

# The streets speak Greek: Hellenization and Identity Formation in Limassol street-naming under Christodoulos Sozos' Mayoralty

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## Abstract

*This paper offers a historical exploration on how the politics of street naming in Limassol, particularly under the mayoralty of Christodoulos Sozos (1908-1912), mapped the evolution of Greek Cypriot national identity and the increasingly articulated demands for a union with Greece. This process entailed not just the replacement of former English and Ottoman names, but a deliberate selection of names that underscored Cyprus' deep-rooted historical, religious, and national ties with Greece. This initiative, undertaken during the mayoralty of Sozos, arguably represented the first instance where city streets became politically contested spaces, transforming them into cultural arenas for projecting a group's self-image and facilitating the politicization of space. These efforts incited the reaction of the British, who perceived their authority over public space being challenged, and the Turkish Cypriots, who were committed to maintaining the status quo that prevailed under Ottoman rule. More than a mere re-naming process, the act of renaming streets mirrored the city's social dynamics and signalled a silent assertion of power. Street names served not only as living testimonials to the city's history but also as markers of its evolving identity, encapsulating narratives that were both shaped by and reflective of the prevailing socio-political context.*

**Keywords:** street naming, Christodoulos Sozos, Limassol, Greek-Cypriot national identity, commemoration

## Introduction

The dawn of the 20th century witnessed an intensified endeavour to Hellenise Limassol's streetscape. This effort was not merely an attempt to replace the city's previously

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English and Ottoman names but represented a strategic move to assert a Greek identity within the city. The new names were carefully selected to emphasise historical, religious, and national narratives that underlined the island's longstanding connections with Greece and the enduring presence of Hellenism in Cyprus. This move, however, incited protest from the Turkish Cypriot community, who resisted this Greek Cypriot effort and insisted on maintaining the status quo that prevailed during Ottoman rule.

The street names served as living testimonials of the city's history, a physical embodiment of the Greek presence, and symbols of the city's elite's aspirations. Street names were not merely informative labels; they embodied narratives that were integral to the city's identity, shaping and being shaped by the sociopolitical context in which they were situated.

The renaming process in Limassol underscored the prevailing romanticism in the Cypriot political scene, echoing notions of national identity and union with Greece. The act of street naming was not simply about bestowing names on city streets; it was also a political act and a reflection of the city's social dynamics. Amid the city's transformation, the (re)naming of streets served as a silent assertion of power, a means of instilling a collective consciousness among the population, and a method of inscribing history onto the cityscape.

The change of street names in Limassol mirrored the city's social, political, and cultural transition as the island of Cyprus shifted from Ottoman to British rule, and then moved towards embracing its Greek identity. Each name inscribed onto the city streets symbolized a chapter in the history of Cyprus, a tribute to its past, and a signal to its future. The renaming process was a manifestation of the ongoing struggle to define and express the city's identity, making the city streets a stage where different national, social, and cultural narratives played out.

This study attempts to shed light on a hitherto unknown aspect of Cyprus's political history concerning the naming of the streets of Limassol during the mayoralty of Christodoulos Sozos (1908-1912). Beginning with the last years of Ottoman rule (1871-1878), it traces the evolution of street nomenclature, revealing the trajectory towards the formation of Greek Cypriot national identity. This progression, through the examination of Limassol's street naming, uncovers the manner in which the demand for the Enosis (union) of Cyprus with Greece gradually intensified and became increasingly articulated in the public space.

The research relied on both primary and secondary sources. Primary material was sourced from prominent repositories, including the Cyprus National Archives, the

Limassol Municipal Archives (with a particular emphasis on the records of the Municipal Council), and the National Archives of the United Kingdom, with a specific focus on the colonial period. Additionally, valuable archival resources were drawn from institutions such as the Press and Information Office of the Republic of Cyprus and the Historical Archives of the Paphos Municipal Museum.

Vis-a-vis secondary sources, the research incorporated a wide array of public print materials, including historical books, photographs, chronicles, and written accounts from both visitors and residents during the 19th and 20th centuries. These secondary sources provided essential contextual information and supplementary perspectives to enrich the research findings.

## **Theoretical Background**

Street (re) naming, by its nature, represents both “spatial politics” (dictating control over space) and “territorial politics” (determining who possesses the right to speak). This act of naming can be hegemonic, reaffirming urban control, or counter-hegemonic when contested. Street (re) naming frequently signals a break with the past during periods of political transformation, facilitating the promotion of a new political establishment’s image within the urban environment<sup>4</sup>.

In the realm of public memory geopolitics, street naming functions as a carrier of ideology of the ruling elite through the act of commemoration, inscribing its visions of history over space<sup>5</sup>; it is not merely a means of orientation in the urban space that enables circulation of people and capital. Street names are interpreted as symbols to which people attribute meaning from which stems national identity<sup>6</sup>. Apart from the symbolism it carries, street naming is a political tool used for the legitimization of nationalistic projects and ideological imperatives<sup>7</sup>. Furthermore, it has been used to

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<sup>4</sup> Lawrence D Berg and Jani Vuolteenaho, *Critical Toponymies : The Contested Politics of Place Naming* (Ashgate Pub 2009).

<sup>5</sup> Duncan Light, ‘Street Names in Bucharest, 1990-1997: Exploring the Modern Historical Geographies of Post-Socialist Change’ (2004) 30 *Journal of Historical Geography* 154.

<sup>6</sup> Derek H Alderman, ‘Creating a New Geography of Memory in the South:(Re) Naming of Streets in Honor of Martin Luther King, Jr.’ (1996) 36 *Southeastern Geographer* 51, 54.

<sup>7</sup> Maoz Azaryahu, ‘German Reunification and the Politics of Street Names: The Case of East Berlin’ (1997) 16 *Political Geography* 479-493; Maoz Azaryahu and Arnon Golan, ‘(Re) Naming the Landscape: The Formation of the Hebrew Map of Israel 1949–1960’ (2001) 27 *Journal of Historical Geography* 178 <<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S030574880190297X>> accessed 2 August 2019.

indicate a temporal break with the past in times of changes in political power and is a tool to manifest the political establishment in space<sup>8</sup>.

Within the cultural geography of nationalism, the influence of nationalist imagination becomes apparent through the integration of historical memory and national myths into the physical space via street commemorations. This transforms the urban landscape into a text that speaks to both the inner and outer groups and is subject to various interpretations by members of different imagined communities<sup>9</sup>. Therefore, the commemoration of a historical event or a person can serve to promote the official historical narrative of the in-group while simultaneously undermining that of the out-group. References to the past, particularly those concerning national origins, often encompass the political mythology over history in crafting national identity<sup>10</sup>. This process often serves to validate and support the present, utilizing invented traditions to establish a symbolic environment and reinforce group unity, as seen in the context of the nation.

Street names function as structural components of urban space creating arenas where different interpretations of history intersect, thus revealing the underlying political dynamics of a specific era. In the same way, street naming can become an arena of struggle for racial and ethnic minority groups to inscribe their own narrative, and so be legitimized and accepted within the public realm<sup>11</sup>. The selection of commemorative street names constitutes a deliberate political act closely aligned with the prevailing ideology of the ruling authority. This act aims to legitimize their dominance within the streetscape by inscribing the official narrative into the urban space. Simi-

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<sup>8</sup> Reuben Rose-Redwood, “Sixth Avenue Is Now a Memory”, *Performativity, Politics, and the Production of Social Space* (Routledge 2014); Maoz Azaryahu, ‘The Power of Commemorative Street Names’ (1996) 14 *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 311 <<http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1068/d140311>> accessed 24 March 2019; Lawrence D Berg and Robin A Kearns, ‘Naming as Norming: “Race”, Gender, and the Identity Politics of Naming Places in Aotearoa/New Zealand’ (1996) 14 *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 99; Graeme Gill, ‘Changing Symbols: The Renovation of Moscow Place Names’ (2005) 64 *The Russian Review* 480 <<https://www.jstor.org/stable/3664605>>; Light (n 2).

<sup>9</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (2nd edn, Verso Books 1991).

<sup>10</sup> Azaryahu, ‘The Power of Commemorative Street Names’ (n 5); Maoz Azaryahu and Rebecca Kook, ‘Mapping the Nation: Street Names and Arab-Palestinian Identity: Three Case Studies’ (2002) 8 *Nations and Nationalism* 195 <<http://doi.wiley.com/10.1111/1469-8219.00046>> accessed 13 May 2018.

<sup>11</sup> Derek H Alderman and Joshua Inwood, ‘Street Naming and the Politics of Belonging: Spatial Injustices in the Toponymic Commemoration of Martin Luther King Jr’ (2013) 14 *Social & Cultural Geography* 211, 213 <<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/14649365.2012.754488>> accessed 14 April 2019.

larly, the (re)naming of streets can be a practice mandated to confer recognition upon historically marginalized groups. Changes in the political order following ideological or nationalistic struggles lead to the reconfiguration of street nomenclature, thereby rewriting the historical narrative in a way that strengthens and legitimizes the new ruling elite.<sup>12</sup> Alderman refers to naming as symbolic capital and symbolic resistance. The concept of naming as symbolic capital highlights the idea that place names are employed to bestow prestige and recognition upon the landscapes and those linked to them. On the other hand, the theme of naming as symbolic resistance recognises that place names are not exclusively in the hands of the ruling elites or dominant groups. Naming can be used by marginalized groups seeking to exert more influence in shaping the vision of the past inscribed in the landscape<sup>13</sup>.

Since memory is materialized through commemorative street names, spaces of commemoration often become spaces of political struggles between competing groups who want to dominate and legitimize themselves through the inscription of their own version of history and ideology in the urban space. Thus, commemoration, de-commemoration, and re-commemoration in the streetscape are acts that aim to serve the dominant ideology<sup>14</sup>. These processes often serve to perpetuate hierarchical power structures and fortify the standing of political elites within a given societal context.

Beyond their political symbolism, street names function as tools to legitimize nationalist projects<sup>15</sup> and ideologies. They signify a rupture with the past during political transitions, accentuating the new political image within the urban space. However, the actual control over the material and symbolic infrastructure of streets is

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<sup>12</sup> Berg and Vuolteenaho (n 1); Maoz Azaryahu, 'Rabin's Road: The Politics of Toponymic Commemoration of Yitzhak Rabin in Israel' (2012) 31 *Political Geography* 73 <<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0962629811001788>> accessed 13 May 2018; Derek H Alderman, 'Street Names as Memorial Arenas: The Reputational Politics of Commemorating Martin Luther King Jr in a Georgia County' in Lawrence D Berg and Jani Vuolteenaho (eds), *Critical toponymies : the contested politics of place naming* (2nd edn, Routledge Taylor & Francis Group 2016).

<sup>13</sup> Derek H Alderman, 'Place, Naming and the Interpretation of Cultural Landscapes' in Brian Graham and Peter Howard (eds), *The Ashgate Research Companion to Heritage and Identity* (Routledge 2008) 196–197.

<sup>14</sup> Guy Puzey and Jani Vuolteenaho, 'Developing a Gramscian Approach to Toponymy', *Names and their Environment: Proceedings of the 25th international congress of onomastic sciences* (University of Glasgow Glasgow 2016) 66.

<sup>15</sup> Brenda SA Yeoh, 'Street-Naming and Nation-Building: Toponymic Inscriptions of Nationhood in Singapore' [1996] *Area* 298.

contingent on people's willingness to accept or reject the narrative presented by the previous political authority.

## **Limassol – Setting the Historical Context**

In 1840-1878, Cyprus was a Sanjak or Liva of the Ottoman Empire in the Vilayet (prefecture) of the islands in the White Sea. The island was partitioned into six Kaza, administered by a Kaymakam (prefect); when the British took over the island, they maintained the administrative division of Cyprus. Limassol acted as the administrative centre, formed by the Nahiehs or Numratta (sub-sections) of Koilani, Avdimou, Episkopi, and the town of Limassol<sup>16</sup>. The consulates of Sweden, Italy, England, Austria, Greece, France, and America were based in Limassol as early as 1869<sup>17</sup>.

In 1878, Cyprus underwent an administrative change as it became a British protectorate through negotiations during the Congress of Berlin, with a tribute paid to the Sultan in exchange. The British administration's arrival on the island marked the onset of various processes linked to modernization, particularly noteworthy among which were advancements in knowledge production and the practices of governmentality.

Limassol is portrayed through the accounts of travellers who began to arrive as soon as Cyprus fell under British possession. According to Saville, Limassol was considered the best town in terms of geographical location on the island and was regarded as “more European in its appearance than any other place in the island and all travellers describe it as comparatively neat, clean and wholesome with tolerably well-built houses of clay and stone.” The town had only one street “a long line of shops and cafes which run parallel to the beach and behind it were most of the best dwelling houses, all standing in gardens”<sup>18</sup>. Von Loher postulated that “Limassol is more European in its appearance than any other town in Cyprus. Houses built of clay and stone pre-

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<sup>16</sup> 3 March 1882 The Cyprus Gazette, ‘The Cyprus Gazette’ (1882); Φίλιος Ζαννέτος, *Ιστορία Της Νήσου Κύπρου - Από Της Αγγλικής Κατοχής Μέχρι Σήμερα (Τόμος Β')* (1η Έκδοση, Τύποις ‘Φιλοκαλίας’ 1911); Ιωάννης Θεοχαρίδης, ‘Οι Κύπριοι Προγραφέντες Το 1821 Σύμφωνα Με Άγνωστη Οθωμανική Πηγή’ <<http://olympias.lib.uoi.gr/jspui/handle/123456789/6400>> accessed 27 April 2019.

<sup>17</sup> Ευστάθιος Παρασκευάς, *Ευστάθιου Παρασκευά Παλαιμάχου ‘Παλαιαι Αναμνήσεις’ Και Έξι Κείμενα Του Ξενοφώντος Π. Φαρμακίδη ‘Η Λεμεσός Κατά Τον 19ο Αιώνα’* (Τίτος Κωλότας ed, 2η Έκδοση, Κανάλι 9,86 2018); Ξενοφών Π Φαρμακίδη, ‘Τεγονότα Τινά. Συμβάντα Εν Λεμεσώ Κατά Τα Έτη 1870-90’ *Αλήθεια* (Λεμεσός, 22 November 1935) 1.

<sup>18</sup> AR Saville, *Cyprus* (1st edn, Harrison and Sons for HMSO 1878) 46–47.

dominate here more especially in the part inhabited by the Turks<sup>19</sup>. Two years after the arrival of the British, Limassol underwent a significant transformation. Indeed, as Baker<sup>20</sup> observes, “no town in Cyprus exhibited the results of British occupation to the same extent as Limassol.” He also praised the efforts of the first commissioner, Colonel Warren, stating that his exceptional ability and energy were instrumental in effecting a thorough cleansing of the town, akin to the legendary cleansing of the “Augean stables.”<sup>21</sup> British administration signified a remarkable increase in population. The first census of the Limassol population in 1881 revealed that out of a total of 5994 citizens, 4060 were Greek-Orthodox and 1528 were Muslims<sup>22</sup>. In the census of 1911, twenty years after the arrival of the British, the population of Limassol had almost doubled<sup>23</sup>, with Christian residents constituting the vast majority<sup>24</sup>.

Limassol was the chief port in Cyprus since 1881<sup>25</sup> from which wine, raisins and carobs were exported<sup>26</sup>. While during Ottoman administration Larnaca surpassed Limassol in terms of prosperity, under British rule the situation was reversed. The conventions in effect during the Ottoman Rule - which favoured the Catholic tradesmen - were no longer in effect, and the competition increased with the Orthodox tradesmen, who were no longer part of the Reaya class<sup>27</sup> and could thus be actively involved in trade<sup>28</sup>. The access to sea meant that Limassol had a pivotal role in terms of the island’s communication with the world. By extension, the port of Limassol at

<sup>19</sup> *Cyprus Historical and Descriptive From the Earliest Times to the Present Day* (R Worthington, 1878) 211.

<sup>20</sup> *Cyprus as I Saw It in 1879* (The Echo Library 1879) 257.

<sup>21</sup> (n 17) 256–257.

<sup>22</sup> The Cyprus Gazette, ‘The Cyprus Gazette (No. 82, March 3, 1882)’ (1882).

<sup>23</sup> G. Georgallides, *A Political and Administrative History of Cyprus 1918-1926* (2nd edn, Cyprus Research Center 1979) 428; Statistical Service of Cyprus (Cystat), ‘No Title’ (*POP-POPULATION-A74\_18-EN-291119*) <[https://library.cystat.gov.cy/Documents/Publication/POP-POPULATION-A74\\_18-EN-291119.xls](https://library.cystat.gov.cy/Documents/Publication/POP-POPULATION-A74_18-EN-291119.xls)>.

<sup>24</sup> Κώστας Πιλαβάκης, *Η Λεμεσός σ’ Άλλους Καιρούς* (2η Έκδοση, Εκδόσεις Ονήσιλος 1977).

<sup>25</sup> ‘The Port of Limassol, Cyprus’ *Illustrated London News* (London, 29 October 1881) 429.

<sup>26</sup> Baker W. (n 17); A. Green, *Cyprus. A Short Account of Its History and Present State* (Kilmacolm : M Graham Coltart 1914) <<https://archive.org/details/cyprussshortaccou00greeiala?q=Nicosia>>; George Hill, *A History of Cyprus, Volume 4, The Ottoman Province. The British Colony, 1571–1948*. (Harry Luke ed, Cambridge University Press 1952); Gordon Home, *Cyprus Then and Now* (JM Dent & Sons Ltd 1960) <<https://archive.org/details/in.gov.ignca.28379/page/n7?q=Nicosia>>; Sir Hutchinson, Joseph Turner and Claude Delaval Cobham, *A Handbook of Cyprus* (Edward Stanford 1907); Charles Harry Luke, *Cyprus under the Turks (1571-1878)* (Oxford University Press 1921); Saville (n 15).

<sup>27</sup> The lowest class representing the mass of subjects in the Ottoman Empire.

<sup>28</sup> Hamilton Lang, *Cyprus: Its History, Its Present Resources and Future Prospects* (Macmillan And Co 1878); Luke (n 23); Γεωργίου Σ Φραγκούδη, *ΚΥΠΡΙΣ* (Αλέξανδρος Παπαγεωργίου 1890); Rolandos



socioeconomic and ideological levels constituted the gate of Cyprus for new ideologies, trends, national movements, novelties in the arts, education, and politics<sup>29</sup>.

Before 1890 Limassol had only two quarters, namely Ayia Napa and Katholiki<sup>30</sup>. The riverbed of Garillis formed the natural boundary separating the Christian and Muslim communities. The Muslims resided predominantly in the Western part of the city in derelict houses, beyond the bed of Garillis, known as the “Turkish Mahalla.”<sup>31</sup> Nevertheless, there were few Muslims living in other areas of the city. Those were Tsiflikkoudia (Chiftikler) in the west, Arnavout or Arnaouthkia inhabited by Turkish Albanians in the northwest of the city<sup>32</sup>, the “Kkesougloudia”, a Turkish Cypriot neighbourhood owned by a rich ottoman named Koseoglou<sup>33</sup> from Syria<sup>34</sup>, Ayian-don<sup>35</sup> (Ayios Antonios) and Tzamouda at Katholiki quarter in the north of the city<sup>36</sup>. The Turkish-Cypriot community in Limassol developed around places of worship. Turkish-Cypriot craftsmen and merchants were concentrated in the area between the Jedit and Kebir mosques<sup>37</sup>.

In 1896, Colonel Green provided his own description of Limassol, more than a decade after the British arrival on the island. He described the town as extending approximately one mile along a low, shingly beach from the mouth of the little Garillis river in the west. The town had very little depth, with few, if any, buildings boasting notable architectural pretensions. Green remarked that while the streets of Limassol were kept nice and clean, they were exceedingly narrow.<sup>38</sup> Nevertheless, the population of the city saw impressive growth in the period since the first census

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Katsiaounis, ‘Labour Society and Politics in Cyprus during the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century’ (University of London 1996).

<sup>29</sup> Katsiaounis (n 25).

<sup>30</sup> In 1912 the British decided the formation of new quarters in the town of Limassol. Therefore, the town was divided into six quarters as follows: Ayia Trias, Ayia Napa, Katholiki, Ayios Antonios, Kiose Oglia, Hambeli or Jami Jedit .

<sup>31</sup> Πιλαβάκης (n 21).

<sup>32</sup> Ξενοφών Π Φαρμακίδης, *Ιστορία Της Λεμεσού - Μετά Λαογραφικών Και Τοπογραφικών Σημειώσεων Και Διαφόρων Γεγονότων Από Της Ιδρύσεως Αυτής Μέχρι Του 1897* (Χρυσοστ Γ Σταυρινίδου 1942).

<sup>33</sup> Φαρμακίδης (n 29).

<sup>34</sup> Today known as the Heroon (Heroes’) Square.

<sup>35</sup> A mixed neighborhood in the west of Djami Jedit

<sup>36</sup> The area derived its name from a small mosque that once stood there.

<sup>37</sup> Akif Akif, Ozay, Selcuk, *Echoes from the Past : The Turkish Cypriot Community of Limassol and Its Heritage - Gecmisten Yankilar: Leymosun Kibris Turk Cemaati ve Mirasi - Ηχώ Από Παλιά : η Τουρκοκυπριακή Κοινότητα Της Λεμεσού Και η Κληρονομιά Της*. (Terra Cypria Supported by UNDP and Cultural Services of the Ministry of Education and Culture 2008).

<sup>38</sup> Green (n 23).





Zig-Zag Street, Limassol.

(Patticheion Municipal Museum, Historical Archives,  
Research Center of Limassol CYLHA.03.005.020.0004)

conducted by the British in 1881 until the fourth census in 1911, all the while maintaining a Greek-Cypriot majority. This increase in population rendered necessary an improved planning of the city's infrastructure, that included the introduction of street naming geared towards better orientation and navigation within the urban space (Table 1).

### **Interplay of Religion, Nationalism, and Colonial Administration in the early Formation of Greek and Turkish Cypriot Identities**

The reactions towards the colonial government had already manifested since 1884 when the first rallies were held in response to the imposition of unbearable taxation by the British<sup>39</sup>. March 1885 saw the first major uproar against the British during the

<sup>39</sup> Πέτρος Παπαπολυβίου, 'Η Πολιτική Ιστορία Της Λεμεσού Κατά Τη Διάρκεια Της Αγγλοκρατίας', *Λεμεσός, ταξίδι στους χρόνους μιας πόλης* (Δήμος Λεμεσού 2006); Ζαννέτος (n 13); Πιλαβάκης (n 21);

Epitaph procession in Limassol. The clashes resulted in the destruction of the British Club<sup>40</sup>. The movement for the union of Cyprus with Greece was particularly strong in Limassol<sup>41</sup>. A decade later, on the initiative of the then mayor Demosthenes, a rally was organized in Limassol where a resolution was adopted calling for exemption from the heavy taxation imposed by the British<sup>42</sup> and the union with Greece<sup>43</sup>.

An appreciation of the politicization of street naming in Cyprus necessitates a deep understanding of how the island's two major communities, the Greek Orthodox and Turkish Muslim communities, formed their national identities. For the Orthodox community, a pivotal moment was the Greek declaration of independence and the advent of the Megali Idea (*Μεγάλη Ιδέα*). This concept extended the notion of Hellenism beyond the boundaries of the Greek state and underscored the obligation of redeemed Greeks to unify with their irredentist peers. As an embodiment of Greek identity, it depicted a seamless historical progression from Greek antiquity, through Byzantium, to the establishment of the Greek state, deeply entwined with Orthodoxy and the Greek language<sup>44</sup>. It also sparked an irredentist movement seeking the emancipation of Greeks in historically Greek territories, including Cyprus, aimed at constituting an expanded Greek state<sup>45</sup>. The nationalistic doctrine promulgated through the Church-controlled education system served the Church's political aspirations<sup>46</sup>.

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Πλουτής Σέρβας, *Τα Προικιά Της Λεμεσού* (Τυπογραφείο 'Πρόοδος' 1999).

<sup>40</sup> Ζαννέτος (n 13).

<sup>41</sup> Παπαπολυβίου, 'Η Πολιτική Ιστορία Της Λεμεσού Κατά Τη Διάρκεια Της Αγγλοκρατίας' (n 37); Πιλαβάκης (n 21); Σέρβας (n 37).

<sup>42</sup> There were also rallies in Nicosia and Larnaka in which Cypriots protested against the tribute tax (Zinzirier tax). According to the agreement of the concession of Cyprus to England in 1878, tribute was to be paid to the Ottoman Empire, the amount of which amounted to 92,800 pounds per year. This amount, which the British withheld to repay a loan owed by the Ottoman Empire to them since the Crimean War, was paid by Cypriot Muslims and non-Muslims (according to colonial terminology).

<sup>43</sup> J. Foscolo, 'The Agitation Against the Turkish Suzerainty in Cyprus' [1895] *Graphic* 26 <<https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0000057/18950525/038/0026>> accessed 16 August 2019.

<sup>44</sup> Πασχάλης Μ Κιτρομηλίδης, "Νοερές Κοινότητες" Και Οι Απαρχές Του Εθνικού Ζητήματος Στα Βαλκάνια' in Θάνος Βερέμης and others (eds), *Εθνική Ταυτότητα και Εθνικισμός στη Νεότερη Ελλάδα* (3η, 2003); Έλλη Σκοπετέα, *Το Πρότυπο Βασίλειο' Και η Μεγάλη Ιδέα. Όψεις Του Εθνικού Προβλήματος Στην Ελλάδα (1830-1880)* (4η, Πολύτυπο 1988).

<sup>45</sup> Πέτρος Παπαπολυβίου, *Η Κύπρος Και Οι Βαλκανικοί Πόλεμοι. Συμβολή Στην Ιστορία Του Κυπριακού Εθελοντισμού* (1η, Κέντρο Επιστημονικών Ερευνών Κύπρου 1997).

<sup>46</sup> See also Adamantia Pollis, 'Intergroup Conflict and British Colonial Policy: The Case of Cyprus' (1973) 5 *Comparative Politics* 575; Michalis Michael, 'History, Myth and Nationalism: The Retrospective Force of National Roles within a Myth-Constructed Past' in Ayhan Aktar, Niyazi Kızılyürek and Umut Özkırmı (eds), *Nationalism in the Troubled Triangle Cyprus, Greece and Turkey* (Palgrave Macmillan 2010).

The British rule dissolved the Ottoman administrative structure, where the Archbishop and Mufti led the Orthodox and Muslim communities, respectively<sup>47</sup>. The British introduced a Legislative Council, which - although initially appointing members - allowed for representation of both communities. Concerns over Christian and Muslim representation resulted in separate electoral rolls, religious-based proportional representation, and separate administrative structures. These measures politicized the Christian-Muslim divide and enabled the Church of Cyprus to maintain its dominance over the Orthodox community through active political involvement. The opening of a Greek consulate in Larnaca in 1833<sup>48</sup> contributed to the development of a Greek national identity<sup>49</sup>.

The process of street naming undertaken by the Limassol Municipal Council must be viewed in the context of significant political unrest on the island during that period. The passing of prominent political figure Archbishop Sofronios in 1900, marked the inception of a profound conflict<sup>50</sup> within the political elite<sup>51</sup>. Henceforth, the Church of Cyprus would take the leadership of the nationalist movement on the island that aimed union with Greece (Enosis)<sup>52</sup>. During this protracted decade-long conflict,

<sup>47</sup> A Attalides, Michael, *Cyprus. Nationalism and International Politics* (1st edn, Bibliopolis 2003).

<sup>48</sup> Caesar V CV Mavratsas, 'The Ideological Contest between Greek-Cypriot Nationalism and Cypriotism 1974–1995: Politics, Social Memory and Identity' (1997) 20 *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 717 <<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/01419870.1997.9993986>> accessed 5 November 2015; Βασίλης Πρωτοπατάς, *Εκλογική Ιστορία Της Κύπρου. Πολιτευτές, Κόμματα Και Εκλογές Στην Αγγλοκρατία 1878-1960* (1η Έκδοση, Θεμέλιο 2012).

<sup>49</sup> Γιώργος Γεωργιάς, *Η Ίδρυση Και Λειτουργία Του Ελληνικού Υποπροξενείου Στην Κύπρο 1833-1864. Μια Ενδεικτική Πτυχή Των Ελληνοτουρκικών Σχέσεων*. (Λευκωσία, Εν Τύποις 2017) 395; Caesar V. Mavratsas, 'National Identity and Consciousness in Everyday Life: Towards a Sociology of Knowledge of Greek-Cypriot Nationalism' (1999) 5 *Nations and Nationalism* 91; Yiannos Katsourides, *The Greek Cypriot Nationalist Right in the Era of British Colonialism. Emergence, Mobilisation and Transformations of Right-Wing Party Politics* (Springer Nature 2017) 84; N Michalis Michael, 'Cities and Ideologies in 19th Century Cyprus: A Traditional Capital and a Modern Port City' (2019) 22 *Chronos: Revue d'histoire de l'Université de Balamand* 85.

<sup>50</sup> The Archiepiscopal Question represented a notable departure from the prevailing socio-political norms in Cyprus. The rupture between the radicals, who embodied the new urban bourgeoisie and nationalist sentiments (Kitiakoi), and the conservative traditionalists, who were represented by the conservatives (Kyriniakoi) and maintained a moderate stance towards the British, marked a significant turning point. This conflict constituted a pivotal juncture during which a majority of the population actively engaged in political affairs.

<sup>51</sup> Katsourides (n 47).

<sup>52</sup> Andrekos Varnava and Irene Pophaides, 'Kyrillos II, 1909-16: The First Greek Nationalist and Enosis Archbishop-Ethnarch' in Andrekos Varnava and Michalis N Michael (eds), *The Archbishops of Cyprus in the Modern Age : The Changing Role of the Archbishop-Ethnarch, Their Identities and Politics* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing 2013); Yiannos Katsourides, *The Greek Cypriot Nationalist Right in the*

Christodoulos Sozos openly aligned with the radicals within the Kitiakoi faction, advocating for Enosis and fostering unity among those opposing the British regime<sup>53</sup>. In the most open and persistent manner, the Municipal Council of Limassol, under the leadership of Christodoulos Sozos, openly declared the request for Union with Greece. In the process of the symbolic construction of the Greek national identity, street naming was utilized for the legitimization of the nationalistic project<sup>54</sup> of Enosis.

On the other hand, Turkish nationalism, triggered by the 1908 Young Turk Revolution (also known as the Committee of Union and Progress, CUP), materialized in Cyprus much later than its Greek equivalent. Until then, opposition to Enosis (union with Greece) was mostly confined to the political and religious elites who, in response to the majority Christian community's demand, advocated for continued British rule.<sup>55</sup>

The first ethnic clashes between Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots were observed for the first time in Limassol in 1912. Instigated by the attack of Turkish-Cypriots against Greek-Cypriot students in Nicosia, outbreaks of violence were noted in Limassol resulting in five casualties<sup>56</sup>. According to the then Chief Secretary of the British Government of Cyprus, Charles Orr: "Time will show how far it is politic to move in Cyprus but riots which occurred in Limassol in 1912 resulted in bloodshed showing that "the feeling between the two elements of the population" was one with which it is necessary to reckon and that caution is required if the local government is to carry out successfully its important duty of preserving law and order in the island"<sup>57</sup>.

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*Era of British Colonialism Emergence, Mobilisation and Transformations of Right-Wing Party Politics* (Springer 2017); Paschalis M Kitromilides, 'Greek Irredentism in Asia Minor and Cyprus' (1990) 26 Middle Eastern Studies 3.

<sup>53</sup> Katsiaounis (n 25) 239.

<sup>54</sup> Azaryahu, 'The Power of Commemorative Street Names' (n 5); Berg and Kearns (n 5); Gill (n 5); Rose-Redwood (n 5).

<sup>55</sup> A Nevzat, M Hatay-Middle Eastern Studies and undefined 2009, 'Politics, Society and the Decline of Islam in Cyprus: From the Ottoman Era to the Twenty-First Century' Taylor & Francis <[https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/00263200903268686?casa\\_token=t3biRQ48o8IAAAAA:Xg-pAlp8umxX0\\_awKyJN-3hSyIDlJbZVQCjoUxAJYNNX6OaHvdbMC0DIV0cS8wxHdhYaem\\_OHL-j0C](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/00263200903268686?casa_token=t3biRQ48o8IAAAAA:Xg-pAlp8umxX0_awKyJN-3hSyIDlJbZVQCjoUxAJYNNX6OaHvdbMC0DIV0cS8wxHdhYaem_OHL-j0C)> accessed 19 February 2019; Niazi Kizilyürek, *Οι Τουρκοκύπριοι, η Τουρκία Και Το Κυπριακό* (1η Έκδοση, Εκδόσεις Παπαζήση 2009); Μιχάλης Ατταλίδης, 'Οι Σχέσεις Των Ελληνοκυπρίων Με Τους Τουρκοκυπρίους' in Γιώργος Τεκεκνίδης and Γιάννος Κρανιδιώτης (eds), *Κύπρος, Ιστορία, Προβλήματα και Αγώνες του Λαού της* (3η, Βιβλιοπωλείο της Εστίας 2009).

<sup>56</sup> Πιλαβάκης (n 21).

<sup>57</sup> William James Orr Charles, *Cyprus Under British Rule* (Robert Scott 1918) 119.

## Naming the Streets of Limassol

The first official street naming list in Limassol was compiled in 1871 (Table 2) as part of the comprehensive registration carried out during the initial general registration effort. Subsequently, the earliest existing list of street names in Limassol dates back to 1883, encompassing a total of 62 names. This compilation retained the street names recorded in 1871 during the initial general registration process, which was facilitated by the implementation of the Turkish Law, wherein the responsibility of maintaining the street signs fell upon the property owners. According to British legislation, the street names served as boundary marks within the towns, and the Director of Survey was empowered to oversee this task. The municipalities faced penalties if they removed the plates that were installed during the survey of 1881. Additionally, the municipality was not authorized to install plates on private property without prior approval from the British authorities. Property owners were granted the right to remove the street signs if they so desired<sup>58</sup>.

The street names in Limassol were typically based on the ownership status of the adjacent properties or the proximity to public spaces such as churches, mosques, and workshops. Contemporaneous written testimonies note that numerous streets were named after prominent Limassol residents, such as Yiangos Giasonides and Theodosios Morides. Other streets bore names of mosques, Catholic churches, and significant landmarks such as Joubmezli Baghdja (Cumbezli Bache - Sycamore tree) and Billardo garshessi<sup>59</sup>.

Sir Garnet Wolseley, the first Governor of Cyprus, tasked Horatio Herbert Kitchener in 1878 to draft a rudimentary map of Cyprus. This was in preparation for a detailed topographical survey of the new British protectorate. The first detailed map of Limassol, completed in 1881 at a scale of 1:2500, featured some but not all street names. While developing this map, Kitchener retained old names, adding or altering only a few. Notably, all street names were subjected to approval from the High Commissioner<sup>60</sup> before being officially adopted<sup>61</sup>.

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<sup>58</sup> 'LRS1/13639 Registrat General to the Chief Secretary, 5 August 1911' (1911); Law 8 of 1885 To Regulate the Duties and Powers of Municipalities 1885 600.

<sup>59</sup> See table 1

<sup>60</sup> The Municipality had the authority to place street signs according to law VIII of 1885. However, this authority required the enactment of a byelaw, therefore the Municipality had no power without the Government's approval to place street signs on private property.

<sup>61</sup> Registrar General to Chief Secretary, 'LRS1/13639/1911 Change in Names of Limassol Streets. Registrar General to Chief Secretary 5 August 1911' 2; Registrar General to Chief Secretary, 'LRS1/13639/1911

In 1881, during the mayorship of Karydes, a decision was made by the Limassol Municipality to assign names to previously unnamed streets<sup>62</sup>. Recognizing an anomaly arising from the rapid increase in new buildings and, consequently, the expansion of building numbers within the city, the Municipal Council took a significant decision on 6th March 1889 during the mayorship of Hadjipavlos. This decision called for a comprehensive revision of the existing numbering system and general street numbering, with the primary objective of providing names to streets that remained unnamed<sup>63</sup>. To facilitate this process, a committee was appointed consisting of “Christian, Lanitis, Ali Aga, and the Secretary of the Municipality, Spyros Araouzos”.

On 17th April of the same year, the Municipality approved an expenditure of £15 to finance the implementation of a standardized numbering system for all buildings within the city. This budget also encompassed the installation of plates displaying street names<sup>64</sup>. Importantly, all street signs were written in English<sup>65</sup>.

Following the approval of the expenditure, a committee composed of Pilavakis, Karagiannis, and Rossides was elected on 22nd May 1889<sup>66</sup>. The primary responsibility of this committee was to survey the various streets of Limassol and classify those that were unclassified. Subsequently, the committee submitted its comprehensive report on 28th February 1890<sup>67</sup>, listing a total of 80 street names (Table 3).

The minutes of 15th May 1890<sup>68</sup> also refer to the then recently named Saripolou Street, illustrating the ongoing efforts to assign names to previously unnamed streets<sup>69</sup>. It also shows the increase of the number of streets that had to be named indicating in this way the spatial expansion of the city.

The compiled list of street names included both the additions made in 1881 and 1889 (Table 4). Intriguingly, out of the 80 streets listed, 23 bear names associated with Greece; this act of street commemoration can be described as the initial endeavor

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Change in Names of Limassol Streets. Registrar General to Chief Secretary 1st July 1911’ 1.

<sup>62</sup> ‘Πρακτικά Συνεδρίας Δημοτικού Συμβουλίου Λεμεσού, 19 Μαρτίου 1881’ (1881); ‘Πρακτικά Συνεδρίας Δημοτικού Συμβουλίου Λεμεσού 19 Φεβρουαρίου 1881’ (1881).

<sup>63</sup> ‘Πρακτικά Συνεδρίας Δημοτικού Συμβουλίου Λεμεσού 14 Μαρτίου 1889’ (1889).

<sup>64</sup> ‘Πρακτικά Συνεδρίας Δημοτικού Συμβουλίου Λεμεσού 17 Απριλίου 1889’ (1889).

<sup>65</sup> ‘LRS1/13639 Registrar General to the Chief Secretary, 10 October 1911’ (1911); Agnes Smith, *Through Cyprus* (Hurst and Blackett 1887).

<sup>66</sup> ‘Πρακτικά Συνεδρίας Δημοτικού Συμβουλίου Λεμεσού 22 Μαΐου 1889’ (1889).

<sup>67</sup> ‘Πρακτικά Συνεδρίας Δημοτικού Συμβουλίου Λεμεσού 28 Φεβρουαρίου 1890’ (1890).

<sup>68</sup> ‘Πρακτικά Συνεδρίας Δημοτικού Συμβουλίου Λεμεσού 15 Μαΐου 1890’ (1890).

<sup>69</sup> Nikolaos Saripolos (1817-1887). A Greek Cypriot professor of constitutional law at the University of Athens. He authored the Constitution of Greece.



or to inscribe cultural ties to Greece and the Greek identity within the urban space of Limassol. It is interesting how history is presented through naming but especially the way in which naming legitimizes the British power in space. This is not surprising as the first Mayor of Limassol, Christodoulos Karydes<sup>70</sup>, the first Mayor of Cyprus as well as the Members of the Municipal Council were appointed by the British administration<sup>71</sup>. The street names follow the history of the island chronologically. Along with the Greeks (Salamis street), the island was colonized by the Phoenicians (Phoenician street). The naming of the streets then continues from the point where the island was taken by Alexander the Great and then passed under the rule of the Ptolemies. Following the Ptolemies, the island became a Roman province and on the division of the empire it fell to the lot of the Byzantine Empire (Zeno street and St. Barnabas street)<sup>72</sup>. Crusade and Richard street refers to Richard Coeur de Lion who conquered the island in 1191 and then sold it to the Knight Templars<sup>73</sup> (see Crusader Street). The Templars' oppressive rule caused a revolt on the island, leading them to return it to Richard. Richard then granted the island to Guy de Lusignan, the deposed king of Jerusalem<sup>74</sup> (Jerusalem Street). Blondel street commemorates the faithful minstrel of Richard who - according to the legend - saved him from captivity<sup>75</sup>.

<sup>70</sup> 'CYLHA.05.005.0001.30 - Minutes of the Limassol Municipal Council, 3 December 1878 - Notice' (1878).

<sup>71</sup> Dixon presents Karydes behaving as a subordinate in his interactions with the British officials. "sons of Milton, Byron and Shakespeare" William Dixon H., *British Cyprus* (Chapman and Hall 1879) 306 <<https://archive.org/details/britishcyprus00dixogoog/page/n160>> accessed 23 March 2019. Karydes was appointed by the Commissioner of Limassol and later chief Secretary to Government, Falkland Warren.

<sup>72</sup> Barnabas was the founder of the Church of Cyprus. In 478 AD the Patriarchate of Antioch interfered in the internal affairs of the Church of Cyprus. The then Archbishop of Cyprus Anthemius found the relic of the Apostle Varnava with the Gospel of Matthew and offered it to the Byzantine Emperor Zeno. Zeno convened an extraordinary ecumenical council in Constantinople in 488 AD, where the autocephaly of the Church of Cyprus was confirmed. At the same time, Zeno granted three privileges to the Archbishop of Cyprus and his successors (wearing a red cloak at official ceremonies, carrying an imperial scepter, and signing in red ink). Κυπριανός, *Ιστορία Χρονολογική Της Νήσου Κύπρου* (Παρά Νικολάω Γλυκει των Εξ Ιωαννίνων 1788) 49.

<sup>73</sup> Λεόντιος Μαχαίρας, Γιώργος Μαυρογένης and Άντρος Παυλίδης, *Λεόντιου Μαχαίρα Εξήγησις: Χρονικόν : Της Γλυκειάς Χώρας Κύπρου η Ποια Λέγεται Κρονακα Τουτεστιν* ([Φιλόκυπρος], 1983).

<sup>74</sup> Nicholas Coureas, "The Conquest of Cyprus During the Third Crusade According to Greek Chronicles from Cyprus", *The Medieval Chronicle VIII* (Brill 2013).

<sup>75</sup> Jean Fiori, *Richard the Lionheart, King and Knight* (Translated by Jean Birrell ed, Edinburgh University Press 1999); David Boyle, *The Troubadour's Song: The Capture, Imprisonment and Ransom of Richard the Lionheart* (Walker Publishing Company, Inc 2005).



The Ottoman period is rather sidelined in the nomenclature of the streets. The British empire and its dominance in space is expressed through the naming of the main and most important streets of Limassol after Victoria, Albert, Prince of Wales, Queen, as well as St. Andrew, St. Patrick, St David and St. George (the four patron Saints of Great Britain and Ireland).

The Greek street names emerged during the process of street naming for those previously unnamed, without strongly expressing the national ideology. Moreover, the fact that street signs were exclusively written in English in a city with a limited percentage of literate residents<sup>76</sup> indicates the influence of British colonization on the urban landscape. Notably, there were street names commemorating Greek heroes of the struggle for independence in 1821-1827, such as Koraes, Kanaris, and Miaoulis<sup>77</sup>, as well as “Enoseos” (Union) Street which was adjunct to the building of the homonymous Association.

The existence of street names that highlight the history of Cypriots and their connections with Greece demonstrates that the demand for unification was still primarily an elite aspiration, as the conditions for the formation of a collective self-awareness leading to the creation of an ethnic group with a distinctive national identity had not yet fully evolved. In simpler terms, the Christian population maintained an ethnic identity but had not yet reached the stage of forming a national identity<sup>78</sup>.

In June 1907, in an article published in the newspaper “Alithia,” the author expressed their concern about the fact that while walking through the streets of Cypriot cities, one cannot discern that Greeks inhabit the island by looking at the street signs. Instead, the streets bear Latin elements and names associated with English history or names commonly found in English cities, which the author describes as “foreign and strange,” given that they are given to streets inhabited by the Greek population. The author specifically mentioned Blondel and Alfred streets in Limassol, along with other English street names, asserting that they have no reason to be commemorated in Cyprus and that naming streets with such names is a disregard towards the homeland’s history, Greek letters, sentiments, and culture of the people. The article further

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<sup>76</sup> Katsiaounis (n 25).

<sup>77</sup> In 1884, the Greek warship “Navarchos (Admiral) Miaoulis” arrived in Limassol under the command of Captain Kriezis, executing a training voyage. The ship’s arrival in Limassol was met with a fervent reception by the Greek inhabitants, who rushed to the sea to greet the crew, chanting slogans in favor of the unification (Enosis) of Cyprus with Greece. Concurrently, events were organized to honor the ship’s crew. It is noteworthy that the road starting from the small pier, where passengers and goods disembarked, was named “Miaoulis Street” until its replacement in 1908.

<sup>78</sup> Anthony D Smith, ‘The Ethnic Origins of Nations’.

commented on how despite the Limassol Municipal Council giving Greek names to certain streets such as Thermopylae, Themistocles, Alexander the Great, Muses, Pallas, Union, Miaoulis, Kanaris, and Amathus, most streets still bear names foreign to history, the city's history, and the broader Greek ethnicity. As stated in the article, the residents of Saint Patrick Street removed the sign with its name. The author suggested taking measures to replace the names of other streets before similar actions, which they consider logical and likely, are taken by Greek residents of the city for other streets. The author also warned that this is not the first time a nation has given "profound and impressive lessons in national dignity" to their rulers and superiors<sup>79</sup>.

### **De-commemorating the traces of the British Rule and the Ottoman past**

In 1908, during the mayorship of Christodoulos Sozos<sup>80</sup>, the Limassol Municipal Council decided to establish a three-member committee comprising the Mayor and Members Nikolaos Kl. Lanitis<sup>81</sup> and Evgenios Zenon. This committee was tasked

<sup>79</sup> Αλήθεια, 'Δελτίον' *Αλήθεια* (Λεμεσός, 1907) 1.

<sup>80</sup> During the Balkan Wars, a large number of citizens of Limassol enlisted as volunteers in the Greek Army; among those was also the Mayor of Limassol, Christodoulos Sozos, who was killed fighting at Ioannina.

<sup>81</sup> Christodoulos Sozos studied law at the University of Athens. He served as the Mayor of Limassol from 1908 to 1912 and participated in the Legislative Council for two consecutive terms from 1901 to 1911. He was the first to systematically oppose the British in the Legislative Council, earning their respect. His work as the Mayor of Limassol was monumental, and as a parliamentarian, he showed a particular interest in the protection of Cypriot antiquities and education. He volunteered in the Balkan Wars and fell in battle in 1912. As Mayor, Sozos emerged as the first Cypriot mayor with a vision and plan for his city, introducing remarkable innovations in a region that had recently emerged from Ottoman rule 'Η Κύπρος Αποτίει Φόρον Τιμής Εις Την Ιεράν Μνήμην Του Χριστ. Σώζου Και Των Λοιπών Κυπρίων Ηρώων Του 1912-1913 (Ομιλία Του Ν. Κλ. Λανίτη)' [1953] *Ελληνική Κύπρος* 13; Πέτρος Παπαπολυβίου, 'Χριστόδουλος Σώζος Και Νικόλας Κλ. Λανίτης: Δύο Μεγάλες Μορφές Της Λεμεσού', *Ιστοριογραφώντας την Λεμεσό - Πρακτικά 1ου Επιστημονικού Συμποσίου Προφορικής Ιστορίας 2005* (Κέντρο Μελετών Δήμου Λεμεσού); Κ Κυριακίδης, Χρίστος, 'Ο Χριστόδουλος Σώζος Και η Δράση Του Στο Νομοθετικό Συμβούλιο' (2016) XXXVIII Επετηρίδα του Κέντρου Επιστημονικών Ερευνών 361; Αριστείδης Λ Κουδουνάρης, *Βιογραφικών Λεξικών Κυπρίων 1800-1920 (Τόμος Α')*, *Ζ' Επνηξημένη Έκδοσις* (Ζ', Έδρα Ουνέσκο, Πανεπιστήμιο Λευκωσίας 2018); Αλήθεια, 'Χριστόδουλος Σώζος' *Σάλπιγξ* (Λεμεσός, 28 December 1912) 2; Αλήθεια, 'Χριστόδουλος Σώζος' *Αλήθεια* (Λεμεσός, 21 December 1912) 2; Αλήθεια, 'Εκείνοι Που Φεύγουν - Χριστόδουλος Σώζος' *Αλήθεια* (Λεμεσός, 1 March 1913) 2; Παπαπολυβίου, *Η Κύπρος Και Οι Βαλκανικοί Πόλεμοι. Συμβολή Στην Ιστορία Του Κυπριακού Εθελοντισμού* (n 43). Nikolaos Kl. Lanitis studied law at the University of Athens. He served as a member of the Legislative Council from 1911 to 1916, 1916 to 1921, and 1930 to 1931. Lanitis was also a member of the Limassol Municipal Council from 1908 to 1911.

with renaming all the old streets of the city and assigning names to the new streets<sup>82</sup> Following Zenon's departure, the preparation of the report rested exclusively in the hands of Lanitis. The report was presented before the Municipal Council on 22nd October 1908 (Table 5). In the presence of the Ottoman Vice President Mahmud Shevket Effendi, the Limassol Municipal Council unanimously approved the proposal for street-naming<sup>83</sup>.

In his comprehensive report, Lanitis underscored the profound significance of street nomenclature, positing that street names serve as reflective narratives of a nation's history. He ardently advocated that street names are instrumental in enabling visitors to unravel the shared beliefs and ideologies of the local population<sup>84</sup>. Lanitis advanced the notion that the renaming of existing streets represented a moral obligation for his generation, offering an avenue to honour the city's pathways. Consequently, the Municipal Council embarked on a mission of commemoration, acknowledging individuals entwined with the region's rich and multifaceted history. According to Lanitis, this act of remembrance intended to recognize the enduring struggles of the indigenous people and the deep-seated influence of religion and education on the Greek nation's twenty-five-century-long presence.

Lanitis primarily proposed names irrevocably connected with the history, culture, and traditions of the Greek Cypriots. Simultaneously, he endeavoured to commemorate noteworthy events and distinguished figures from bygone eras. His report offered an exhaustive and detailed delineation explaining the rationale behind the selection of these names. He observed that Cyprus' history is brimming with names deserving of commemoration, sufficient enough to designate all the streets of a large European city. For Limassol, a small town, designations from the "great Greek homeland" would be immortalized in the town's streets. He further argued that places tied to important historical events had to be commemorated in the streets of Limassol, thus serving a dual function: educating the city's residents about their nation's history and acting as a reminder of their duties as inheritors of a glorious Greek past. Lanitis' proposed names, imbued with the homeland history of Greek Cypriots and referring

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After the Cyprus revolt in 1931, he was exiled to Athens by the British Κουδονάρης; Παπατολυβίου, Χριστόδουλος Σώζος Και Νικόλας Κλ. Λανίτης: Δύο Μεγάλες Μορφές Της Λεμεσού'; Πιλαβάκης (n 21).

<sup>82</sup> 'Πρακτικά Συνεδρίας Δημοτικού Συμβουλίου Λεμεσού Ημερ. 12 Ιουνίου 1908' (1908).

<sup>83</sup> Χριστόδουλος Σώζος, 'Σώζος Προς Τον Προσωρινόν Διοικητήν Λεμεσού, 30 Αυγούστου' 9; 'Πρακτικά Συνεδρίας Δημοτικού Συμβουλίου Λεμεσού Ημερ. 22 Οκτωβρίου 1908' (1908).

<sup>84</sup> Νικόλαος Λανίτης, 'Η Ονοματοθεσία Των Οδών Η Προς Το Δημοτικόν Συμβούλιον Έκθεσις' *Αλήθεια* (Λεμεσός, 1908) 1.

4. ΔΗΜΑΡΧΕΙΟΝ ΛΕΜΕΣΟΥ 20

Παλαιά ὀνόματα.	Ἐν Λεμεσῷ τῇ	- Νέα ὀνόματα -
72 Ἡ ὁδὸς Βαρυπύου	Ἡ	Ὀδὸς <u>Πυραῶν</u> ἢ <u>Βεραππίου</u>
73 Ἡ ὁδὸς Ἀφροροϊαίου	Ἡ	Ὀδὸς Ἀφροροϊαίου
74 Ἡ ὁδὸς ἀπὸ τῆς οἰκίας Ἐυδερμαίου ἢ Λογερυτίου	Ἡ	Ὀδὸς Βαρυπύου Κιαγροῦ
75 Ἡ ὁδὸς Κόραϊ	Ἡ	Ὀδὸς Παιῶν Μεγὰ
76 Ἡ ὁδὸς Λαοῦ	Ἡ	Ὀδὸς Λαοῦ
77 Ἡ ὁδὸς Λογυρῶν	Ἡ	Ὀδὸς Λογυρῶν
78 Ἡ ὁδὸς Ἐνδρῶν	Ἡ	Ὀδὸς Τριβῶν
79 Ἡ ὁδὸς τῆς οἰκίας Καραϊουαίου γέφυρ τῆς οἰκίας Ἀρσείου	Ἡ	Ὀδὸς Μουρμυρῶν
80 Μία ὁδὸς ἀπὸ τῆς οἰκίας	Ἡ	Ὀδὸς Λαλαῶν
81 Ἐτέρα ὁδὸς ἀπὸ τῆς οἰκίας	Ἡ	Ὀδὸς Πυραῶν
82 Ἡ ὁδὸς Ἀγίου Τυρπίου	Ἡ	Ὀδὸς Τυρπίου τοῦ Ἁγίου
83 Ἡ ὁδὸς Ἀγίου Ἀρσείου	Ἡ	Ὀδὸς Ἀγίου Ἀρσείου
84 Ἡ ὁδὸς Παγιδῶν	Ἡ	Ὀδὸς Ἀγίου Περικλεῶν
85 Ἡ ὁδὸς Ἀγιάδων	Ἡ	Ὀδὸς Ἀγιάδων

Ἐν τῷ Δημαρχεῖῳ. —  
30. 8. 1911.

List of street names by Christodoulos Sozos 1911.  
(Cyprus National Archives SA1\_1041\_1911\_001)

to Greece's myths, traditions, and legends, were slated to replace the "inconsequential names bearing no relation to the city's populace." Lanitis characterized the names bestowed by the English<sup>85</sup> as "demonstrations of considerable indifference," which arrived in Cyprus amidst the wave of modernization in 1878.

<sup>85</sup> 30 street names originally chosen by the British Administration were replaced (see Table 4)

In Limassol, streets were named in commemoration of British Philhellenes. Specifically, Byron Street, named after Lord Byron, who fought alongside the Greeks against the Ottomans, connected to Canning Street, named after the British Prime Minister whose efforts contributed to the establishment of the Greek state. This then linked to Gladstone Street. The commemoration of Gladstone was profoundly tied to the aspirations of Greek Cypriots who believed that British occupation would lead to Enosis. Gladstone, a proponent of the union of the Ionian Islands in 1864, became a symbol of hope for the realization of a similar aspiration in Cyprus<sup>86</sup>. Indeed, street naming was a political act with political implications. According to Papapolyviou, the naming constituted a reflection of the romanticism prevailing in the Cypriot political scene, but at the same time, it reflected the naive and unattainable perception of “British Philhellenism” that had given rise to the so-called “Eptanisian Syndrome” which influenced Cypriot politicians until 1931<sup>87</sup>.

Since the beginning of the British Occupation in 1878, Bishop Kyprianos of Kition welcomed Sir Garnet Wolseley upon his arrival in Larnaca with the words, “We accept the change of government, trusting that Great Britain will assist Cyprus as it did with the Ionian Islands to unite with Mother Greece, to which it is naturally connected.”<sup>88</sup> The union of the Ionian Islands with Greece in 1864 took place during a period when the British government no longer considered the possession of these islands a vital interest due to their other acquisitions. A year before Lanitis’ report on street naming, in 1907, during Winston Churchill’s visit to Cyprus, Greek legislators in the Legislative Council drew parallels between his visit and Gladstone’s visit to the Ionian Islands, which had served as a “precursor to the union of the Ionian Islands with Greece.” Cypriot legislators urged Churchill to fulfill the aspirations of the Cypriots for Union. Churchill, as he had stated, believed that the time had not yet come to fulfill the request of the Greek Cypriots. During his visit to Limassol, Mayor Christodoulos Sozos conveyed in his address “the timeless aspirations of the Cypriot people for union (Enosis) with Greece.” Moreover, a series of events that followed

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<sup>86</sup> ‘Η Στέφης Του Βασιλέως. Ζήτω η Ένωσις!’ *Αλήθεια* (Λεμεσός, 14 June 1902) 1; ‘Το Έργον Της Κυπριακής Επιτροπής’ *Αλήθεια* (Λεμεσός, 12 October 1889) 1; Katsiaounis (n 25); Robert Holland and Diana Markides, “The Peculiarity of Cyprus, 1878–1931”, *The British and the Hellenes. Struggles for Mastery in the Eastern Mediterranean 1850-1960* (1st edn, Oxford University Press Inc, New York 2006).

<sup>87</sup> Παπαπολυβίου, ‘Χριστόδουλος Σώζος Και Νικόλας Κλ. Λανίτης: Δύο Μεγάλες Μορφές Της Λεμεσού’ (n 79) 36.

<sup>88</sup> Harry Luke, *Cyprus. A Portrait and an Appreciation* (George G Harrap & Co Ltd 1957) 170.



the Greco-Turkish war and Cyprus' offer to Greece by the British in 1913, 1914, and 1915 reinforced the belief among Greek Cypriots that Union was attainable<sup>89</sup>.

In the Turkish-Cypriot quarter, Lanitis proposed the replacement of the Turkish names of four streets with "Syntagmatos (Constitution) Street," "Eleftherias (Freedom) Street," "Isotis (Equality) Street," and "Dikaiosynis (Justice) Street," symbolizing the emblems of the Turkish political transition<sup>90</sup>. The restoration of the constitution was accepted with celebrations in Limassol, in which Greeks also participated. However, each side counted the achievements of the Young Turks differently.<sup>91</sup> Lanitis claimed that the renaming of these streets signified sympathy towards reformative efforts. Furthermore, he suggested that one street in the Turkish Cypriot quarter be renamed "Midhat (Pasha) Street,"<sup>92</sup> to honour the "great Turkish worker of freedom or civilization"<sup>93</sup>. It is of interest to note that the renaming of streets was initiated by the headmaster of the Ottoman School, who conveyed the gratitude of the Ottoman Community of Limassol to Kl. Lanitis through a letter published in Alithia Newspaper expressing appreciation for his proposal to rename five streets within the Ottoman quarter. Furthermore, the Headmaster conveyed his appreciation to the members of the Municipal Council for endorsing the proposal recognising it as emblematic of the robust interrelations between the Greek and Ottoman Communities in Limassol, and emphasizing the significance of the "Ottoman-Greek Collaboration". He further proposed that the name of Midhad Pasha should be attributed to Hambeli street which was regarded as the finest locale within the Ottoman quarters. Regarding the name "Freedom" he recommended assigning it to the street opposite the Ottoman

<sup>89</sup> Κλ Νικόλαος Λανίτης, *Ο Ακρίτας Του Ελληνικού Νότου* (ΑΕΤΟΣ' ΑΕ 1945) 42–47.

<sup>90</sup> 'Πρακτικά Συνεδρίας Δημοτικού Συμβουλίου Λεμεσού Ημερ. 12 Ιουνίου 1908' (n 80).

<sup>91</sup> Ελευθερία, 'Κύπρος Και Νεότουρκοι' *Ελευθερία* (Λευκωσία, 19 September 1908) 1; 'Ακρόπολις', 'Η Θέσις Του Ελληνισμού Μετά Το Νέον Καθεστώς' *Αλήθεια* (Λεμεσός, 26 September 1908) 2; Θεμιστοκλής Δέρβης, 'Το Σύνταγμα Εν Τουρκία' *Φωνή της Κύπρου* (Λευκωσία, 22 August 1908) 2; Δ Λεοντίδης, Ν., 'Οι Εν Παρισίοις Νεότουρκοι Και Το Πρόγραμμα Αυτών' *Αλήθεια* (Λεμεσός, 8 August 1908) 1.

<sup>92</sup> Lanitis referred to the young Turk revolution of 1908 which aimed to overthrow the authoritarian regime of Sultan Abdul Hamid II. This movement marked the beginning of the transition to modernize the Ottoman empire and signalled the beginning of the Turkish nationalism Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey* (2nd edn, Oxford University Press 1967).

<sup>93</sup> In 1908, celebrations were held in Limassol by the Ottoman community to commemorate the restoration of the 1876 Constitution and these events also saw the participation of the Greeks. However, each community interpreted the event differently. The Ottomans believed it would lead to cooperation among the various ethnicities within the empire, potentially resulting in the return of Cyprus to the Ottoman Empire. Conversely, the Greeks believed that the overthrow of the established order within the Ottoman Empire would have a positive outcome in addressing the Bulgarian threat in Macedonia.

schools, emphasizing that schools “constitute a wellspring of freedom”. For “Justice” he advocated renaming the street situated behind the Limassol Ottoman fort that was used as a prison by the Ottomans and later the British to serve “as a reminder of reverence for the laws of the homeland”. David street (behind the port) would be renamed “Fraternity” since in that street Greeks and Ottomans coexisted and worked harmoniously. Lastly, he suggested naming the street commencing from the small bridge and culminating at the Muslim Cemetery as “Equality” street, underlining that cemeteries are “places of equality for all, regardless of wealth and status”<sup>94</sup>. However, the headmaster’s proposals for renaming, which evidently stemmed from a different ideological perspective than those of Lanitis, were not taken into consideration. It is worth noting that the new names assigned to the streets of the Turkish-Cypriot quarter in commemoration of the Turkish political transition would be inscribed on the street plates in Greek.

Lanitis’ report can be viewed as a eulogy to national history, culture, language, traditions, and religion, aiming to supplant the “discordant” names imposed on the city’s inhabitants by “irresponsible foreigners who introduced the current of modernization to Cyprus in 1878.” In his report, Lanitis underscores the gravity of the street naming issue, arguing that through these names, history becomes perceptible, and observers can discern the “perceptions and ideology of the population”<sup>95</sup>. The nomenclature of Limassol’s streets served as an expression of the official historical narrative, accentuating the unbroken existence of Hellenism in Cyprus from antiquity to the contemporary era.

It is noteworthy that the uninterrupted presence of the Greek element in Cyprus during the Frankish period is intricately interwoven in the streetscape. The commemoration of Eleni Palaiologina, King John II of Cyprus’s wife, and her struggles in support of the Church of Cyprus, serve as a nexus to the Byzantine era. Her daughter, Carlotta, is honoured for suppressing foreign languages at the Cypriot court and enforcing the Greek language. According to Lanitis, the use of Carlotta’s name functions as a “rebuke” to modern individuals who “often replace the sweet Greek language, our ancestors’ most noble and precious inheritance, with foreign languages”.<sup>96</sup>

Street names were deemed significant educational tools for younger generations, evident in the nomenclature of streets leading to the city’s schools. Prominent phi-

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<sup>94</sup> Αλήθεια, ‘Ωραία Επιστολή Νεότουρκου’ *Αλήθεια* (Λεμεσός, 6 November 1908) 2.

<sup>95</sup> ‘Πρακτικά Συνεδρίας Δημοτικού Συμβουλίου Λεμεσού Ημερ. 12 Ιουνίου 1908’ (n 80).

<sup>96</sup> ‘Πρακτικά Συνεδρίας Δημοτικού Συμβουλίου Λεμεσού Ημερ. 12 Ιουνίου 1908’ (n 80).



losophers of Cypriot origin, contemporary literary figures, the city of Athens, and notable men of the nation were all commemorated through street names. Particular importance is accorded to Athens as the “intellectual beacon that sends its bright rays to the far corners of the Greek world.” Lanitis emphatically noted that the name of the Greek capital would serve as a reminder for current and future generations of individuals who financed the construction of the city’s gymnasium out of national solidarity. Names associated with the city’s first settlers, Alexander the Great, the defenders of Famagusta during the Ottoman siege, and distinguished Cypriot clergy or saints had to be commemorated.

The implementation and the subsequent reactions

In 1910 the new street names of the city were announced in an article in the Limassol daily “Alithia”. The article included a congratulatory note from the “most notable professor of Greek literature” at the National Kapodistrian University of Athens, Nicolaos G. Politis, applauding Nikolaos Lanitis for his commendable contribution in renaming the streets of Limassol<sup>97</sup>. Politis described Lanitis’ work as being characterized by a profound understanding of history and an enlightened awareness of his national duties and patriotism. Politis indirectly alluded to the Cypriots’ demand for union with Greece. The commemoration of both distant and recent history confirmed the effort to justify the continuous historical trajectory of Cypriot Hellenism, driven by a commitment to the Greek language and tradition.

In May 1911, local newspapers reported on the installation of street signs, signifying a tangible representation of the city’s Hellenic character. These new street name plates, related to local and national history, replaced the dissonant foreign names attributed by the city’s initial administrator<sup>98</sup>.

In June 1911, the Limassol Commissioner reported to the Chief Secretary his surprise at the placement of enamelled plates displaying exclusively Greek street names throughout the city<sup>99</sup>. The Commissioner complained to the Chief Secretary supporting that the absence of English language in the street-name plates posed an inconvenience to the public, newcomers and visitors. This initiative, undertaken without his foreknowledge, was perceived as a challenge due to the strong Greek affiliations

<sup>97</sup> ‘Η Ονοματοθεσία Των Δρόμων Της Πόλεως - Όλα Τα Νέα Ονόματα’ *Αλήθεια* (Λεμεσός, 17 December 1910) 2.

<sup>98</sup> *Αλήθεια*, ‘Δελτίον’ *Αλήθεια* (Λεμεσός, 26 May 1911) 1.

<sup>99</sup> Limassol Commissioner, ‘SA1/1041/1911 Limassol Commissioner to the Chief Secretary, 1st June 1911’ 1.

of the names and the difficulties it posed to foreign visitors unfamiliar with the language. The Turkish Cypriot quarter, however, remained unchanged<sup>100</sup>.

Correspondence with the Registrar General unveiled that there was no existing legislation regulating the naming of streets. The Director of Surveys indicated that the initial government-affixed street signs followed Ottoman law, assigning maintenance responsibility to the property owner. Street name signs installed by the Director of Surveys within the towns were considered boundary marks. The municipality could face penalties for removing plates that were placed by the Survey in 1881. As indicated, the municipality was unauthorized to attach plates to private property without government endorsement; owners could lawfully remove them if this happened. Nevertheless, due to the expansion of the city and due to the fact that the property owners were Greek-Cypriots there were no objections to the placement of the plates, annulling in this way the authority of the law<sup>101</sup>

Based on British records, there were changes to the names of 36 streets, while 20 streets were newly named, and only 22 streets retained their original names. Christodoulos Sozos submitted the list of street renamings in a letter dated 30th August 1911 in response to the inquiries of the British authorities<sup>102</sup>.

The British authorities' intervention was deeply political. On 2nd June 1911, a letter signed by 23 Turkish Cypriots, led by Haji Mustapha Hadagi Mehmed Hoja, the Imam and Muderis Mustafa Fakhri, and the Cadi of Limassol and Paphos, Esseyid Adurrahman Niazi, criticized the Municipality's decision to rename streets in Limassol. They claimed that the streets were largely named after Greek Revolutionists, stirring strong emotions among the Muslim inhabitants. They further lamented that the street signs failed to represent Limassol's distinct ethnic and linguistic components of the population, as they were only in Greek. They suggested that if new plates displaying the old names were necessary, they should be written in English, Turkish, and Greek. They appealed to the Government to remove the street signs to safeguard both the official business and the Turkish rights<sup>103</sup>.

In response to the Commissioner of Limassol's letter regarding the matter, Sozos left limited room for the British authorities to act, as the decision of the Municipal Council was based on the law No. 8 of 1885, which granted the municipality the right

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<sup>100</sup> 'SA1/1041/1911 Commissioner to the Chief Secretary, 23 October 1911' (1911).

<sup>101</sup> Registrar General, 'SA1/1041/1911 Registrat General to Chief Secretary, 5 August' 2.

<sup>102</sup> Σώζος (n 81).

<sup>103</sup> 'SA1/1041/1911 Letter from Turkish Cypriots of Limassol to the High Commissioner of Cyprus, June 2, 1911' 2.

to name streets within the municipal area and affix plates bearing these names. He underlined that the decision was unanimous among the Greek and Turkish Cypriot council members.

In his letter, Sozos highlighted the importance of street names in representing the city's history and allowing observers to measure the progression in the city dwellers' perceptions and ideas. He stressed that names were chosen to commemorate important events and notable figures from their national history. Sozos concluded that, barring the Commissioner of Limassol, he received no complaints from the city's residents, whether Christian or Muslim, about the choice of street names.

In his letter, Sozos conveyed that the unanimous decision made by the Municipal Council in 1908 was attended by Ottoman members and the Ottoman Vice President of the Council. He requested the names of the streets in the Ottoman quarter from the Vice President when the Municipality decided to order the street name plates. The Vice President asked for the deferral of the order for the Ottoman quarter's name plates and proposed the replacement of Miaoulis Street with Saadi Street, which the Municipal Council approved. Sozos noted that the request of the Deputy Mayor was endorsed by the Greek-Cypriot members of the municipality "in a gesture of goodwill towards their Ottoman compatriots, with whom they desire to co-exist peacefully as brothers, whose interests are united against the ruling government". Enclosed in his correspondence, Sozos stressed that these street names enabled visitors to understand the history of the Cypriot people, their myths, legends, and their deep-rooted historical traditions. He further asserted that these names were a tribute to the significant events and personalities of their ancestral history.<sup>104</sup>

The British authorities sought further explanations from Sozos about the inaccuracies in the numbering of streets. During their meeting, Sozos exhibited resistance to reverse the Municipality's decision, which had been in effect for two years, and the enamelled iron plates that were affixed to all the 85 streets of Limassol had been in place for a year. Addressing the concerns of the British authorities over the identification of registers and documents by the Land Registry Department, he argued that the new name plates would expedite the Department's tasks during the upcoming registration process. He referenced examples from other municipalities across various countries that had altered their street nomenclature without encountering objections from their respective Land Registry Departments.

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<sup>104</sup> Σώζος (n 81).

However, a similar effort by the Nicosia Municipality in 1912 to rename the streets in the capital of Cyprus faced strong resistance and opposition from both the British colonial government and the Turkish Cypriots. It is worth noting that this confrontation in both Limassol and Nicosia prompted a reaction from the Turkish Embassy in London, which sought British intervention to protect the Muslim residents of the two cities<sup>105</sup>. According to Papapolyviou, this controversy marked the first-ever demand by the Turkish Cypriots for separate majorities in the municipalities<sup>106</sup>. In June 1912, in a note to the Secretary of the State addressing the issue, the High Commissioner reported that English names such as “Byron”, “Gordon”, “Prince of Wales” and “Albert” had been replaced by “Ptolemy”, “Enosis” (Union with Greece), “Eleftheria” (Freedom) and “Ellas” (Hellas). The High Commissioner noted that the renaming of the streets appeared to be more objectionable to the British rather than to Moslem sentiment<sup>107</sup>.

Indeed, the street name plates with white lettering on dark blue ground<sup>108</sup>, the colors of the Greek flag, written exclusively in Greek, confirmed an attempt at Hellenization. The choice of street to carry the name “Enosis” (Union) held significance, with Victoria (Queen of Britain) street’s parallel road named Ellados (Greece) street, and the street connecting Victoria Street and Ellados street named Enoseos (Union) Street. Although the principal avenues of Limassol were not renamed, St. George Street was renamed to George I Street, to commemorate the king of the Greeks. As Kl. Lanitis would admit in a speech on the 40th anniversary of Sozos’ death, with the naming of the city’s streets, they (the then municipal council) engaged through street (re)namings in “high politics and diplomacy.”<sup>109</sup>

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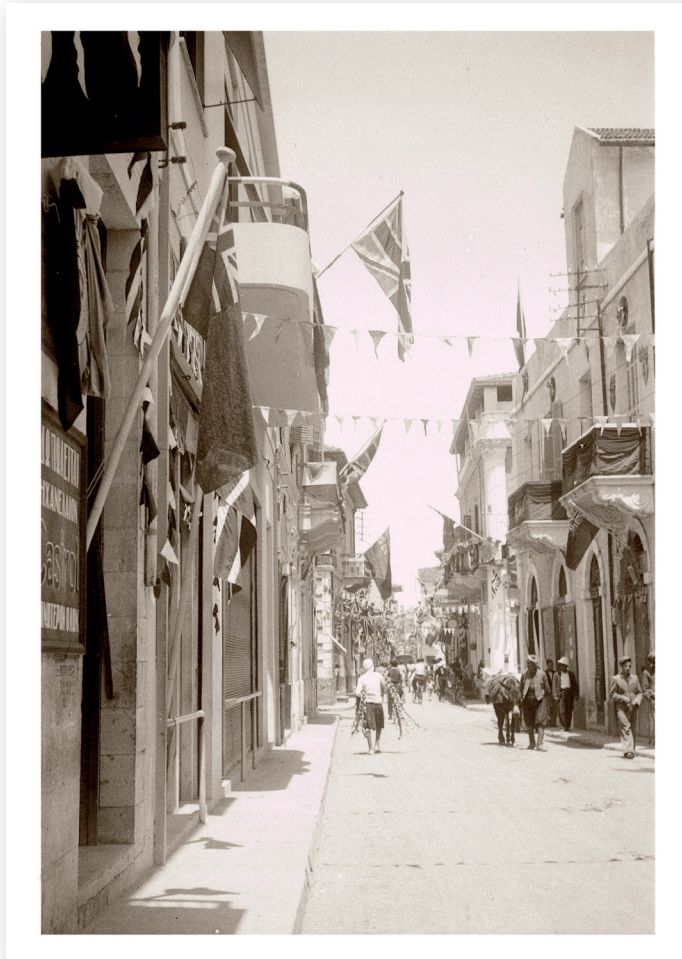
<sup>105</sup> ‘SA1/625/912 Resolution Passed by the Moslems of Nicosia to the Commissioner, 11 March’ (1912); ‘SA1/625/1912 The High Commissioner of Cyprus to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, 7 June’ (1912); ‘SA1/625/1912 Note from the Turkish Embassy in London’ 1.

<sup>106</sup> Παπαπολυβίου, ‘Χριστόδουλος Σώζος Και Νικόλας Κλ. Λανίτης: Δύο Μεγάλες Μορφές Της Λεμεσού’ (n 79).

<sup>107</sup> ‘SA1/625/1912 The High Commissioner of Cyprus to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, 7 June’ (n 103).

<sup>108</sup> Registrar General, ‘LRS1/13639 Registrar General to Chief Secretary, 25 October’.

<sup>109</sup> ‘Η Κύπρος Αποτίει Φόρον Τιμής Εις Την Ιεράν Μνήμην Του Χριστ. Σώζου Και Των Λοιπών Κυπρίων Ηρώων Του 1912-1913 (Ομιλία Του Ν. Κλ. Λανίτη)’ (n 79) 15.



St Andrew Street, Limassol. (Patticheion Municipal Museum, Historical Archives, Research Center of Limassol – K. Eleftheriades Archives CYLHA.10.036.006.0003

## **Conclusion**

Street naming reflected the dynamics involved in the legitimation of authority within the public space. The advent of British colonial rule marked a significant transition for the local populace, signifying a departure from an extended period of Ottoman dominion, during which the emergence of a distinct national identity was not formed. Instead, the city's inhabitants were primarily stratified along religious lines. Conse-

quently, the development of national identity was transcribed in the public space with street (re) naming, effectively ingraining itself within the collective identity.

Upon the arrival of the British colonial administration, a meticulously crafted official narrative was promulgated to legitimize the transfer of power and the shift from the Ottoman era to British rule. This narrative was predicated upon the liberal principles espoused by the newly-installed ruling elite, thereby heightening the aspirations of the Greek Cypriot population for union with Greece. The selection of street names, driven by practical reasons such as taxation and urban orientation, concurrently served as both an expression of the new rule. Street names encompassing references to both the contemporary British monarchy (including British Royals such as Queen Victoria and the Prince of Wales) and historical allusions (such as figures like King Richard, the Crusades, and St. John's) played a pivotal role in legitimizing the authority of the newly-established ruling class and substantiating their claim over the public domain.

In Limassol, street naming was a tool of control of the public space in the hands of the British authorities for commemorative purposes. In this function, streets imposed colonial power in the urban space. On several occasions, street names had neither historical nor geographical links. Even so, they formed a constant reminder of the power of the colonial authorities. With time, street names became an essential aspect of the symbolic construction of national identity, serving as vehicles of commemoration. National identity was thus shaped by historical conceptions and collective memory, representing a useful past and a political tool for the legitimization of national aspirations and the nationalistic narrative <sup>110</sup>.

This paper documented the first massive de-commemoration that took place in the urban space of Limassol during the mayorship of Christodoulos Sozos. The street renaming process constituted the culmination of the formation of the national identity that found its expression in the urban space. The urban space of Limassol became an arena of struggle between the colonial official narrative and that of the Greek-Cypriot elites which advocated for union with Greece.

The persistent renaming of streets demonstrated the transformative power of street names in shaping the ideological landscape of a city. The complex process of renaming streets in Limassol unveiled the multifaceted relationship between names,

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<sup>110</sup> Maoz Azaryahu, 'King George or King David? On Renaming the Colonial Past in Israel' 15; Azaryahu, 'The Power of Commemorative Street Names' (n 5); Maoz Azaryahu, 'Banal Commemoration, the Written Word, and Beyond' in Reuben Rose-Redwood, Derek Alderman and Maoz Azaryahu (eds), *The political life of urban streetscapes: Naming, politics, and place*. (1st edn, Taylor & Francis 2017).

identity, power, and place. This historical review reveals that the renaming of streets was not only a mere administrative act but a crucial component in the utilization of urban space as a vehicle to promote history and identity. The complex interplay between the city's urban space, its social dynamics, and its historical narratives reflects how the street names of Limassol have come to embody the city's evolving identity, inscribing the city's history and national aspirations onto its landscape.

An intriguing aspect of this historical analysis is the exploration of street naming practices during the initial decades of British colonial rule of Cyprus with a particular reference in Limassol. This study significantly contributes to our understanding of how urban space becomes politicized and the power dynamics that underlie such processes. The street names bear witness to the island's rich history, its cultural ties to Greece, the influences of British colonial rule, and the dominant national narrative of the period under examination. From the first British-appointed mayor of Limassol, Christodoulos Karydes, who aligned positively with British authority and accepted the imposed street names, to Hadjipavlou, who, without disrupting his relationship with the British administration, the street nomenclature reflected the shift of the Greek-Cypriot elite towards union with Greece referencing the island's Greek past. The challenge to British authority and the imposition of the national narrative in the urban space culminated with Christodoulos Sozos, who successfully promoted the Hellenization of the city and the collective demand for Enosis (union) with Greece through the renaming of streets and the exclusive use of the Greek language on name plates, provoking reactions from both the British and members of the Ottoman elite.

The study of street naming in Limassol from 1878 to the early 1900s provides significant insights into the island's socio-political transformation from Ottoman rule to British rule. These transformations have profoundly influenced the urban space and influenced the interactions between the emerging national groups on the island, namely Greek and Turkish Cypriots. The intricate intermingling of spatial, social, and economic factors has shaped Limassol's journey, with a particular focus on its growth, modernization, and occasional ethnic conflicts.



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**Appendix**

**Table 1** Houses and Persons in Chief Towns of Each District Within Municipal Limits

Year	Houses	Males			Females			Total		Total
		Mahomedan	Non-Mohamedan	Total	Mahomedan	Non-Mohamedan	Total	Mahomedan	Non-Mohamedan	
1881	1101	3419			2587			6006		6006
1891	1495	802	2828	3630	799	2576	3375	1601	5404	7005
1901	1793	934	3202	4136	953	3037	3990	1887	6239	8126
1911	2191	1166	4074	5240	1100	3763	4863	2266	7837	10103
1921	2888	1343	5431	6774	1195	5139	6334	2538	10570	13108

**Table 2** List showing the names o the streets in Limassol Town in 1871

The streets of Limassol in 1871	Street names as they appear in Kitchener's map
Ahekli	Tronbadon
Arnavoud Mesoyidi	St Patrick's
Ayianapa Kelissasi	
Ayio Antoni	Kolossi street
Bayadjilar Jarshessi (Dyer's street)	St John's
Billardo garshessi (The street where there was a casino and a club with a billiard –the first billiard in Limassol. The billiard had made such a great impression on the residents that they named both the building and the street after it)	
Coja Bekir	Liquor lane
Christoghlo Haji Pavli <sup>111</sup>	
Dabaghane (Tabakhane) <sup>112</sup> Tannery	
Dare Boyace	
Dekujku Dash	

<sup>111</sup> Christodoulos Hadjipavli was a renowned merchant, father of the third mayor of Limassol Demosthenis Hadjipavlou (1885-1887 and 1896-1908).

<sup>112</sup> Παρασκευάς (n 14) 78.

Deyirmenji Gadi	
Dirifonas	
Djami Djedid Cami-i cecid	
Djamili Monaster	
Djedid Hamam (New Bath)	Athanas
Eski Carantina Hanessi <sup>113</sup> the old quarantine	
Eski Makkeme Meydani (old court square)	St George
Fethi Effendi	St. David's
French Monastiri (French Monastery)	Fisher
Hadji Papas	
Hadji Pavlo	Blondel
Hafiz Effendi	St. Barnabas
Haji Yorghis	Ambeli
Hamam (Bath)	
Haukoumet (Hükümet, Government )	Jerusalem
Hekim Bashi (Hekim Bashi: Hekim Baş, surgeon general)	
Ibsaridi <sup>114</sup>	
Islam Jarshessi (Islam Jarshessi: İslam Çarşısı, (There is a reference to Müslümanlar Çarşısı [Muslims' Bazaar] at CYLHA.05.005.0028)	
Jankar Jarshessi (Jankar Jarshessi: Shoe-makers Bazaar)	
Jar	
Jarmaudi	
Jikmaz (Jikmaz: Çıkamaz, Dead End Street)	Crusader
Jikmaz Baghdja (Jikmaz Baghdja: Çıkamaz Bahçe, Dead End Garden)	
Jikmaz Jopjan Bachi	
Joumbezli Baghdja (Cumbezli Bache - Sycamore tree Garden)	
Kala Kebir Jivari (Kala Kebir Jivari: Around the Big Castle )	St. Filia
Katholidji Kelssasi	
Kilsa Baghdjarsi	
Koftioyi	
Mehmed Ali	
Meydan Mahelle (Meydan Mahelle: Square Neighbourhood)	
Ousta Michail	
Ouzoun Jarshi (Uzun Çarşı, Long Bazaar, (CYLHA.05.005.0167 we have a reference to this at the municipal council meetings)	Pilgrim
Pavlaki Pavlaki (Pilavaki – Demosthenis Pilavakis	Canning
Ressam	St. Andrews

<sup>113</sup> Παρασκευάς (n 14) 86.

<sup>114</sup> Παρασκευάς (n 14) 79, 86.

Sava Anastasi	
Serdar agha Baghdjassi	King Richard
Soghauh Sou (Soguksu) Cold water	
Stiliani (Hadji Stylianou at Katholiki Quarter - See minutes of the Limassol Municipal Council 11 June 1887 and 24 October 1888)	Bishop
Theodossi Moridi <sup>115</sup>	
Vania <sup>116</sup>	
Vareljeler charshessi (Vareljeler charshessi: Barrel Makers Bazaar)	
Vatia garshessi	
Yanko Yassonidi <sup>117</sup>	Lanidi
Yanni	
Yel Dehusseini	Victoria
Yeni Charchi (Yeni Çarşı New Bazaar)	
Yorghaki Stilianidi	The Cut
Yorghañji Yarnandi	
Yorgho Adamo	
Yorgho Papa Stefano	
	Katholiki
	Prince of Wales
	Wang Cut

**Table 3** Street Names as they appear in Kitchener’s map (1883)

1	Tronbadon	10	Blondel	19	King Richard
2	St Patrick’s	11	St. Barnabas	20	Bishop
3	Kolossi street	12	Ambeli	21	Byron
4	St John’s	13	Jerusalem	22	Lanidi
5	Liquor lane	14	Crusader	23	Victoria
6	Athanas	15	St. Filia	24	The Cut
7	St George	16	Pilgrim	25	Katholiki
8	St. David’s	17	Canning	26	Prince of Wales
9	Fisher	18	St. Andrews	27	Wang Cut (Way Out)

<sup>115</sup> Παρασκευάς (n 14) 86.

<sup>116</sup> Thomas F Pettigrew and Linda R Tropp, ‘A Meta-Analytic Test of Intergroup Contact Theory.’ (2006) 90 *Journal of personality and social psychology* 751.

<sup>117</sup> Παρασκευάς (n 14) 74.

**Table 4** List of street names in 1890 (According to the minutes of 28th Feb. 1890)

	Street Name	Description
1	Albert	Prince Albert of England
2	Alexander	Greek History (Alexander the Great)
3	Alfred	British Royal Family - son of queen Victoria
4	Ali	Ottoman names
5	Anemomylos	(windmill) Landmarks
6	Athania	British names
7	Ay. Antonios	Saints and Landmark
8	Ay. Fylaxis	Religion (Landmark - road leading to the village of Ayia Fylaxis)
9	Bethlehem	Cities – Religion
10	Bishop	Church
11	Blondel	British names
12	Byron	British poet and Greece 1821 War of Independence – Philelline
13	Canning	Prime Minister of England (until 1827)
14	Chrysorogiatissa	Saints - Monastery of Chrysorogiatissa
15	Commandaria	Cyprus wines - connected with the the knights templar
16	Cordington	British admiral who took place at the Battle of Navarino (defeat of the Ottoman fleet - Greek revolution of independence).
17	Crusader	Cyprus History
18	David	Saint
19	Demetra	Greek Mythology
20	Dervis	Ottoman names
21	Enosis	Union (with Greece) The Enosis lodge was found at this street since its establishment in 1884-1885, after its split from the Isotis lodge.
22	Filia	British names
23	Fisher	British names
24	Fitchroy Place (square)	Landmark
25	Gamvettas	Gambetta - prime minister of France 1881-1882
26	Garillis	Limassol river crossing Ay. Antonis neighborhood
27	Gordon	British General who died in 1885
28	Hambeli	Hambeli street was the centre of commercial activity in the Ottoman period. The name Hambeli derives from the the followers of Hanbeli or Hambali school of thought, one of the four Muslim religious creeds <sup>118</sup>
29	Hermes	Greek Mythology

<sup>118</sup> Akif, Ozay & Selcuk Akif, *Echoes from the Past : The Turkish Cypriot Community of Limassol and Its Heritage - Gecmisten Yankilar: Leymosun Kibris Turk Cemaati ve Mirasi - Ηχώ Από Παλιά : η*

30	Hungary	European cities
31	Ibrahim	Ottoman names
32	Ifigenia	Greek Mythology
33	Jerusalem	Cities – Religion
34	Kanaris	Greek Revolution
35	Kleopatra	Queen of the Ptolemaic Kingdom
36	Kolossi	Village
37	Koraes	Greek Revolution
38	LeeConnor	British names
39	Leonidas	Ancient Greek History (Spartan king who lost his life at the battle of Thermopylae)
40	Lusignan	History of Cyprus
41	Macheras	Cypriot Historian Venetian era (Leondios Macheras)
42	Miaoulis	Greek Revolution
43	Muse	Greek Mythology
44	Paphos	Towns of Cyprus
45	Phoenician	History of Cyprus - Colonizers of Cyprus
46	Pilgrim	Religion
47	Plateia Krinis (Fountain Square)	Landmarks
48	Prince of Wales	Prince Albert of England
49	Queen	Queen of England
50	Richard	Richard the Lionhearted - English Kings
51	Roman	History of Cyprus
52	Saafi	Ottoman names - See Shafii sect - one of the four Muslim religious creeds
53	Salamis	Ancient Cyprus Cities
54	Salsey Square	Landmarks (British)
55	Sea Lane	Landmarks (British)
56	Serif	Ottoman names
57	Sfageiou (Slaughterhouse)	Landmarks
58	Sfalangiotissa	Saints (Orthodox)
59	Shakespeare	English poet and playwright- His play Richard III refer to Richard the Lionhearted (Cultural appropriation)
60	Sideway of Byron street	



61	Sideway of Commandarias street	
62	Sideway of Hambeli	
63	Sideway of St. Andrew street	
64	Socrates	Greek Philosopher
65	Soguksu	(Κρύο νερό - cold water) - Ottoman names – Landmarks
66	Solon	Ancient Greek Philosopher
67	St. Andrew	Saints - Patron Saint of Scotland
68	St. Barnabas	Saints (Orthodox) – The founder of the Church of Cyprus
69	St. George	The Patron Saint of England
70	St. John	Saints connected with Knights of St John Hospitaller, 1192-1489 who ruled Cyprus
71	St. Patrick	Saints - patron saint and national apostle of Ireland (British Saint)
72	Stasinós	Cypriot epic poet
73	Thermopylae	Ancient Greek History
74	Tropatour	Troubadour - lyric poets and poet-musicians often of knightly rank
75	Victoria	Queen of England
76	Way out	Landmarks
77	Yeizulah	Ottoman names
78	Yildiz	(star in Turkish) Ottoman names
79	Zenon	Ancient Philosopher from Kition (Cyprus city)
80	Zig Zag	Landmarks

**Table 5\*** List of Names included in the report presented before the Municipal Council on 22nd October 1908

\*For the purposes of this paper street names are translated in English

Old street name	New street names	About
The street between the old slaughter house and the old hospital	Herakleidiou tou Olympionikou	Ancient Greek Olympic winner from Salamina, Cyprus. He competed in stadion, a 600 feet race, in the 143 <sup>rd</sup> Olympic games in 204 BC.
The street between the old hospital and the residence of Agat. Frangoudes	Philokypros	Ancient King of Soloi (Ancient kingdom in Cyprus)

The street between the residence of Agath. Frangoudes and Mich. Argyrides	Aristokypros	King of Soloi 500 bC
The street between the residence of Argyrides and the warehouse of M.K. Schizas	Evelthon	King of Salamis
Fisher	Dighenis Akritas	A mythological person symbolizing supernatural strength. He was called “The Hercules of Cyprus”
Pilgrim	Righena	Cypriot queen in medieval times
Jerusalem	Jerusalem	
Filia	Vasileos Onisilou	King of Salamis who fought against the Persians
Athania	Vasileos Onisilou	King of Salamis
Enoseos	Augustas Theodoras	Wife of the Justinian, emperor of Byzantium
Crusader	Nikiphoros Phokas	Byzantine emperor
Sea Lane	Crete	See – Independence of Crete
St. Patrick	Makedonias	Macedonian Struggle (1904-1908)
Ifighenias	Ifighenias	Greek Mythology
Way Out	Konstantinou Paleologou	Byzantine Emperors
Cordington	Mesologgiou	Greek city
Commandarias	Koumandaria	
Agoras (Market)	Agoras (Market)	(Αγορά) Market
Ermou (Hermes)	Ermou (Hermes)	Greek Mythology
Parallel to Ermou street	Syntagmatos	
Shaffi	Shaffi	
Miaoulis	Saadi	
The street from Pavlides residence to the Commissioner’s residence	Vyronos	Lord Byron (Philhellene)
From the end of Vyronos street up to the residence of Christian	Canning	A proponent of the Greek political independence
The street near the Commissioner’s residence	Navarchou Cordictonos (Cordington)	British Admiral – philhellene – Admiral of the British Mediterranean fleet in the battle of Navarino

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The street from the chamber up to Canning street	Gladstone	British Prime Minister – Philhellene – Union of the Ionian Islands with Greece
St. Nicolaos	Anapafseos	(Anapafseos – rest – cemetery street)
Demetra	Miaoulis	Admiral - Heroes of the Greek struggle of independence (1821-1827)
Shakespeare	Androutsos	Heroes of the Greek struggle of independence (1821-1827)
The street towards P. Georgiades residence to Oasis towards Lusignian street	Karaiskakis	Heroes of the Greek struggle of independence (1821-1827)
Louzignian	Kolokotronis	Heroes of the Greek struggle of independence (1821-1827)
Roman	Athanasios Diakos	Heroes of the Greek struggle of independence (1821-1827)
Phoenician	Kapodistrias	Heroes of the Greek struggle of independence (1821-1827)
Hungary	Othonos and Amalias	The first king and queen of Greece
Zenonos	Zenonos	Greek Philosophers (born in Cyprus)
Apostolos Varnavas	Apostolos Varnavas	Cypriot Saints
Tropatur	Aftokrateiras Irinis	Byzantine Emperors
Blondel	Elenis Paleologinas	Cyprus Kings – Lusignan Period
Richard	Vasileiou Makedonos	Byzantine Emperors
Salamis	Salaminos	Ancient Cypriot cities
Bishop	Archiepiskopou Kyprianou	Archbishop of Cyprus. Executed by the Ottomans – Greek War of Independence
Saripolos	Saripolou	Cypriot. Professor of Constitutional, Criminal and International Law, representative of the Kapodistrian University at the 2nd National Assembly (1862-1864)
David Street up to the Djami	Vyzantiou	Byzantium
The street between Victoria and Djami	Tsamis	Djami (Τζαμί) mosque

St John	Kitiou Kyprianou	Kyprianos served as the Metropolitan of Kition in Cyprus from 1868 to 1886, was the first to raise the issue of Enosis (Union) with Greece to Sir Garnet Wolsley, the first High Commissioner of Cyprus, upon his arrival.
Albert	Ellados	Ελλάδος - Greece
Zig Zag	Zig Zag	
Victoria	Victorias	Queen of England
Prince of Wales	Eleftherias	
The street from Prince of Wales street up to the residence of Avgousta Evangelidou	Spartis	Ancient Greek cities
Gordon	Enoseos	(Ενώσεως) Union
Anemomylos street from Garyllis bridge	Navarinou	Battle of Navarino
Thermopylae	Thermopylon	Battle of Thermopylae
Kanaris	Kanari	Heroes of the Greek struggle of independence (1821-1827)
The street that connects Victor and Thermopylae street	Marathonos	Battle of Marathon 490bC defeat of Persians by the Greeks
Leonidas	Leonidas	Spartan king who fell at Thermopylae fighting the Persians
Vyron (Byron)	Ptolemeon	Ptolemaic Dynasty
Alexander	Megalou Alexandrou	Alexander the Great
The street from Anna Zavrou residence to the schools	Georgiou Gennadiou	The teacher of the nation (1821)
The street from the schools to the Ptolemy street	Athanasiou Sakellariou	A distinguished Greek scholar, acclaimed writer and publisher who devoted his teaching career to Cyprus, where he imparted his knowledge and experience.
Canning	Athinon	Athens – the capital of the Greek state
The street between Rossides and Court Square	Court Square	

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Muse	Themidos	Ancient Greek Mythology - Goddess of Justice
Liquor	Aphroditis	Ancient Greek Mythology – Aphrodite
Socrates	Socratous	Ancient Greek Philosopher (Socrates)
The street parallel to Socrates street	Ayiou Neophytou	Cypriot saint
Gamvetta	Vragadinou	Marcantonio Bragadin led the defence of Famagusta during the Ottoman conquest in 1571.
the street next to Vragadinou street	Marias Synglitikis	A Cypriot young lady who put on fire the Ottoman flagship and two other warships in the Famagusta harbor after the capture of Famagusta and the death of Bragadino
The next street	Markou Botsari	Heroes of the Greek struggle of independence (1821-1827)
Macheras	Leondios Macheras	Cypriot Writers, 16th Century
The street next to Leondios Macheras street	Ayiou Spyridonos	Cypriot saint
Queen	Richard and Berengaria	British Kings (Richard the Lionheart)
Chrysoroyiatissas	Chrysoroyiatissis	Cyprus Saints
the street before Eleftheriades and Solomonides residences	Vasilissis Karlottas	Queen of Cyprus Medieval period
Korae	Pavlou Mela	Officer in the Greek artillery. A hero of the Macedonia Struggle for liberation was killed in duty in 1904
Stasinou	Stasinou	Cypriot epic poet
Solonos	Solonos	Ancient Greek Statesmen
Vithleem	Grivas	Greek minister
The street from Karaiskakis to Androutsos street	Boumboulinas	Heroes of the Greek struggle of independence (1821-1827)
A street next to it	Siehtouri	Hero of the Greek struggle of Independence (1821-1827)
Another street next to it	Tzamadou	Hero of the Greek struggle of Independence (1821-1827)). The streets of Miaoulis, Sahtouri, and Tsamados run parallel to each other
St George	Georgiou tou protou	King of the Greeks

St. Andrew	St. Andrew	Patron saint of Scotland and Orthodox saint
Pallados	Andrea Themistokleous	Andreas Themistocleous – the headmaster of the Limassol Gymnasium – proponent of Enosis movement <sup>119</sup>
Amathountos	Amathountos	Ancient Cyprus Kingdoms
Fitchroy Place (Plateia Kounapias)		Landmarks

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<sup>119</sup> Κλεόβουλος Ι Μυριανθόπουλος, *Δύο Μεγάλοι Μορφαί: Ανδρέας Θεμιστοκλέους, Χριστόδουλος Σώζος* (Τύποις Ο Χειμωνίδη 1938).