labours and zeal, the literature of an isolated island like Cyprus is becoming known and accessible abroad.

He has been honoured with various distinctions including the State Prize for Prose from the Ministry of Education and Culture, the First Prize at the 5th International Festival of a Play for Television (Sofia 1976), the First Prize of the Society of Playwrights of Cyprus (1980) and the First Prize from The Cyprus Theatre Organisation for a One Act Play (1984).

He was employed for many years at the Cyprus Broadcasting Corporation as the Head of Radio and Television. His work has been translated into European languages and his plays have been presented on television and in the theatre in Cyprus.

KYRIAKOS CHARALAMBIDES

Kyriakos Charalambides was born at Achna in 1940. He studied History and Archaeology in Athens, where he also attended courses on the theatre, and specialised in Radio in Munich. He worked as a teacher of Greek in secondary education and, for three decades, at the Cyprus Broadcasting Corporation, from where he retired as Head of Programmes. He has published ten collections of poems.

Kyriakos Charalambides' poetry has a purely personal style. His matchless elliptic verses, his drawing of symbols from the ancient Greek world and their use to reflect contemporary reality are the main innovations in his poetry which lead him to a purely personal style. Introverted lyricism and the mature concreteness of his poetry coexist in an indissoluble cohesion in his work. His intense problematisation about the language and a deep sense of ontological isolation penetrate all his work. His verses, charged with existential anxiety, echo the concerns and quests of contemporary man. For Kyriakos Charalambides language is not just a simple means of communication but also a means of mastering his personal myth.



His poetry is distinguished for its basic technique, the rejection of what is technically superfluous, succinctness and intellectual content. The understanding of the meaning of history, the reference to historical symbols, the imagery of his poems, compose a poetry which is purely personal and which expresses the polymorphous Greek character.

He has been honoured with various distinctions in Cyprus and abroad including a prize from the Academy of Athens for the collection of poems "Dome" / "Tholos" (1989), three State Prizes for Poetry from the Ministry of Education and Culture, the State Prize for Poetry of Greece for his collection "Meta-history" / "Methistoria" (1996) and the International Cavafy Award (1998). He was also honoured by the Academy of Athens with the Costas and Eleni Ourani Prize (2003) for the entirety of his poetry.

MARINOS MITELLAS

Marinos Mitellas was born in Limassol in 1938. He studied Music in Athens and on his return to Cyprus in 1981 was appointed teacher of music in Secondary Schools. He retired as Head Master.

Marinos Mitellas, with his high professionalism and dedication has played an important role in the upgrading of music and cultural life in general of the island.

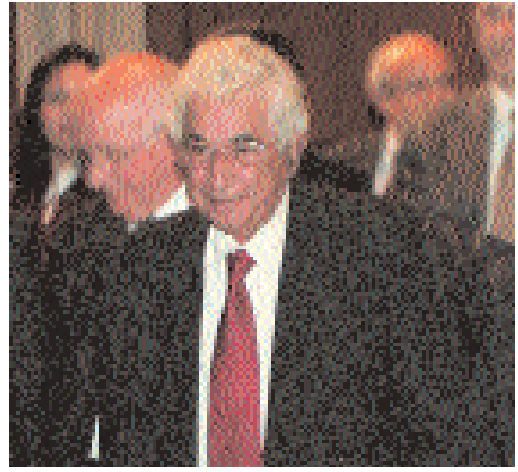
He offered his services to music in Cyprus in the various positions he held, such as teacher, and later Head Teacher in Secondary Schools. As successor to Solon Michaelides, he took over the direction of the "Aris Limassol" choir and from then on he unflinchingly offered his services, for almost 10 years, with exceptional zeal and personal sacrifice. Thanks to his tireless efforts, he contributed substantially



to the re-establishment of the "Aris Limassol" choir, winning universal recognition in Cyprus and abroad for its high artistic standard. He has played an important role in the cultural life of the country, especially in his birthplace, Limassol. He served as a member on various committees such as the Artistic Committee of THOC and of the Limassol Municipality. Today he is a member of the Board of the Symphony Orchestra of Cyprus Foundation.

NICOS SHIAFKALIS

Nicos Shiafkalis was born at Droushia, Paphos, in 1934. He studied Theatre in London and worked in England as an actor on the stage, on television and radio and in films. From 1960, he collaborated with the Cypriot Theatre, the New Theatre and the Cyprus Organisation for Theatre Development. He taught acting in Athens and at the Pedagogical Academy of Cyprus. In 1967 he founded the Nicos Shiafkalis Theatre Company. He was a member of the Artistic Committee of the Cyprus Theatre Organisation as an actor and regular director from the time of its foundation. He has translated plays and books from English. In 1981 he took over the artistic direc-



tion of the Agrinion Municipal Regional Theatre where he organised the 1st International Seminar of Regional Theatres, the Pan Hellenic Conference of Regional Theatres and, on his own initiative, he founded the International Centre of Ancient Drama. He returned to Cyprus in 1986.

Nicos Shiafkalis was one of the founders of the Cyprus branch of the International Theatre Institute. As a member of the Board and Executive Director of the Cyprus Centre of the International Theatre Institute, he inspired and organised a range of events on ancient Greek drama, such as the International Festival of Ancient Greek Drama, the Symposium, the Summer Institute and the International Encounter of Drama Schools, which have become established as important artistic institutions and have placed Cyprus on the international cultural map. Thanks to the relations of the Cyprus Centre of the International Theatre Institute with other national centres of the same organisation, relations which he developed to a great extent, the theatre family of Cyprus has had the opportunity to become acquainted with worldwide trends in the theatre and also to take part in theatrical events abroad.

For a succession of years he served as a member of the Executive Committee of the International Theatre Institute and President of the Permanent World Committee of Cultural Identity and Development of the same organisation, of which he is today honorary president. In this capacity he has taken part in various international conferences, projecting Cypriot culture internationally and particularly Cypriot theatrical creation.

VALENTINOS CHARALAMBOUS

Valentinos Charalambous was born in Famagusta in 1929. He studied ceramics in London at the Central School of Fine Art and at the studio of the famous English ceramicist Bernard Leach.

The sources of the artistic work of Valentinos Charalambous can be traced in both the tradition of the popular pottery of Cyprus and contemporary artistic ceramics. With his excellent knowledge of his material and contemporary techniques, Valentinos creates works of matchless beauty, of monumental form and character, which transcend the limits of the scale to which ceramics have conventionally deferred.

The contribution of Valentinos as a teacher of ceramics has been enormous and continues uninterrupted today in his studio in Limassol. His contribution to the systematic academic study and teaching of ceramics has been catalytic. In Iraq, where he lived and worked as an academic for many years, Valentinos has been recognised as a founder of the teaching of contemporary ceramics, initially in his capacity as founder and Head of the Ceramics Department of the Institute of Fine Arts of Baghdad and, later, as founder and Head of the Ceramics Department of the Academy of



Fine Arts of the University of Baghdad. Iraq has awarded him the honours due to him for his contribution. He also contributed substantially to the strengthening of the cultural relations of Cyprus with the Arab world.

He was a member of various committees and Commissioner for the Cypriot entries at international Biennale, while works of his are in the Leeds Museum of Contemporary Ceramics in England, in the Museum of Contemporary Art of Iraq and in other museums in Egypt, Barcelona, Nicosia and elsewhere.

Among other international distinctions, he has been honoured by the Ministry of Culture of Iraq for his contribution to the contemporary art of Iraq and by the Cypriot Government for his contribution to contemporary Cypriot art. In 1996 he was included in the book "The Leach Legacy" which was published in England and is about the contribution of a small group of ceramicists to contemporary art, while in 2001 the International Biographical Centre of Cambridge included him in the volume "500 Founders of the 21st Century" and presented him with a marble

plaque and gold medallion and, in 2002, a diploma for his Overall Contribution to Ceramics. In 2002 the American Biographical Institute included him in the volume "Great Minds of the 21st Century". In 2002 the World Academy of Letters of the United States awarded him an Honorary Distinction for his contribution to world ceramics. In 2002 one of his works was auctioned in London at Bonhams, along with works by the world's most famous ceramicists. In 2005 the International Biographical Centre of Cambridge listed him among the one hundred top artists of 2005 in the publication "100 Top Artists 2005", while in 2006 he was included in the book "Leach Pottery St Ives".

The prizes and distinctions conferred on him from time to time are proof of the international recognition of his work and his contribution in general to the development of ceramics.

ANDREAS KAZAMIAS

Andreas Kazamias has traced an exceptionally rich and successful course in the field of scientific research and teaching. His long academic career, during which he served the science of pedagogics in various institutions of higher education in America and Europe, is tangible proof of the academic range and effect which his scientific work has had and continues to have, since it has been translated into many languages and continues to be taught.

Andreas Kazamias was born in Kalopanayiotis in 1927. He studied History and English Literature in England and Education in the United States. He received a doctorate from Harvard University in the History of Education and Comparative Education. He went on to work as an academic in the U.S.A.

and Europe. At the same time he published research, wrote scientific studies and organised and took part in international conferences in the U.S.A., Europe, Greece, Turkey, Mexico, China and the Soviet Union. In 1964 he was appointed Professor of Comparative Pedagogics and Educational Policy at the School of Science of Education of the University of Wisconsin (U.S.A.), where he taught until 2005. He is now Emeritus Professor. He was also Professor of Pedagogics at the University of Crete and Professor of Pedagogics at the University of Athens, where he served until 1997, and is now Emeritus Professor.

A proof of the respect which he enjoys in Greece for the multifarious services which he offered in the founding and development of scientific research and study is the fact that Andreas Kazamias served as President of the Pedagogical Association of Greece as well as President of the Greek Association of Comparative Education. In 1981, he was elected Corresponding Member of the Academy of Athens.

With his regular attendance at tens of scientific conferences held in Cyprus, Andreas Kaza-



mias has always kept alive his ties with his native land. His continuous interest in the educational system and educational policy of Cyprus, his proven abilities and his desire to offer his knowledge and his experience for the improvement of the quality and the upgrading of education were the criteria for his appointment by the Council of Ministers in 2003 as President of the seven-member committee which prepared and submitted in 2004 its report on Educational Reform, with the title "Democratic and Humanistic Education for a Euro-Cypriot State".

CHRISTOFOROS PISSARIDES

Professor Christoforos Pissarides was born in Nicosia in 1948. He teaches Economics at the London School of Economics and Political Science and is also Head of the Research Programmes in Macroeconomics at the Centre for Economic Performance of the same university. He is a member of the British Academy and of the Econometric Society. He



has also been or continues to be an active member of very many other research centres and professional organisations such as the European Economic Association, the Royal Economic Society, the Centre for Economic Policy Research (London), the Institute for the Study of Labor (IZA, Bonn) et al.

His academic qualifications and specialised knowledge have led to the role of special advisor to various regional and international organisations, such as the Forum for Economic Research in the Arab Countries, Iran and Turkey, the European Employment Task Force, the World Bank, the European Commission and the Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development. He has served as advisor to the Bank of England on matters relating to the labour market and is also a member of the Monetary Policy Committee of the Central Bank of Cyprus.

For his pioneering scientific work in the Economics of Labour, which led to a better understanding of the complex relationship between unemployment and the fluctuations of labour, Professor Christoforos Pissarides was awarded the IZA prize in 2005. The model which Professor Pissarides developed for the matching of the creation of jobs with the number of unemployed and vacant positions and the tension between the demand for and the supply of labour, is now a basic tool for the analysis of the labour market. The prize, which was awarded jointly to Professor Pissarides and Dale Mortensen, was awarded for the first time to an economist from outside the U.S.A.

HELEN SOTERIOU

In the person of Helen Soteriou there is an ideal combination of virtues which define her exceptional personality, since she is a paragon

of a distinguished scientist with a strongly developed sense of social contribution. Helen Soteriou's aim in life was to ease human pain, summoning up for this purpose her profound scientific knowledge and her specialised training in the diagnosis and treatment of cancer.

Helen Soteriou was born in England in 1920. She studied medicine at the medical schools of the Royal Free Hospital, London University, the Royal Buckinghamshire Hospital, the Central Middlesex Hospital and the National Temperance Hospital. She specialised in Oncology and Radiotherapy at the Royal Free Hospital after serving for four years in the British army as a doctor with the rank of captain. As an Oncology and Radiotherapy specialist, she worked as Head of the Radiotherapy Centre of St Luke's Hospital, Guildford. In 1969 she married Andreas Soteriou from Famagusta and settled in Cyprus. She worked at the Nicosia General Hospital as Head of the Radiotherapy Department. After her retirement from the public sector, Helen Soteriou set up the first private Radiotherapy Centre in Cyprus, at the Evangelistria Clinic in Nicosia, and worked there until 1995.

For the services which she offered and the

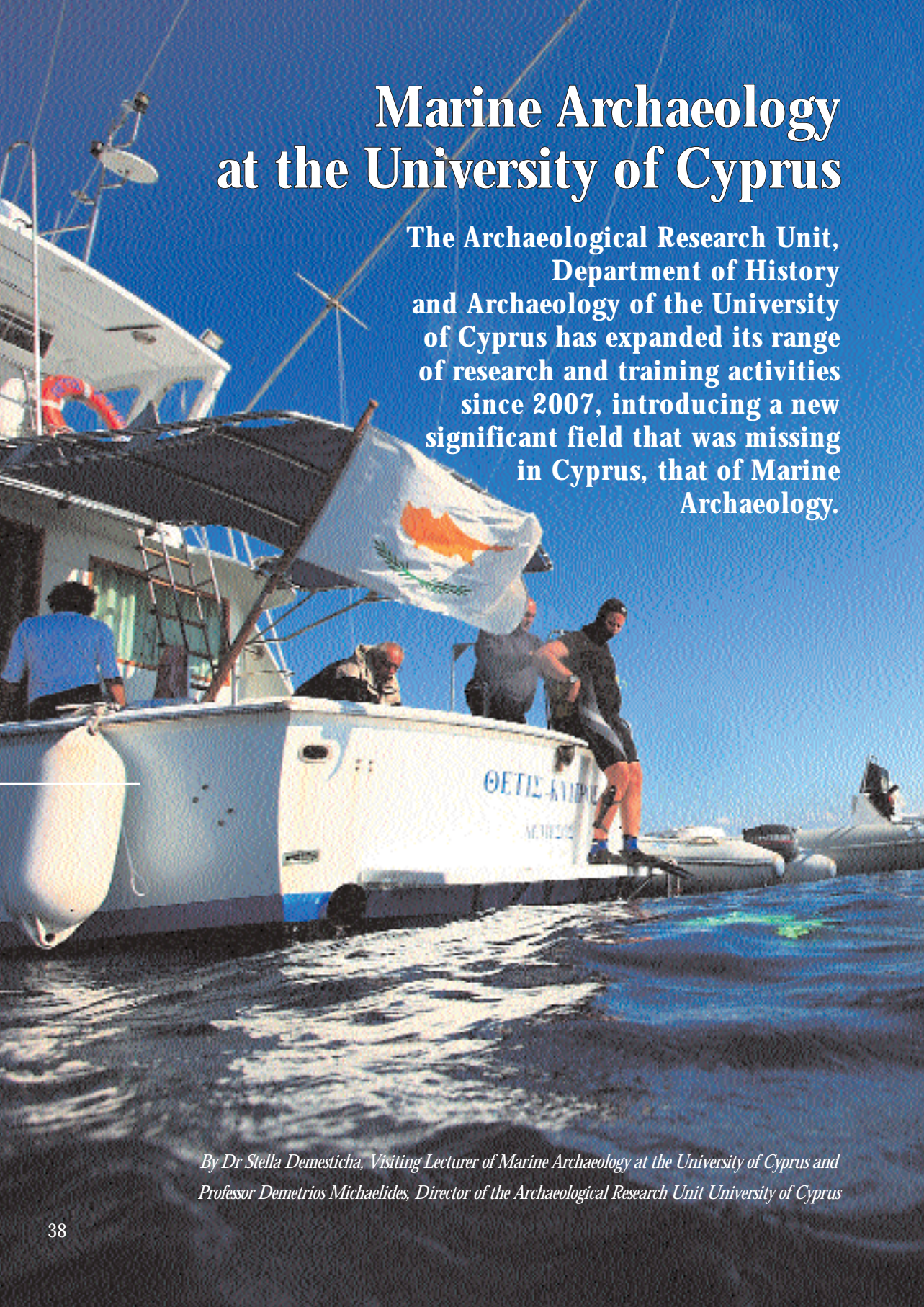


entirety of her contribution, Queen Elizabeth II conferred on her the title of Officer of the Order of the British Empire (O.B.E.). Her support and assistance to her fellow human beings who suffer from cancer was channelled through her work for the Anticancer Association of Cyprus, in offering invaluable services from her position of vice president and now from that of honorary vice president. Her participation in political activities and movements, such as the anti-occupation marches of the movement "Women Walk Home", is the crown of her socio-political activity in the long course of her humanitarian contribution.



Marine Archaeology at the University of Cyprus

**The Archaeological Research Unit,
Department of History
and Archaeology of the University
of Cyprus has expanded its range
of research and training activities
since 2007, introducing a new
significant field that was missing
in Cyprus, that of Marine
Archaeology.**



*By Dr Stella Demesticha, Visiting Lecturer of Marine Archaeology at the University of Cyprus and
Professor Demetrios Michaelides, Director of the Archaeological Research Unit University of Cyprus*

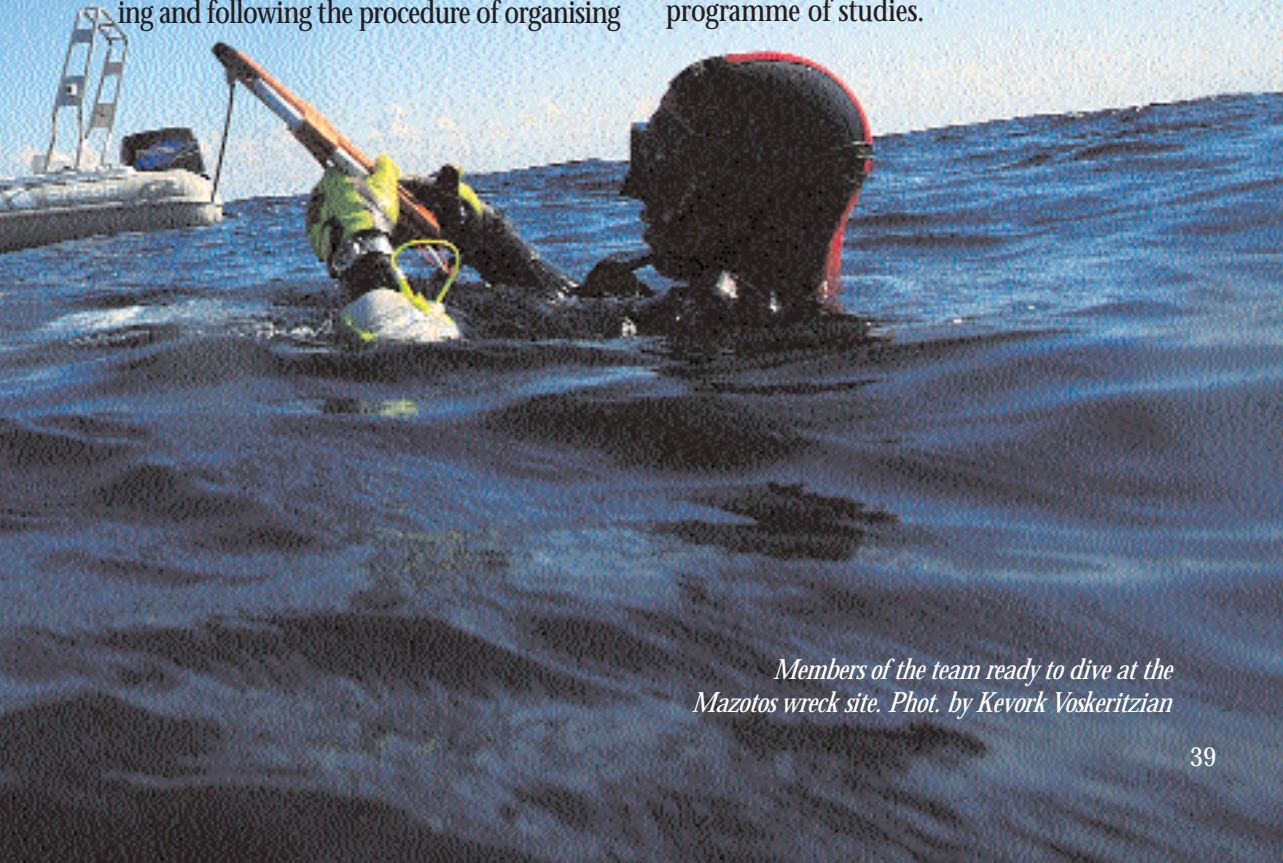
Training

Archaeology students at the University of Cyprus, within the framework of their graduate studies, now have the opportunity to attend classes on marine archaeology. In other words, they learn about marine activity in ancient times through the study of sources (iconography, ancient texts) and archaeological finds (sunken cities, ports, ancient shipwrecks). The lessons commenced following a relevant agreement signed by the University of Cyprus and the THETIS Foundation, which funds the entire cost. In particular, the lesson entitled 'Methods and Techniques of Underwater Archaeological Research', besides including theoretical teaching in the classroom, also includes practical training at sea.

Training is compulsory for all students who must acquire the entry level diving qualifications before commencing practical training and following the procedure of organising

and undertaking underwater research. The purpose of these practical lessons is to familiarise the students with the conditions and methods of archaeological research in the sea. The theoretical lessons of Marine Archaeology are accompanied by an integrated programme of basic study in this particular field.

It is worth noting that the addition of these classes to the graduate programme of the University is of particular importance. In a country like Cyprus, which has had significant marine activity, the training in relevant subjects is viewed as a necessity, especially for new archaeologists who will be involved in research, protection and promotion of antiquities, which are found on the coast or on the seabed. Furthermore, the University of Cyprus is now one of few universities in the Mediterranean which includes practical lessons of underwater archaeology in its undergraduate programme of studies.



Members of the team ready to dive at the Mazotos wreck site. Phot. by Kevork Voskeritzian

Researching a Shipwreck

Since November 2007, the University of Cyprus has also been undertaking underwater research at an important shipwreck of the classical period (middle of the 4th century BC).

The shipwreck was found in the sea of the Mazotos area in 2006 and was reported to the authorities by divers. Some of the ship's cargo is visible on the seabed. It appears to be a merchant ship that was transporting amphorae of wine from Chios. Wine from Chios was considered the best and perhaps the most expensive Greek wine in ancient times. The type of these amphorae dates the shipwreck to about the middle of the 4th century BC (350 – 330 BC). Given the evidence so far, it is estimated that the ship was transporting 400-600 amphorae. About half are visible on the sea floor, while the rest of the find is still buried in the seabed. The depth of the find, but also the fact that the composition of the seabed is sandy provides hope that besides the cargo, a part of the body of the wooden ship will have been preserved. In the current phase the research aims to record the shipwreck through a detailed drawing and photographic documentation of the structure in its present condition.

This research is of major significance for the naval and economic history of the Eastern Mediterranean, given that the shipwreck of Mazotos comprises one of the few shipwrecks of the classical period in the Eastern Mediterranean that is preserved in such good condition. The results of the project will shed more light on the fundamental issues of naval and economic life in ancient times that currently concern the archaeological research: the trading relations between the northern Aegean and the southeast Mediterranean, the role of Cyprus in the naval routes during the last peri-



*Drawing the amphorae of the Mazotos wreck.
Phot. by Yiangos Hadjiyiannis*



*Students of the University of Cyprus learn how to document an ancient stone anchor underwater.
Phot. by Michalis Tzirponouris*

od of the Cypriot kingdoms, and the types and sizes of merchant ships of the time.

Another equally important aspect of this project is the fact that it is the first underwater research which is being undertaken with the collaboration of exclusively Cypriot institutions: the Archaeological Research Unit undertook the research after an agreement with the Cyprus Department of Antiquities. The Cyprus Tourist Organisation was among the first institutions that funded the investigation of this wreck, right after it was declared to the Department of Antiquities, and still shows great interest thanks to the efforts of Glafkos Kariolou. The first expedition was realised with the finan-

cial support of the THETIS Foundation and the personal interest of its founder, Adonis Papadopoulos.

The accommodation of the team from Greece at the Aldiana hotel in Alaminos was kindly sponsored by Mr. Christos Mouskis. The boats for the research were also provided free of charge by the owners: as support boat the THETIS KYPROS was used, owned by the THETIS Foundation and as safety boat the speed boat belonging to Yiangos Hadjiyiannis.

Professor Demetrios Michaelides and Stella Demesticha headed the project. The archi-

tect Fotini Vlahakis is responsible for drawing documentation, and the archaeologist, Bruce Hartzler, for the creation of photo-mosaics. The physicist, Markos Garras is responsible for technical equipment, and Niovi Karapetsis, archaeologist, specializing in marine archaeology, assisted the team. Of utmost significance for the success of the mission was the contribution of the Cyprus professional divers, members of the Scientific Committee of the Cyprus Federation of Underwater Activities: Andreas Troullides, George Troullides, Christos Patsalides, Costas Andreou, Pantelis Themistocleous, Polyvios Savvas and Yiangos Hadjiyiannis.



Students of the University of Cyprus in the speedboat, kindly offered by the British Sovereign Bases at Akrotiri, to support the lessons. Phot. by Thomas Kosti

New Minister of Education and Culture

Professor Andreas Demetriou was appointed Minister of Education and Culture in the new government following the elections of 24 February 2008.

For the last four years before his appointment, Professor Andreas Demetriou had been President of the Interim Governing Board of the Technological University of Cyprus and since 2007 President of the Conference of Rectors of the Universities of Cyprus.

Born in Strongylo, in the Famagusta district in 1950, he studied Psychology and Education at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and proceeded with further studies in Psychology at the University of New South Wales, Australia. In 1983, he obtained a PhD in Psychology from the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece.

He was a member of the academic staff of the Department of Psychology at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki from 1975 to 1996 and full professor of developmental psychology from 1992 – 1996 and from then onwards at the University of Cyprus and the Technological University of Cyprus.

He taught as Visiting Fellow or Professor at several universities, including the Universities of Porto, Portugal, Ljubljana and Maribor, Slovenia, Fribourg, Switzerland and the University of Melbourne, Australia, and lectured as invited lecturer for technical seminars on cognitive development at more than 50 universities all over the world, including the Universities of Stanford, Harvard, Yale,



McGill, Toronto, Munich, Leiden, Gothenburg, Wurtzburgh, Edinburgh, Leuven, etc. He is a member of many learned societies, including the European Association for Research on Learning and Instruction, the International Society for the Study of Behavioural Development, the Society for Research in Child Development, and the American Psychological Society.

He served as editor or board member of many journals, including the *Advances in Learning and Instruction*, *Learning and Instruction: The Journal of the European Association for Research on Learning and Instruction*, *Developmental Science*, *Psychology: The Journal of the Hellenic Psychological Society*.

He has published more than 150 books and articles in technical journals presenting his work on cognitive development. This work advances a new comprehensive theory of cognitive development. On assuming his duties, Professor Demetriou pledged to invest all his efforts and experience acquired through long years of serving education in order to achieve the implementation of the long-awaited education reform. Expressing his great confidence in the potential of the pupils, students and education staff of Cyprus, the Minister urged them to join forces in building new mechanisms of communication and cooperation, in devising the formula for the way ahead.

The editorial board of *Cyprus Today* wishes Professor Demetriou every success in his task.