

*Zypern und der Vordere Orient im 19. Jahrhundert.
Die Levante im Fokus von Politik und Wissenschaft
der europäischen Staaten*

[Cyprus in the Near East in the 19th Century.
The Levante in the Focus of Politics and Science of European States]

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This volume is the result of a symposium held at the 10th anniversary of the institute. The sequel of the articles is not always obvious. The first three contributions deal with the political historical background of modern Cyprus. The theme of the following articles is mainly the archaeology of Cyprus and of the Near East in the nineteenth century. Some of them focus on the Orient only. However, it has been a tradition to link Cypriot archaeology with that of the Near East and not with the Greek world and to a certain degree this is justified. Thus this book contains ample information on archaeology, the history of excavations and art history though its title suggests that the book is devoted to nineteenth century policies.

The first contribution by Rolf Ahman (pp. 9-32) analyses British oriental policy in the nineteenth century. It reveals that Britain acquired Cyprus to safeguard the Life Line of the Empire from England through the Mediterranean to India. As regards Cyprus Ahman follows the classical studies of Lee (1934) and Hill (1952). He mentions the Tribute to be paid by the Cypriots but he does it in such a vague manner that the real problem of this payment is not made clear. The author still believes that Britain acquired Cyprus as a *Place d'Armes* though there was no deep water harbour in Cyprus then. He seems unaware that in the decisive phase it was the Exchequer and not the military that wanted Cyprus in order to compel the Cypriots to pay the interest of a bounced Ottoman bond of 1855 to the British shareholders. And this they did up until the end of the 1920s, hence Ahman's account reflects the state of research 40 years ago.

Winfried Baumgart is a renowned specialist on nineteenth century imperialism and power politics. He describes the Oriental Question (pp. 33-42) from the viewpoint of the Great Powers: Russia, Austria-Hungary, Great Britain, France and Prussian Germany. He correctly states that the First World War brought closure to the Oriental Question as it was known. 'The hereditary titles were claimed by the three Entente Powers, by Italy, by the Arabs and by the Jewry.' At that time, however, Russia was no longer a member of the Entente community of heirs as she had

become the Soviet Union. Strange as it may seem the author does not mention another heir with a claim: Greece and her *Megali* Idea. Consequently, despite the fact that the Treaty of Lausanne terminated the Greek-Turkish War, the author describes it as a Treaty concluded between the Allies and Turkey. A sound knowledge of history on Great Power politics does not obviously necessitate a detailed understanding or an intimate familiarity with developments on a lower level.

Daniel Bertsch's contribution (pp. 43-62) chronicles the special mission of Anton Graf von Prokesch-Osten to Palaestine in 1829. This article is excellent reading and covers the period during the Greek War of Independence when Prokesch travelled widely and gained a wealth of experience in the area. Prokesch was subsequently sent to Palestine to negotiate with the Pasha of Akkon, Tripolis and Saida in an attempt to settle the conflict between the Pasha and the Austrian Vice-Consul Catafagio and end the persecution of Austrian subjects. As the Pasha did not receive Prokesch immediately the latter travelled to Jerusalem, and it was later, on his return to Akkon that he succeeded in closing the matter by signing an agreement. His success was based on his intimate knowledge of Levantine mentality:

'To persuade someone in Turkey is no easy task because in general words do not count much. Ambassadors will not get far by using words. A correct way of handling the Turks needs a deep insight into their customs, manners, prevailing ideas, weaknesses and way of thinking. Even the cleverest European cannot acquire this insight in a few months' contact not even in years without closely mixing with them. Much of our art of persuasion cannot be used with the Turks who are capable to recognize the truths and the lies. Energy and mildness based on absolute tranquility are the keys to their trust which has to be acquired always first. But once it is acquired one can lead them like children on reins [a leash?].'

Reading this article might even be highly profitable for today's diplomats and negotiators engaging with the successors of those Turks who Prokesch met almost 200 years ago and it might even apply for Cyprus today ...

Three articles deal with the Ancient Near East in general: Reinhard Dittmann's contribution (pp. 63-100) presents an overview of the relevance of the nineteenth century excavations in the Near East. Following the unearthing of archaeological finds in that area he describes the competition between the British Museum and the Louvre as to which museum might obtain the most beautiful objects from graves in Mesopotamia, which in turn, would inspire the German Empire to follow up. But the purchase of Sargon's II stele found at Kition should not be mentioned in this context. The early treasure hunters had almost no scientific knowledge and caused a lot of damage when excavating. Dittmann points to the special importance of Leon Heuzey in regard to the methodology used to treat the finds for historic interpretation. As a result the damage to excavated finds reduced as the treasure hunters became more skilled. Hans Neumann (pp. 199-224) exemplifies this development on the basis of German scholars at the time of Emperor Wilhelm II. And lastly, Dietrich Meijer (pp. 189-198), underlines the important role played by Henri Frankfort in the advancement of near eastern archaeology. His reference to 'new

archaeology', and to processual and post-processual developments in archaeological studies, is rather tense.

Reinhard Senff (pp. 256-269) recounts the study of ancient Cypriot art during the nineteenth century beginning with the so-called consular excavations and ending with the first scientific conception of Cypriot archaeology. Andreas Mehl (pp. 153-187) characterises the scholarly results of Ludwig Ross, whose aim in travelling to Cyprus in 1845 was to explore the influence of Phoenicia and Greece on the island's art. Antoine Hermary (pp. 101-113) contrasts the French consular excavations in the mid-nineteenth century which led to the purchasing of the Cypriot collection of the Louvre, with the scientific exploration of Cypriot archaeology by Heuzey, Perrot and Chipiez.

Hartmut Matthäus (pp. 115-151) demonstrates the importance of Max Ohnefalsch-Richter for the systematisation of Cypriot archaeology. He prepared the systematic basis for the first chronological account of ancient Cypriot culture but sensed that his own psychological problems led to his isolation and the ultimate loss of the subject he himself had helped to create. Eftychia Zachariou-Kaila (pp. 271-293) adds a new aspect to nineteenth century archaeological research on Cyprus by quoting the statements of Greek scholars, D. Vikelas and J. Gennadiuos, in Cypriot newspapers of 1899, attacking the continued export of art which the British had not stopped when Cyprus became British in 1878.

Finally, Dirk Sangemeister (pp. 225-253) gives an enlightening insight into the role of Cyprus in German romanticist literature by referring to some typical examples; significantly all those poems, novels or drama plays of the Lusignans and the Venetians in the late mediaeval period. The most important representative of this group is Goethe's brother-in-law, Christian August Vulpius, with his novels 'Armidoro' (1804) and 'Lucindora die Zauberin' (1810). His heroes are illegitimate descendants of the Lusignan family who, in an act of homage to the island's patron goddess, fight against Venice for the freedom of Cyprus and pay the ultimate price with their lives. In 1822 he added another work entitled 'Bublina, die Heldin Griechenlands unserer Zeit' – a typical example of philhellenistic propaganda. Although Bublina acts for Cyprus, there is no resemblance whatsoever with the historical figure of the real heroine Bouboulina.

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