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**ΙΡΛΑΝΔΙΑ-ΚΥΠΡΟΣ**  
Παράλληλοι Δρόμοι. Κοινές Επιδιώξεις

**IRELAND-CYPRUS**  
Parallel Journeys. Common Aspirations



ΕΚΔΟΣΕΙΣ ● ΕΝ ΤΥΠΟΙΣ



## ISLAND CULTURES AT THE OPPOSITE ENDS OF EUROPE: CYPRIOT STUDIES IN IRELAND

*Giorgos Papantoniou and Christine E. Morris*

### **Introduction**

During the last few years, Ireland has seen an intensification of interest in Cypriot studies. This is owed to the interest that various institutions and individuals have shown in promoting Greek and Cypriot studies within the country. In this chapter we review the key-factors that have allowed the promotion of Cypriot studies in Ireland and the establishment of various academic relations and bonds between the two countries. We conclude by drawing attention to the contribution of Irish-based academic activity to the Cypriot studies as a discipline, evaluating the scope for the continuation of such developments in the future.

### **Trinity College Dublin: A Growing Academic Interest in Cypriot Studies**

#### *1. The Department of Classics and the Anastasios G. Leventis Foundation*

Cypriot studies have found a home within the Department of Classics at Trinity College Dublin. In fact, Trinity College Dublin is the only academic institution in Ireland which has developed a dynamic and effective specialisation in Cypriot studies. It is largely due to the generous support of the Anastasios G. Leventis Foundation on the one hand, and to the efforts and interest of Dr Christine E. Morris in promoting the study of Cypriot history and archaeology. We would also like to make special mention of the gentle presence of the Cypriot professor Petros Florides (Professor of Mathematics and more recently a Pro-Chancellor of Trinity), who has, since joining the College in 1962, acted as mentor and friend to fellow Cypriots studying in Trinity.

The support and interest of the Anastasios G. Leventis Foundation, and, more recently, the Andrew A. David Foundation in Trinity College Dublin have their roots in the family connections with the College. Charalambos Alcibiades (known as

Bambos) David, came to Trinity in 1954 to study economics, and, to judge from contemporary reports he was a lively and sociable figure, described as “the first personality of College and to social Dublin Makarios is the other Cypriot”.<sup>1</sup> Among his many activities he was Chairman of the Trinity News, and an active member of the ‘Phil’ (the College debating society), where he is recorded as having addressed the society on the topic of Cypriot enosis as “a passionate patriot” in November 1954.<sup>2</sup> It was also at Trinity that Bambos met and became engaged to Ioanna (Jean) Patatimides, a fellow student, studying modern languages.<sup>3</sup> Equally well-known in College was Andreas A. David (1934-2000) who graduated in business studies in 1957, while excelling at sport, notably as captain of the College football club and as a member of the Irish Universities’ team. Like Bambos he was on the staff of the Trinity News, both as sports editor and Vice-Chairman.<sup>4</sup>

The Anastasios G. Leventis lectureship in Greek Archaeology and History was established in 1994, a position held by Dr Christine E. Morris since then; it was renamed the Andrew A. David lectureship in 2010 in recognition of the joint support of the two Foundations for the post, and the special links of the David branch of the family with Trinity College. The generous support of the Foundations enabled Trinity to appoint, for the first time, a scholar specialising in Greek and Cypriot archaeology. This appointment has been central to the nurturing and development of Cypriot studies as a strand of Greek archaeology in Trinity. Two Anastasios G. Leventis Studentships for postgraduate research (from 2012) have added further support to Hellenic studies in Trinity.

Of particular significance has been the introduction of an undergraduate seminar course on Ancient Cyprus. This seminar module explores the archaeology and long-term history of Cyprus from earliest times through to the foundation of the Iron Age city-kingdoms. It aims at introducing the students to the island’s distinctive material culture and to the development of Cypriot society within a broader Mediterranean context. The incorporation of such a specialised course on ancient Cyprus in a

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<sup>1</sup> *Trinity News (University Newspaper)*, Dublin 10 May 1956.

<sup>2</sup> *Trinity News (University Newspaper)*, Dublin 11 November 1954.

<sup>3</sup> *Trinity News (University Newspaper)*, Dublin 30 May 1957.

<sup>4</sup> *Trinity News (University Newspaper)*, Dublin 18 May 1957.

University outside Cyprus itself is indeed a very rare phenomenon, and it makes an important contribution to the international profile of Cypriot studies. Students also reflect on how the study of Cypriot archaeology has been shaped by modern historical events, processes and ideologies. The course has, over the years, benefitted from the donation and exchange of books on Cypriot topics published by the Anastasios G. Leventis Foundation and the Cypriot Department of Antiquities. Support for teaching also came over several years in the form of public lectures and a series of memorable undergraduate seminars on Cypriot archaeology given by Prof. Vassos Karageorghis.

For the academic year 2013-2014, Trinity aims at incorporating into its postgraduate programme another specialised course on ancient Cyprus. Dr Giorgos Papantoniou will offer a postgraduate course to the M.Phil. in Classics programme entitled “Unlocking Sacred Landscapes: Cypriot Sanctuaries and Religion from Prehistory to the Roman times”. Perceiving sacred space as instrumental in forming power relations and worldviews in antiquity, this module aims at elucidating how meanings and identities were diachronically expressed in, or created by, the topographical setting of religion and its material depositions and dedications. The introduction of a specialised course on Cyprus within a master’s programme again, is an innovating and rare phenomenon in an Anglophone university. It is hoped that the module will attract students wishing to pursue postgraduate research specifically on Cyprus.

## *2. Irish-based Research on Cyprus outside the Domain of Classics*

While the focus on Cypriot studies in Trinity College Dublin has usually been on ancient history and archaeology, we would also like to draw attention to the scholarly work of Dr Savvas Neocleous, a Trinity graduate and current research associate within the Centre for Medieval and Renaissance Studies and of Eliza Papaki who recently completed her M.Phil. thesis on the study and interpretation of street names in Dublin and Nicosia.

While a doctoral student at Trinity College, Savvas Neocleous organised two international postgraduate fora in Byzantine Studies.<sup>5</sup> In addition to helping to put

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<sup>5</sup> Savvas Neocleous, ed. *Papers from the First and Second Postgraduate Forums in Byzantine Studies: Sailing to Byzantium*, Newcastle upon Tyne 2009.

Trinity on the map of Byzantine Studies, Neocleous also organised the workshop ‘Reading Greek Manuscripts’, which drew academic attention to Trinity’s rich but largely unexplored holdings in Greek manuscripts. Neocleous published a number of articles on aspects of Latin-Byzantine relations in international academic journals; of note in this context is his article “Imaging Isaak Komnenos of Cyprus (1184-1191) and the Cypriots: Evidence from the Latin Historiography of the Third Crusade”, forthcoming in the 2013 in one of the most prestigious international journals on Byzantine studies.<sup>6</sup>

Eliza Papaki, another Cypriot student in Trinity College Dublin, explored and interpreted street names in Dublin and Nicosia as part of her M.Phil. in Public History and Cultural Heritage.<sup>7</sup> The study examines the iconography inscribed on the urban space through the commemoration of street names. Approaching this issue through the capitals of Cyprus and Ireland and driven from an interest in the historical background of the two cities as part of the British Empire, this analysis attempts a wider evaluation of the political dynamics of street naming.

### *3. Doctoral and Postdoctoral Research on Ancient Cyprus funded by Trinity College Dublin and the Irish Research Council*

A number of Trinity master and doctoral dissertations on Cypriot subjects have already been completed, or are currently under implementation. In the following section we will briefly present the doctoral research undertaken within the Department of Classics under the supervision of Dr Christine Morris.

Deirdre Stritch completed her Ph.D. dissertation in 2007.<sup>8</sup> Her work was undertaken under the umbrella of the Centre for Mediterranean and Near Eastern Studies of

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<sup>6</sup> Neocleous, “Imaging Isaak Komnenos of Cyprus (1184-1191) and the Cypriots: Evidence from the Latin Historiography of the Third Crusade”, *Byzantion* 83, 2013.

<sup>7</sup> Eliza Papaki, “Reading and Interpreting Street Names: a comparative study of the politics of renaming in Nicosia and Dublin”, unpublished M.Phil. dissertation, Trinity College Dublin 2012.

<sup>8</sup> Deirdre Stritch. *Archaeology and the State: An Examination of Archaeological Practice and Official Interpretation of Archaeological Remains in Israel and the Republic of Cyprus*, Ph.D. dissertation, Trinity College Dublin 2007.

Trinity College Dublin, and funded with a Mediterranean and Near Eastern Studies studentship through the Government of Ireland's National Development Plan. The thesis explored the history of the relationship between archaeology and the state through two case studies, Cyprus and Israel. In both cases archaeology and heritage developed initially under British influence, and both countries have faced the challenge of management, preservation and presentation of the past in the face of war and conflict.

Giorgos Papantoniou has completed his Ph.D. dissertation in 2008.<sup>9</sup> His doctoral research was also fully funded by the Government of Ireland's National Development Plan via the Centre for Mediterranean and Near Eastern Studies of Trinity College Dublin. This work has recently been published as a monograph under the title "Religion and Social Transformations in Cyprus: From the Cypriot Basileis to the Hellenistic Strategos".<sup>10</sup> The transformation of this work from a doctoral dissertation to a scholarly monograph was funded through a one-year postdoctoral fellowship from the Irish Research Council, then the Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences.<sup>11</sup> The monograph focuses on religion to explore how the socio-cultural infrastructure of Cyprus was affected by the transition from segmented administration by many Cypriot kings to the island-wide government by a foreign Ptolemaic correspondent. It approaches politico-religious ideological responses and structures of symbolism through the study of sacred landscapes, specific iconographic elements, and archaeological contexts and architecture, as well as through textual and epigraphic evidence. A fresh approach to the transition is put forward, connecting the island more emphatically with its *longue durée*.

Very recently completed (2012) is a PhD by Katarzyna Zeman-Wiśniewska.<sup>12</sup> This project has been funded by a Trinity College studentship, and then by the Irish

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<sup>9</sup> Giorgos Papantoniou, *Cyprus, from Basileis to Strategos: Social Power and the Archaeology of Religion*. Ph.D. dissertation, Trinity College Dublin 2008.

<sup>10</sup> Papantoniou, *Religion and Social Transformations in Cyprus: From the Cypriot Basileis to the Hellenistic Strategos*, Leiden, 2012.

<sup>11</sup> Irish Research Council official website, <http://www.irchss.ie/awards/scheme-2-2009>.

<sup>12</sup> Katarzyna Zeman-Wiśniewska, *Goddesses with Upraised Arms in Crete and Cyprus. A Comparative Study*, Ph.D. dissertation, Trinity College Dublin 2012.



Research Council.<sup>13</sup> The project is a comparative study of the figure and figurine type conventionally termed ‘Goddesses with Upraised Arms’ found on Cyprus and Crete, during the transition from the Late Bronze Age to the Early Iron Age. In particular, the research focuses on why, and to what extent, ‘Goddesses with Upraised Arms’ were reinterpreted and incorporated into older Cypriot cult practices, and to what extent they were a sign of new elements on Cyprus, brought by migrants from the Aegean region.

A further Ph.D. project on a Cypriot topic is currently in the early stages of implementation. Constantina Alexandrou, the first recipient of the Anastasios G. Leventis Postgraduate Scholarship in Hellenic Studies (from 2012), is working on “An analysis of the Late Cypriot II-IIIa anthropomorphic terracotta figurines”. This builds on initial work undertaken for her completed M.Phil. in Classics (2011). The project aims to establish a statistical and contextual analysis of the Late Cypriot Base-Ring terracotta figurines in order to explore their use, role and character but also their importance in Cypriot society. Of particular importance will be the study of the technological aspects of production of the figurines which are both solid and hollow formed, and of consideration of the experiential dimensions of this corpus of material. This work further builds a particular strength in coroplastic (figurine) studies within Trinity in the context of both Cypriot material (Zeman-Wisniewska; also Papantoniou), and Cretan Bronze Age material (Morris’ work on peak sanctuary figurines, in collaboration with Alan Peatfield).

At a time of international economic recession the Government of Ireland also made the commitment to fund another postdoctoral project related to Cypriot archaeology. One of the present authors (Papantoniou) is currently holding a three-year Irish Research Council postdoctoral fellowship co-funded by the European Commission (Marie Curie International Outgoing Fellowships) to work on the project entitled “‘Unlocking’ Sacred Landscapes: A Holistic Approach to Cypriot Sanctuaries and Religion”.<sup>14</sup> This project constitutes a collaboration between the Department of Classics, Trinity College Dublin and the Laboratory of Geophysical – Satellite Remote

<sup>13</sup> Irish Research Council official website, <http://www.irchss.ie/awards/year-2009-awards>.

<sup>14</sup> Irish Research Council official website, , <http://www.research.ie/awards/scheme-2-postdoctoral-fellowship-2011>.

Sensing and Archaeo-environment, Foundation for Research and Technology, Hellas (FORTH), Institute for Mediterranean Studies (IMS) at Crete, under the mentorship of Dr Christine Morris and Dr Apostolos Sarris. This project aims to contextualise the development of sacred space and cult from the Bronze Age to the Roman period, using a range of so-called ‘culture-historical’, ‘processual’ and ‘post-processual’ approaches. Particular emphasis is given to the interaction between political and religious structures.

#### *4. Postgraduate Cypriot Archaeology Annual Meetings*

The Department of Classics in collaboration with the Centre for Mediterranean and Near Eastern Studies and various other bodies (such as the Irish Institute of the Hellenic Studies at Athens and Cyprus Tourism at Dublin) has hosted the Postgraduate Cypriot Archaeology (POCA) annual meeting twice, in 2003 and in 2005. In fact, Ireland is the only country which has hosted the POCA meeting on more than one occasion. POCA was first conceived in 2001 as a gathering of young researchers with a keen interest in Cypriot archaeology, providing a forum for young scholars to present their work, constructively discuss central themes of their research, meet people who work in the same area and exchange ideas and information in a friendly and collegial environment; in addition POCA from the beginnings aimed at promoting Cypriot studies and contextualising Cyprus within its broader Mediterranean context.

Until 2005 POCA was largely informal in character and was addressed to postgraduate students mostly from the United Kingdom and Ireland. The 2005 Dublin meeting has been characterised as the real “turning point in the history of POCA [...] which served to transform the idea of POCA and established it as an international gathering of postgraduate students and young researchers working on Cypriot Archaeology”.<sup>15</sup> Students from various countries, including Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Poland, the United Kingdom and the United States travelled to Dublin in order to attend the workshop. In addition, POCA 2005 aimed at including time periods not

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<sup>15</sup> Skevi Christodoulou and Anna Satraki eds, *Postgraduate Cypriot Archaeology Conference*. Newcastle upon Tyne, 2010, p. xvi; cf. Papantoniou and Neocleous, “Κυπριακή Αρχαιολογία στο Δουβλίνο”, (Cypriot Archaeology in Dublin), *Κοινότητα. Ενημερωτικό Δελτίο Πανεπιστήμιου Κύπρου*, February 2006, p. 10.



usually covered by the conference, achieving presentation ranging from the Bronze Age to the Byzantine and Medieval times, but also including modern heritage management. Perceiving the need for the survival and growth of such a forum for postgraduates and young researchers, and the usefulness of interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary studies, the Trinity postgraduate students who organised the event, were most keen to actively encourage participation from disciplines other than pure archaeology.

The 2005 Dublin workshop was opened by Prof. Maria Iacovou of the University of Cyprus with a public lecture entitled “Let the ‘ancient island’ speak: A Cyprocentric approach to the history of the Cypriote Kingdoms”. The content of this lecture has been instrumental in forming the directions of Cypriot archaeology as a discipline in the future.<sup>16</sup> Iacovou encouraged the new generation of scholars working on Cyprus to listen to the voice of the ‘ancient island’. In a more recent publication, where she brings together the results of her attempts to introduce an island-specific methodology for the study of the emergence of state formation in ancient Cyprus, Iacovou even more clearly ‘advocates Cyprocentricism’.<sup>17</sup> The forum was concluded by Prof. Maria Iacovou and Dr Christine Morris. Some suggestions and key questions for the new directions and the new, expanded form that POCA was starting to take were raised.

POCA 2005 was a great success, attracting thirteen presented papers, thus making this the largest POCA up to that date. In this context, it also has to be said, that this was the first time in POCA’s existence that the proceedings had been published.<sup>18</sup> All the papers that were finally submitted for publication were subject of peer review by the most appropriate academics and scholars.

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<sup>16</sup> Papantoniou, *Religion and Social Transformations in Cyprus*, op. cit. p. 372.

<sup>17</sup> Maria Iacovou., “Advocating Cyprocentricism: An Indigenous Model for the Emergence of State Formation on Cyprus”, in S. White Crawford, A. Ben-Tor, J.P. Dessel, W.G. Dever, A. Mazar, and J. Aviram, eds, “*Up to the Gates of Ekron*”. *Essays on the Archaeology and History of the Eastern Mediterranean in Honor of Seymour Gitin*, Jerusalem 2007.

<sup>18</sup> Papantoniou, ed., *Postgraduate Cypriot Archaeology. Proceedings of the Fifth Annual Meeting of Young Researchers on Cypriot Archaeology. Department of Classics, Trinity College, Dublin, 21-22 October 2005*. British Archaeological Reports-International Series 1803, Oxford 2008.

The 2005 Dublin POCA had an additional mission: the International Conventions of UNESCO stipulate that it is illegal to conduct excavations or any other archaeological fieldwork in the occupied territory of the Republic of Cyprus. Until 2005 this principle had been duly respected by all international institutes, universities and archaeologists who specialise in the archaeology of Cyprus. In 2005, however, we were concerned to learn that German archaeologists were currently actively engaged in the illegal excavation of the well-known archaeological site of Galinoporni in the occupied peninsula of Karpasia. By means of a petition signed by any POCA participants who wished to protest against this, we took the opportunity of this workshop to request that this violation of international law should come to an end.

#### *5. Erasmus Exchange Programme between Trinity College Dublin and the University of Cyprus*

The visit of Maria Iacovou in Trinity College Dublin during the POCA 2005 meeting has been instrumental in fostering a closer link between the academic worlds of the two countries. Since 2006 an Erasmus postgraduate and staff exchange agreement between the Department of History and Archaeology of the University of Cyprus and the Department of Classics in Trinity College Dublin has been in operation. The exchange has opened up greater possibilities for sharing teaching expertise and exposing students, both undergraduate and postgraduate, to new material, methodologies and approaches. Public lectures by staff also add an important public outreach dimension. Within this framework scholars from Trinity have given classes and public lectures in Cyprus (Dr Christine Morris; Prof. Brian McGing; Dr Hazel Dodge;) in turn, (Dr Ourania Kouka and Prof. Maria Iacovou) have offered classes and lectures in Trinity College Dublin.

#### *6. Other Academic Visits and Events*

Beyond the POCA symposia and the Erasmus exchange, connections and collaborations between Cyprus and Ireland, and Trinity College in particular, have been lively in other ways. Prof. Vassos Karageorghis' visits to Dublin have already been mentioned above, and another visit of great significance was the occasion of the award of an honorary degree to him by the College on July the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1998. Each degree recipient

is honoured by an oration composed for them in Latin and delivered by the College Orator (then Prof. John V. Luce) The full text (in Latin and in English) is available as part of an online archive of orations on the Department of Classics website.<sup>19</sup>

Another fruitful collaboration between Vassos Karageorghis and Christine Morris was the organisation of an international conference on defensive settlements of the Aegean and Eastern Mediterranean in Dublin which resulted in a co-edited publication.<sup>20</sup> The dedication page of the volume reads “To the memory of Andrew David, a generous patron of learning and scholarship”. Perhaps surprisingly, this was not in fact the first publication which linked Trinity College with the Anastasios G. Leventis Foundation; that distinction lies with an edition of Lord Charlemont’s, *Travels in Greece and Turkey 1749*, on which William B. Stanford (Regius Professor of Greek in Trinity College Dublin) collaborated with Eustathios Y. Finopoulos.<sup>21</sup>

Since the establishment of the Embassy of Cyprus in Dublin in 1997, there have been a number of fruitful collaborations with the Dublin academic institutions, which have included events drawing public attention to the problems of looting and illicit antiquities in Cyprus. In May 2006 Trinity College Dublin (in collaboration with the Irish Institute of Hellenic Studies at Athens and the Embassy of Cyprus) hosted a film presentation and discussion with Michael Jansen on the occasion of the launch of her book on war and cultural heritage in occupied Cyprus.<sup>22</sup> The portable exhibition, “Stealing History” (mounted by the Illicit Antiquities Research Centre, with the support of the Anastasios, G. Leventis Foundation), was displayed in Dublin during the World Archaeology Congress (WAC) in June 2008, with the support of the Embassy of Cyprus. The exhibition showed a number of important examples of looting, including the Kanakaria mosaics of Cyprus.

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<sup>19</sup> Full text in Latin and English in the Department of Classics official website, <http://www.tcd.ie/Classics/jvl/1990s.php>.

<sup>20</sup> Vassos Karageorghis and Christine Morris, ed., *Defensive Settlements of the Aegean and Eastern Mediterranean c. 1200 BC. Proceedings of an International Workshop held at Trinity College Dublin, 7th-9th May, 1999*, Nicosia 2001.

<sup>21</sup> William B. Stanford- Eustathios Y. Finopoulos, ed., *Lord Charlemont’s Travels in Greece and Turkey, 1749*. London 1984.

<sup>22</sup> Michael Jansen, *War and Cultural Heritage: Cyprus after the 1974 Turkish Invasion*, Minneapolis, 2005.



The Director of the Archaeological Research Unit (ARU) of the University of Cyprus, Prof. Demetrios Michaelides has also been a regular speaker in Trinity. He supported the initial POCA 2003 meeting as guest speaker and respondent, and in 2010 he participated in the panel discussion on “Why Does the Past Matter? The Greco-Roman world in the 21st Century”, which marked the launch both of the (renamed) Andrew A. David lectureship and of the annual Classics Forum in his honour. The event, which took place at the Trinity Long Room Hub on October the 7th 2010, was chaired by Dr Tom Mitchell (former Provost of Trinity) and featured talks by the Anastasios G. Leventis Professor of Greek Culture in the University of Cambridge, Paul Cartledge, and poet Peter Fallon, artist Dorothy Cross together with Demetrios Michaelides. In addition to the Classics Forum, next day Prof. Michaelides gave a lunchtime lecture on medicine and healing in ancient Cyprus.

The Forum aimed to contribute to the current public debate taking place in Ireland about the importance of the arts and humanities. Questions raised included why archaeological remains such as the Parthenon marbles, are such a source of dispute. Why people are arguing about the ‘ownership’ of Alexander the Great. How Ulysses, one of the seminal novels of the 20th century, is an adaptation of Homer’s *Odyssey*, a work created nearly thirty centuries ago. Why a modern Irish poet would translate Virgil’s *Georgics* and why a contemporary British politician would write a book about the Roman Empire. The speakers concluded that Greek and Roman antiquity still plays a fundamental role in the Mediterranean world and its modern international extensions. Throughout their explorations of the Classical past the speakers highlighted to what extent and why it continues to remain relevant today and important for our future.

Academic links have also been enhanced by collaboration over cultural events, and on 12-13 December 2012 the end of the Cypriot Presidency of the EU (and its transfer to Ireland) was marked by a cultural event in Trinity College (co-organised by H.E. the Ambassador of the Republic of Cyprus, Dr Michalis Stavrinos and Dr Christine Morris. The event comprised a wonderful concert of traditional and medieval music by the Cypriot group *Kyprogenia*, led by Larkos Larkou, and a display of Cypriot icon paintings by Mattheos Mattheou. Mr Mattheou also delighted those present by actually painting an icon (of John the Baptist) during the evening. He

continued work on the icon the following day as part of an academic seminar on techniques and practice of icon painting in the Classics Department. He then generously gave the completed icon to the Department, where it will serve as a happy reminder of this important and memorable event, marking the special links between Cyprus and Ireland.

## Conclusion

Having reviewed the Irish-based academic interest on Cypriot history and archaeology we can conclude that, considering the size of the country, the contribution of Ireland to the development and promotion of Cypriot studies as a discipline has been substantive.

Cypriot studies have only recently been manifested as a distinct scholarly discipline studied *per se* rather only as part of ‘Greco-Roman’ or ‘Near Eastern’ studies (depending on the academic perspective and training of each individual scholar). Through the organisation of the various events and through academic teaching and research, Trinity College Dublin has contributed immensely to sustaining Cypriot studies as a distinctive academic discipline. The School of Cypriot history and archaeology nowadays is not perceived as isolated from Greek, Roman or Near Eastern studies, but also not absorbed by their predominance.

The exhibition of Cypriot material culture in Ireland manifests the most appropriate representative for Cyprus in the country. Antiquities exposed in the National Museum of Ireland or in the various university museums function as educational tools for the museums’ visitors and for Dublin-based undergraduate and postgraduate students who wish to acquire training and experience on Cypriot history and archaeology.<sup>23</sup> As history and archaeology take place in the present, they cannot divorce themselves from contemporary society and politics. The inclusion of Cypriot collections in the National Museum of Ireland and of modules on ancient Cyprus in the academic portfolio of the Department of Classics at Trinity College Dublin, have worked as an ambassador –or at least as a stimulant for further thought– of the Cypriot political

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<sup>23</sup> Christina Souyoudzoglou-Haywood, *Cypriot Antiquities in Dublin. The Collections of the National Museum of Ireland and the University College Dublin*, Nicosia 2004.

problem, the destruction of Cyprus' cultural heritage and the development of the contemporary Cypriot identity.

During the first official visit of an Irish president, i.e. Mary McAleese in Cyprus in October 2006, the Cypriot president Tassos Papadopoulos praised the mutual respect and understanding between the two countries despite the great geographical distance between them.<sup>24</sup> On the other hand, at a lecture given at the University of Cyprus during her visit the Irish president said: “although two small islands situated at opposite ends of Europe [...] Ireland and Cyprus, two small feisty nations, are Europe's sentinels, fighting with words and ideals [...]. Small nations with strong independent voices made even stronger by speaking in unison with one another”.<sup>25</sup>

This quotation encapsulates not only the shared elements of contemporary Irish and Cypriot insular identities and mentalités but it also reflects the role that the contemporary academia of the two countries is called to play in maintaining and promoting each other's distinctive European identities; as the study of 'Classics' in the two countries provide a common space for exchange and interaction, this role of academia has been overtly emphasised and achieved by the scholarly communities of Trinity College Dublin and the University of Cyprus. Even if it is more difficult to achieve, it is hoped that Irish studies (maybe those of the more recent past which share common features with the Cypriot recent past) will also find a home in Cyprus in the future. In the meantime, the 2013 succession of the European presidency from Cyprus to Ireland is a nice coincidence.

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<sup>24</sup> P.I.O.(Press and Information Office), *Press release no. 1*, Nicosia 9 October 2006; cf. Lambros G. Kaoullas, “Cyprus Ireland: Sister islands, revolutionary islands” στο Giorgos Georgis-Giorgos Kazamias (ed.), *Linked By History-United By Choice: Cyprus and its European Union Partners*, Nicosia 2012, σ. 426-427.

<sup>25</sup> P.I.O, *Press release no. 1*, Nicosia 9 October 2006, cf. Kaoullas, op.cit., p. 427.





*Πομπή διδακτορικών αποφοίτων στο Trinity College.*

Φωτο: Trinity College Dublin

*Doctoral candidates walk in procession to the Public Theatre.*

Photo: Trinity College Dublin



*Ο διαπρεπής κύπριος αρχαιολόγος Καθ. Βάσος Καραγιώργης (πρώτος αριστερά) κατά την αναγόρευση του σε επίτιμο διδάκτορα του Trinity College το 1998.*

*The renowned Cypriot archaeologist Prof. Vassos Karageorghis (left) is awarded an honorary degree by Trinity College Dublin, in 1998.*