

EARLY FORMS OF ETHNIC CONFLICT IN CYPRUS: ARCHBISHOP KYPRIANOS OF CYPRUS AND THE WAR OF GREEK INDEPENDENCE 1821

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Abstract

"Άσφαλές το γενόμενον, άσαφές το μέλλον."

Thales, (*Stobaeus, Fforilegium, flf. 79, e*)

On 25 March 1821, the Greeks of Morea and the Aegean Islands triggered a revolt against their Ottoman rulers who had dominated and exploited their land and fellow countrymen since 1453. The sultan viewed this uprising as a threat to order and discipline among the Christian subjects of his threatened Empire. The oecumenical patriarch Gregorios V and the Cypriots were among the first to suffer the anger and repressive measures of the Porte. The persecution of the Cypriots began on 9 July 1821, and continued indiscriminately, on a large scale, until December of the same year. This was a dark period for the Greek Cypriots. Many of them were massacred, their villages were burned, and some of them were sold into slavery in the markets of the Orient.

"For the whole earth is the sepulcher of famous men; and their story is not graven only on stone over their native earth, but fives on faraway, without visible symbol, woven into the stuff of other men's lives."

Pericles. *Funeral Speech*

For over four hundred years the Greeks had endured the rule of their Ottoman masters, and social and political oppression and humiliation. These were years of trial and terror. Indeed, the history of the Greeks in the decades following the fall of Constantinople (1453-1821) is a melancholy one. It is a record of physical captivity and cultural limitations. Yet the Greeks and Hellenism survived those centuries,

They survived because they were nurtured by their faith. However orthodoxy, the Church, survived because it was saved by Hellenism. During all those years of captivity the Greeks unceasingly hoped and planned for the day when they would be free again, and be masters in their own land.¹ It was now time for the Greeks to liberate their land, throw off the ottoman yoke, and regain their freedom and identity; it was time to reestablish freedom in the birthplace of the ideals of democracy. The Greeks of the *diaspora* started the movement towards Ypsilandis in a letter to the Greeks of the mainland and of the diaspora, calling for a joint effort to free Greece from its Ottoman rulers. "Take up your rifles my friends and respond to the call of our country."² A British Philhellene wrote enthusiastically, "The moment is rapidly approaching for the fulfillment of the prophecy, the white haired Giaour is at the gates of Constantinople; and the crescent only shines over its walls till it determined who shall erect the cross."³

On the 25th of March 1921 the Greeks began their struggle for independence.

"Can the Europeans, can the Americans, originating in Europe, look with indifference to them whether Turkish dominion continues, and perhaps, aroused by impending danger, rises with new vigour; or whether the Greek nation resuscitates and resumes its place in the number of European states? This cannot be indifferent to them. It shall not! The cause of the Greeks is the cause of Europe!"⁴

As the chapter of Greece's recent history opened with its struggle for freedom becoming a force which inspired artists, men of letters, politicians and Philhellenes far beyond the limits of Greece and the geographic frontiers of Europe, the Greeks of the island of Cyprus, together with those of Smyrna, Rhodes, Crete and other places played a major role in their collective and individual contributions to the liberation of the motherland. Like other regions of the Greek diaspora the Greeks of Cyprus participated in the preparations for, and shared in the upheavals of, the Greek national uprising. Yet, although much is known and written about the contributions of other regions of Greece to the struggle, alas, the role of Cyprus in the uprising was not given the proper attention it deserved.⁵

The story of the role of Cyprus in the Greek struggle begins with the visit to the island of Dimitrios Hypatros, who after his induction into the *Philike Hetaireia* on 6 July 1818, was made *apostolos* of the Society with jurisdiction over Egypt and Cyprus. Three months after his initiation into the Society, Hypatros undertook his first official journey to the regions under his jurisdiction. In October 1818 he arrived in Cyprus where he met with the Archbishop and leading figures of the Greek community of the island. It is recorded that during his meeting with Archbishop Kyprianos of Cyprus he initiated the Archbishop into the Society. The Archbishop expressed the personal concern and that of his people for the struggle and "offered his support" for the planned Greek uprising.⁶



It has often been the tendency amongst students of the history of Greece and Cyprus during the years of the *Tourcocratia*, to dismiss most, if not all, the members of the higher clergy of the Orthodox Church, Patriarchs, Archbishops and Bishops, as men of weak and rather questionable character. Such charge, however, lacks sound foundations. Actually those centuries produced men of great courage, faith and devotion without whose efforts Hellenism might have not survived.

Of the Archbishops of Cyprus reigning during the centuries of the *Tourcocratia*, Kyprianos claimed the honoured title of *Ethnomartis*. Archbishop Kyprianos (1810- 1821), was born at "Strovilo in the Nahieh of Dagh."⁷ Not much is known of his earlier career, which was mainly spent as a novice, monk, deacon and priest at the monastery of Machaira. In 1783 he accompanied archimandrite Charalambos of Machaira to the province of Wallachia to raise funds for the restoration of the monastery. While in Wallachia, at the request of Michael Soutso, Prince of Wallachia, Kyprianos was asked to stay in Wallachia and serve as a priest to the Prince. After almost two decades in Wallachia, in 1802 Kyprianos returned to Cyprus where he took over the management of the estates of the monastery of Strovilo. In that capacity he won a great reputation for his zeal, his integrity and his administrative abilities. Archbishop Chrysanthos of Cyprus, recognizing the administrative talents of Kyprianos, elevated him to the rank of Oeconomos, Treasurer, in charge of the financial affairs of the archdiocese of Cyprus. The Archbishops of Cyprus and the Greek Dragomans of the island always had enemies among the Turkish officials of Cyprus and the Turkish inhabitants of the island, who resented their influence at the Porte.⁸ This deep resentment led to a violent uprising of the Turks of Cyprus against the Greek-Cypriots on 10 March 1804. The rioters burned and looted the residence of the Dragoman and then marched towards the archiepiscopal palace which they ravaged. Archbishop Chrysanthos was molested and illtreated. Was it not for the efforts of archimandrite Kyprianos, the rioters would have burned the archiepiscopal residence. Kyprianos managed to ease the pathos of the rioters and secure the assistance and intervention of the Turkish officials of the island. His positive role in that crisis earned him the title of "guardian of the nation".⁹ But he also managed to create enemies among the Turkish-Cypriots who resented his energy, authority and influence among high ranking Turkish officials. In 1810 Kyprianos was elected Archbishop and was consecrated to the primacy of the Church of Cyprus.¹⁰ A capable, sensible, just and patriotic man,¹¹ respected for his battle against corruption, and interest in education. Kyprianos is credited with the establishment of the Greek School of the Holy Trinity, situated opposite the archiepiscopal palace.¹²

In the autumn of 1818 Demitrios Hypatros of the *Hetaireia* made a tour of the area under his jurisdiction. In October of 1818 he visited Cyprus. He met with Archbishop Kyprianos and initiated him into the Hetaireia. Hypatros informed the Archbishop of the Society's strategy for the planned national uprising. Kyprianos

although sympathetic and most supportive of the plan, expressed his strong skepticism and personal reservations on the role of Cyprus in the national struggle. The close proximity of Cyprus to Ottoman territories, and presence on the island of a formidable Turkish military force, made participation in the national struggle of Greece disastrous for the Greek-Cypriots. An uprising in Cyprus would result in the certain slaughter of the Greek inhabitants of the island, Kyprianos told Hypatros. Two years later Hypatros returned to Cyprus. On 2 June 1820 he made his second, and this time, more extensive visit to the island. His numerous meetings with the Archbishop and other Greek Cypriot notables, resulted in considerable support for the forthcoming struggle of the motherland.¹³ The support was to be in funds and material goods.

On 1 October 1820, the *Archontes* of the *Hetaireia* gathered at Ismalia in the province of Moldavia (Roumania) to plan the strategy of and preparations for the *Ethniko Agona*, National Struggle. In considering the role each area was to play in the insurrection, they accepted the wishes of Archbishop Kyprianos of Cyprus and agreed with his fears about an "active" participation of Cyprus in the struggle. They concluded that:

"Since Archbishop Kyprianos has promised to assist in money or in provisions, all that he was able to, the Good should communicate with His Beatitude. and explain to him the situation. He should also urge him to be as generous as was the reputation of the island which the Cypriots have had the privilege of administering almost by themselves for so many years. These letters should be given to Pelopidas who, either on his way to, or on his return journey from Egypt, should stop in Cyprus and hand them (the letters) to His Beatitude. He should request that the funds be forwarded to Constantinople while provisions should be sent to locations which we shall indicate. Finally, he should urge him (the Archbishop) to take proper measures to best protect his flock from its enemies...."¹⁴

On the 8 October 1820 the Good - code name of Alexandros Ypsilantis – wrote to the Ethnarch of Cyprus:

"Your Beatitude,

Dimitrios Hypatros assured me of the generous contribution which Your Beatitude has promised to him in support of the School of Peloponnesos. As general trustee of the school I do consider it my duty to write to Your Beatitude in order first to thank you, and second, to tell you that the School's opening day is very near. I have instructed Mr. Antonios Pelopidas, a virtuous man and a most trustworthy patriot, to visit with you and inform you in person of our plans for the Holy Establishment. May Your Beatitude, as soon as possible, give your own contribution together with the contributions of your fellow countrymen, in funds or in provisions, to Mr. Ioannes Papadiamantopoulos of Palaia Petra of Peloponnesos. The delivery to him should be done either by your own

trusted individual or by the carrier of this letter."¹⁵

A second letter was addressed to Antonios Pelopidas at Constantinople. He was a member of the *Hetaireia*. In his letter Ypsilantis asks Pelopidas to travel to Egypt and Cyprus:

" I have given to archimandrite Dikaios letters addressed to our brothers in Egypt and for the Holy of Cyprus. Please take the letters and leave at once for those places. Tell our compatriots that the long-awaited hour for the implementation of our sacred plan is not far away. Urge them to make every effort to contribute much more than what they promised to under oath during their initiation. We need more because the nation's needs are much too great. On your return journey from Egypt, please make a stop in Cyprus where you should hand the letter to the Prelate, and urge him to contribute what he has promised. After you receive the funds, sail either alone or in the company of a trusted man of the Prelate, for Palaia Petra of Peloponnesos, where you will deliver them in person to Joannes Papadiamantopoulos. From him you should receive the necessary receipts."¹⁶

In accordance with his instructions Pelopidas arrived in Cyprus early in 1821. He was well received and entertained by Archbishop Kyprianos. Before his departure from Cyprus Pelopidas initiated into the *Hetaireia* Chrysanthos, the Exarch of the diocese of Lemessos, several bishops, abbots of monasteries and other members of the Church of Cyprus.¹⁷

On the 25 March 1821 the Greeks launched their struggle for their liberation from their Ottoman masters. At the Porte, Sultan Mahmud II retaliated by striking at the head of Hellenism and the Orthodox Church, the Oecumenical Patriarch, the aged Gregorios V. The vulnerable hierarch was hanged on Easter Sunday 10 April 1821. The fever and spirit of the revolution spread among the Greek subjects of the Sultan. Alarmed by the extent and magnitude of the uprising, Mahmud II issued a *Firman* ordering the immediate disarming of all the Christians throughout the Ottoman Empire.

The Turkish Governor of Cyprus was Kichuk Mehmed who was appointed to his post early in 1820 by order of Deli Abdullah, Capudan Pasha. Louis Lacroix writes, "*Koutchouk Mehmet, homme imperieux et dissimule, que le capitain-pasha avait choisi a dessein pour ruiner l' influence due primat greco.*"¹⁸

The Governor dispatched his janissaries throughout the island with instructions to carry out the orders of the Sultan. Lacroix observed that, "*Les Grecs, frappes de terreur, se Jaissent desarmer pur oter tout pretexte au soupcon.*" (*La Croix*). The disarming of the Christians of Cyprus was observed and recorded in the Italian newspaper *Notizie defGiorno*:

"... That very instant the governor general announced the prohibition of the carrying and retaining of all kinds of arms, firearms and cutting weapons. Even Franks, Armenians and Maronites were deprived of them: butchers, pork-dealers, labourers and all others were stripped of the tools used in their several occupations. Ammunition exposed for sale in public stores was seized without payment and lodged in the fort"¹⁹

The methods used and ways by which the janissaries implemented their orders to disarm the Christians so alarmed the people of the island, that Archbishop Kyprianos thought it necessary to issue a circular on the 22 April 1821, urging them to cooperate and not be frightened.

"Reverend priests and all Christian inhabitants of this nation.... We are well aware that the recent events, meaning the disarmament, disturbed you a great deal... We assure you that we have done all that is possible to stop it; however, this is the order of our kind, and nothing could be done, but do not be alarmed.... Our king simply wishes to protect himself from his enemies. He has made it very clear how pleased he is with our obedience and loyalty to him from the day of the conquest to the present. It is very important my dear children, that we try and keep our record clear in the eyes of our king, this, if you want to enjoy his protection. Also all of us must pray to God that no harm should come upon us. So please open your stores again and mind your own business and relax without having the slightest suspicion. Leave all your hopes and trust in the hands of our Holy God, who because of his love and kindness would free us from all kinds of sufferings. Also please be very careful, and if any one of you still has arms which he has not returned, please bring them to us and we shall then turn them to the proper authorities. We like to believe that you will follow our fatherly advice on this matter. May the love of God and his blessings be with you all."²⁰

While Kyprianos was preoccupied with efforts to pacify his flock and excite no suspicion by the islands Turkish authorities, his nephew, archimandrite Theophilos Theseus arrived in Cyprus. Theseus arrived late in April 1821 as an "apostle" of the *Hetaireia*. He brought with him literature from Ypsilantis for distribution among the Greek-Cypriots. But, unfortunately for them, copies of the material fell into the hands of the island's Governor. This was more than adequate to strengthen the Governors' suspicion of the Greek-Cypriots' "involvement" in the Greek revolution. Kuchuk acted swiftly. He instructed his man to carry a search throughout the island for the capture of Theseus. However, since Theseus had fled the island, they captured in his stead a man by the name of Leonidas whom they connected with Theseus. Leonidas was imprisoned and tortured. He died as a result of his treatment. The visit of Theseus to the island at this very critical period was described as being "a thoughtless act which helped confirm the worst suspicions of the local authorities with grave consequences for the people" of Cyprus.²¹

The search for Theseus resulted in the capture of another Greek Cypriot, the herdsman Dimitrios from the village of Aghios Ioannis of Malouda. The Governor brought him to Nicosia for interrogation. Kuchuk Mehmed, under the threat of torture and death, managed to extort a deposition from the herdsman implicating the Archbishop with the circulation of "literature in favour of the Greek struggle." The literature, according to the Governor, urged the Greek-Cypriots to revolt against the Turks when the appropriate signal was given - the firing of a cannon in Nicosia."²² During the search for Theseus, a third Greek-Cypriot was captured. A Haji Petros Boskos from the village of Soleas Flassou, a letter carrier, was caught

having in his possession letters from the *Hetaireia* addressed to Archbishop Kyprianos and a prominent Cypriot by the name Michael Glykis.²³ The Governor's reaction was swift: with the disarming of the Christians completed by 23 April 1821, and in possession of his "evidence of implication" his suspicions of the sympathies of the Greek-Cypriots were given substance. He summoned the Turkish Agas of Cyprus to a meeting. He presented his "evidence" to them and asked for their endorsement for his appeal to the Porte. With their support he secured the Governor, then submitted to the Porte a list of 486 names, including that of Kyprianos, three metropolitan bishops, the names of the abbots and officers of all the monasteries of Cyprus, as well as the principal clerics and prominent Greek-Cypriot laymen. In his letter to the Porte, the Governor pointed out that the disarmament of the Christian population of Cyprus would be ineffective as long as the individuals whose names appeared on his list remained alive.²⁴ He also asked that additional forces be dispatched to the island. Honoring the Kuchuk's request the Sultan ordered Abdullah, the Pasha of Acre, to dispatch men to Cyprus. On 3 May 1821 a force of 4,000 men from Syria landed on the island.²⁵ Not long after their arrival in Cyprus the troops engaged in frequent acts of brutality. The executions of the Christians of Cyprus had begun. John Carne, an Englishman, who was visiting Cyprus at this time wrote that the executions were carried out with great fury. He described the executioner as a "brutal Slavonian" who had the effrontery to visit the Archbishop and claim a reward for this skill at striking off the heads of his (Archbishop's) Christian flock with a single blow. According to Carne, the Slavonian told him that the Governor paid him for each head.²⁶ Carne's comments following his visits with Archbishop Kyprianos and Kuchuk Mehmet are of great interest. Of the Archbishop, Carne wrote:

"One evening I was invited to a dinner at the archiepiscopal palace, during which a Turkish soldier came to deliver a message to the Archbishop whom he addressed in most abusive language. The Archbishop remained composed and spoke to him in a very calm and decisive manner.... The other bishops and priests at the table were pale and terrified, and to them the Archbishop gave some encouragement. He was, indeed, very moved and disturbed over the whole affair, but one could still see in his noble face, lighted with energy, his determination to defend his suffering flock.... He spoke to all of us at the table, and no one interrupted him, as if he was delivering his farewell address, a speech of a good shepherd to his harassed flock.... This man, highly eminent for his learning and piety as well as for his unshaken fortitude, was the last rallying point of the wretched Greeks; and his frequent remonstrances and reproaches, on behalf of his people, had rendered him very obnoxious to the Turkish authorities"²⁷

"My death is not far off" Kyprianos told Carne, "I know that they are only awaiting for the right moment to kill me." Of his visit to the Governor, Carne wrote:

"One afternoon on the invitation of the Governor I went to his palace. I found him

sitting on a cushion in a cool room. His features were those of a most ferocious and savage fellow. He had nothing noble and dignified in his manners, which usually characterize Turks of high rank. As soon as we were seated he poured out a flood of inconceivable words against Archbishop Kyprianos and the Greeks, and in general fiercely threatened the Greek monastery of the Stavrou located not far from the city (Nicosia). In fact it was shortly after my departure that his soldiers sacked it and murdered all the monks May I say that the behaviour of this man during our conversation was that of an animal rather than of a human. It was quite clear that he was enjoying the thought of greater disasters and atrocities against the unfortunate Greeks."²⁸

On the 16 May 1821 the Archbishop made a desperate effort to calm his flock. In his letter Kyprianos wrote:

"Kyprianos by the grace of God
archbishop of New Justiniani and all Cyprus

Most devout priests and all other blessed Christians of the Kadilik of Kythrea, having prayed we bless you all in a fatherly way. The present circumstances and disturbances of the times which against all hope have suddenly surrounded us on account of the multitude of our sins are no doubt passed on by work of moths in an undeniably exaggerated way and cause disturbance and fear in the hearts of all our fellow-Greeks, as many of course as are unaware of the causes from which all these things sprang and still spring in a just way. They are shaken and in fear and it is therefore our indispensable duty in such circumstances to give you the fatherly advice and encouragement that we owe you so that you can understand on what our common benefit and salvation depends. Above all, my beloved children, we must run towards the infinite mercy of holy God with a contrite heart and with repentance so that He should overlook our sins and we should entrust our hopes to the trackless ocean of His mercy, and his supreme power and wisdom will look after our interests. Secondly, we must reject every passion and coldness which we have towards our brothers, and embrace dispassion and true love for one another, as our God, who is prince of peace, teaches us in all His sacred Gospel, and this is the only virtue which is sought by His sweetest mouth, our Jesus, and which can propitiate holy God, and cover a host of our sins. Thirdly, that deep submission, obedience and faith which our ancestors also preserved, and which we from the time of the capture until now owe to our most powerful and long-lived emperor, and through which we have enjoyed throughout the interval infinite gifts and mercies of his power, calm, rest and every other good, that same obedience and trust should be preserved by us unaltered in the future without our groaning at the level of the imperial taxes owed by us and we should make intercessions night and day to the highest God for the long life and unshaken

duration of his power, for the protection of the obedient and faithful rayahs and for the frightening and destruction of his opponents, and we must make davas, also for our aga effendi who does not cease to work night and day for the maintenance and protection of the rayahs of our island. When we follow these three things as we should we can depend on it that we shall not experience the slightest harm, neither will a hair fall from our head. And so you, too, my dear children, following this fatherly advice of ours, put every fear out of your hearts and place your hope in the mercy of holy God because there is not danger. The submission and faith of faithful rayahs which until now has been observed is known even, the same is kept in accordance with the guarantees and reports which we have made with our three brother metropolitans to the most powerful devlet, we hope for greater protection and richer graces of its power. Take care for God's sake, my children, that you do not fall into the slightest fault, either in word or in deed, because whoever is careless in such times in his words or his deeds is liable to capital punishment. Those who maintain the required obedience, such people, who will not experience the slightest tribulation, will enjoy greater goodwill and protection. Moreover, my children, your clothing should be sober and such as befits rayahs, your turbans and sashes and slippers should be black. For this is the command of our aga effendi and whoever is found in foreign dress will be punished severely. Make a firm decision to do this. That is all.

1821

May 16

+ Archbishop of Cyprus, your intercessor in Christ.

Postscript note in the left margin

To our archimandrite, our blessing. This is ordered by our aga effendi to be read to then.⁺²⁹

In a letter to the Porte the Archbishop emphasized the loyalty and obedience of the Greek Cypriots to the Sultan. However, the Governor made certain that the letter never reached its destination.³⁰ Alarmed by the delay of the expected reply from the Porte, Kyprianos visited the Governor to express his concern. During the visit Kuchuk Mehmed is alleged to have told the Archbishop that he had nothing to worry about, and "swore on the Koran not to behead him."³¹ According to M. Jerome Isaac Mechain, French Consul at Larnaka, Cyprus, as a sign of their obedience and loyalty to the Sultan, the Greeks of Cyprus visited the Governor, and handed him a signed letter of loyalty together with 100.000 piastres to be forwarded to the Sultan as a token of their gratitude. However it is believed that Kuchuk Mehmet kept the money for himself and never forwarded the document. The document was signed by the Archbishop, the bishops and leading laymen of the Christian community of Cyprus. Consul Machain observed that ". . . the Cypriots had submitted their obedience to the Sultan.... But the Governor never

forwarded these documents to the Porte, but kept them together with other correspondence. These documents would have convinced the Sultan that the island was indeed peaceful and its inhabitants obedient³² Exacerbated and greatly disturbed by the behavior and actions of the Governor in a letter to the French Minister de la Marine et des Colonies of 4 July 1821, Mechain wrote, ".... The governor of Cyprus is a harsh, vulgar and fanatical man He behaves towards us, as if it was the King of France that is fighting the Turks. The forces sent by the Pasha of Acre have committed many atrocities. They have especially threatened the life of the Europeans whom they confuse with the unfortunate Greeks"³³ Machain made a demarche to the Governor for the violation by his troops of the "diplomatic immunity" of the members of his consulate.³⁴ On 6 July 1821 an infuriated Machain wrote, "... The governor is a lunatic ... he treats us as enemies and holds all our correspondence"³⁵ Other European consuls had made repeated appeals to the Governor protesting the brutal behavior of his troops and those of the Pasha of Acre, but, alas, to no avail. The situation prevailing on the island at this time is melancholically described in the *Notizie def Giorno* as well:

"One Sunday, while a detachment of eighty Turkish soldiers was marching towards S. Tantaleone to garrison the sea-coast, it passed before the Latin Church served by the Franciscans (Minari Osservanti). High mass was being celebrated, and they had the audacity to discharge their muskets in the church, so that the dense smoke wrapped the building in darkness to the terrible alarm of the congregation, especially the Catholic ladies who fell to the ground half dead."³⁶

The hostility of the Governor and his troops was as strong against the European community of Cyprus as it was against the Greek inhabitants of the island. With Kuchuk's request to the Porte to execute the proscribed 486 Greeks authorized, the Governor in June ordered the 486 to come to Nicosia for a meeting. Fearing that some of them might escape, he dispatched his soldiers throughout the island to escort them to Nicosia. "On a given day, Sunday 12 June, officers sent by Kuchuk Mehmet came to the place where each dwelt, and forcibly arrested them all, catching them as they left their churches after the early celebration of the Holy Mysteries. Their homes, stores and places of business were sealed until further orders; their wives and children were turned into the streets . . . and the men themselves were bound and taken to Lefcosia."³⁷

With all the proscribed having being brought to Nicosia, on 7 July 1821, the Governor summoned the Turkish Agas of Cyprus to his palace at which time he read to them the Porte's authorization to proceed with the execution of the proscribed Greek-Cypriots. He ordered that the gates of the city be closed and the streets heavily patrolled. Two days later, on Saturday 9 July, Kuchuk Mehmed summoned the proscribed to his palace (the old palace of the Lusignan kings). The Greek-Cypriots were told that the purpose of the meeting was to deliver to them the Sultan's reply to their letter of loyalty and obedience to him. On arrival they were received at the square in front of the palace. Alas, what the Governor read to them

was the order for their execution. "The city of Lefcosia," Philemon wrote, "was thus destined to be turned into a human slaughter-house."³⁸ To Hackett "Saturday 9 July, was the day selected, when another crime was added to that long list of horrors, which have brought such well deserved infamy upon the Ottoman name."³⁹

"Honoring" his pledge to Archbishop Kyprianos, Kuchuk Mehmed ordered that the Archbishop be hanged and not beheaded. He was hanged from a mulberry tree in the square, meeting his fate with dignity and courage. "Taking in his hand the noose from the executioner," according to Kepiades, "he made three times the sign of the cross... and then turned to his executioner and in a firm voice said 'Execute the command of your cruel master'."⁴⁰ His secretary, archdeacon Meletios was also hanged. The Metropolitan bishops of Paphos, Chrisanthos, of Kition, Meletios, and of Kyrenia, Lavrentios together with the laymen Georgios Massouras of Limassol, the herdsmen Dimitrios and others, were beheaded.⁴¹ The episode is recorded in the *Notizie def Giorno*. The execution, according to the newspaper "... began by having the bishop of Larnaca beheaded, decreed the same for the others of Papho and Kyrenia, and caused to be hanged the archbishop of the whole island Monsignor Cipriano and his archdeacon."⁴² Other accounts of the melancholy episode are given in numerous sources.⁴³

The slaughter of the Greeks of Cyprus continued on Sunday 10 July 1821. Hundreds of Greek-Cypriots found safety in the consulates and homes of Europeans as well as the French vessel *La Bonite* which was anchored at the port of Larnaka.⁴⁴ By 14 July, 470 of the proscribed had been executed.⁴⁵ Describing the situation Consul Machain wrote, "... In only a few days ... the archbishop, the bishops, the high-ranking Greek priests, the merchants, the notables of the cities and villages, finally all rich or influential people have been slaughtered, beheaded, or hanged, their properties confiscated and their families enslaved."⁴⁶ The humanitarian role of the members of the European community and of the European consuls, in saving so many Greeks from death or enslavement, cannot be overestimated, and should remain for ever in the annals of history. They opened the doors of their homes and consulates, and at great risk to themselves, offered asylum to so many and saved them from certain death. The European consuls had earlier offered asylum to Archbishop Kyprianos, but he refused. When Carne asked him why he did not take the opportunity to save himself, the Archbishop, according to Carne replied, "I shall remain here to offer my services to my people till my last breath."⁴⁷

*They went and asked him if he would turn
Turk and change faith*

*For then they would grant him his life let
him live sound and safe.*

*If he would speak Turkish would
pray the Turkish prayer,*

*They would make him pasha then
their orders to declare.*

*They brought with them a bundle of clothes to
offer the Archbishop*

*And strip him of his holy weeds and
of his ancient workshop.*

*My friends, you should not waste your words don't
trouble to speak further,*

*For I am destined for the grave and
for the hangman's halter.⁴⁸*

The contributions of the Greek-Cypriots to the Greek struggle for liberty were as important as those of other region of the scattered Greek world. Yet relatively little attention has been given to the role of Cyprus and the Cypriots in the national uprising. Archbishop Kyprianos of Cyprus in his conduct early in the struggle of the war for the liberation of Greece, his dignified behavior during the months of crisis (March-July 1821), his dedication to his people, and bravery in meeting his cruel fate, has shown his worthiness to be considered, not only as the *Ethnomartis* of Cyprus but also as one of the island's most admirable *Ethnarchs*.

Notes

1. See Runciman, Steven Sir. *The Great Church in Captivity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968).
2. Greece. *Genika Archeia tau Kratous* [National Archives] *Phi/ike Hetaireia* [Society of Friends] File I (21).
3. H. Lytton Bulwer. *An Autumn in Greece* (London: John Ebers, 1826). p. 65.
4. *The Cause of Greece the Cause of Europe* (London: James Ridgway, 1821). p.6
5. John Koumoulides. *Cyprus and the War of Greek Independence 1821-29*. (London: Zeno Publishers, 1974). "A detailed chronological ordering of events is today impossible. The more successful attempts are those of G. Hill, *A History of Cyprus*, IV, Cambridge, 1952, pp. 122-34 and J. Koumoulides, *Cyprus and the War of Greek Independence 1821-1829*, London, 1974, pp. 40-65". In Benedict Englezakis, *Studies on the History of the Church of Cyprus, 4th-20th Centuries*, (London: Variorun, 1995), p. 291, note 8.
6. E. G. Protopsaltis. E. *Philike Hetaireia* [The Society of Friends] (Athens, 1964). p. 59.
7. John Hackett. *History of the Orthodox Church of Cyprus*. (London, 1901). p. 226.

8. Chrysanthos was Archbishop from 1767 to 1810. Late in the 1970s he appointed Hajigeorgakis Kornessios to the office of *Dragoman* of Cyprus. He held that post until 1809.

9. Ali Bey. *Travels of Ali Bey in Morocco, Tripoli, Cyprus, Egypt, Arabia, Syria and Turkey, Between the Years 1803 and 1807*. (London, 1816). p. 270.

10. Kallinikos Delikanis. *Ta en tois Kodexi tou Patriarchikou Archeiophylakiou Sozomena Epissima Ecclessiastika Egrapha*. (Constantinople, 1904). Kodex IB. pp. 602-604.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 603.

12. The school was originally founded in 1740 by Archbishop Philotheos of Cyprus.

13. *Greece: Genika Archeia tou Kratous (Syllogi Vlachogianni)* C. 20. One source states that Kyprianos was also visited by a Stergios Haji Kostas, a merchant and member of the Hetaireia. George Hill sir. *History of Cyprus Vol. IV*. p. 124.

14. Those gathered at Ismalia were, Alexandros Ypsilandis, Emmanouel Xanthos, Gregorios Dikaos, Dimitrios Themelis, Petros Markezos, Dionysios Emorphopoulos, Evangelos Mantzarakis, Dimitrios Kypatros, Christophoros Perraivos, Ivos Regas and others. Konstantinos I. Myriantopoulos. *Hadigeorgakis Kornessios o Dierminefs tes Kyprou 1779-1809: Etoi Symvoulai eis ten Istoría tes Kyprou epi Tourcocratias 1570-1878*. (Lefcosia, 1934). pp. 32-33.

15. *Greece: Genika Archeia tou Kratous (Sy/logi Vlachogianni)*. F. 1. Protopsaltis. p. 195.

16. *Greece: Genika Archeia tou Kratous (Sy/logi Vlachogianni)* . F. 1.

17. Georgios I. Kepiades. *Apomnemoneumata ton kata to 1821 en te Nysson Kypro Tragicon Skenon* (Alexandria, 1888). p. 10. Protopsaltis, pp. 221-4.

18. Louis Lacroix. *lies de la Grece*. (Paris, 1853). p. 83.

19. In Claude D. Cobham'. *Excerpta Cypria*. (Cambridge, 1908). pp. 450-1.

20. *Greece: Ethnologikon Mouseion Athenon*. No. 4652.

21. Kepiades. p. 9.

22. *Ibid.*, p. 14.

23. Kepiades. pp. 18-19.

24. Philemon in *Excerpta Cypria*. p. 467. See also Philios Zanetos. *E Kypros kata ton Aiona tes Paligenessias 1821-1930*. (Athens, 1930). p. 14.

25. Hill, IV, p. 125.

26. John Carne. *Letters from the East*. (London, 1826). Volume II. pp. 159-71.

27. *Ibid.*, pp. 164-6.

28. *Ibid.*, pp. 173-4

29. Nicosia, Cyprus. *Archeia tes !eras Archepiskopis Kyprou: Fakelos Archiepiskopou Kyprianou 1810-1821*. Englezakis, pp. 225-301; Koumoulides, p. 48.

30. Hill, IV, p. 129. Also, Philemon in *Excerpta Cypria*. p. 468.
 31. Kepsiades, p. 14. Hill, IV. p. 133.
 32. Letter of Jerome Isaak Mechain, French Consul at Larnaka, Cyprus, to M. David, dated 6 August 1821. *Kypriaka Chronika*, VII. pp. 55-7.
 33. *Kypriaka Chronika*. VII. pp. 52-53.
 34. *Ibid.*
 35. *Ibid.*, p. 54.
 36. *Excerpta Cypria*. p. 451. In Larnaca the English Vice-Consul was Antony Vondiziano, and the Consul of Russia and Sweden was Constantine Peristianis. Hill. IV. pp. 129-135. Harry Luke, Sir. *Cyprus: A Portrait and an Appreciation*. (London, 1957). p. 82.
 37. Philemon in *Excerpta Cypria*. p. 468. See also Spyridon Tricoupis. *Istoria tes Hel/enikis Epanastaseos*. (Athens, 1853-1857). IV. p. 294.
 38. Philemon in *Excerpta Cypria*. p. 468.
 39. Hackett. p. 229. Kepsiades. p. 13.
 40. Kepsiades. p. 22. Also, Philios Zannetos. p. 17.
 41. Kepsiades, p. 14. "G. Massouros, P. Oikonomides, Michael Glykis, Joseph Pierakes, John Antonopoulos, P. Boskos, N. Zographos, S. Solomos, S. Symopoulos, Chr. Koutellarides." Hill. IV. p. 134. Basil Stewart. *My Experiences in Cyprus* (London 1908). p. 219. Philip Newman. *A Short History of Cyprus*. (London, 1940). pp. 188-191.
 42. *Excerpta Cypria*. p. 451.
 43. Rene de Mas Latri. *Chronique de l' lie de Chypre* (Paris, 1886), quoted by Hackett (page 229) was told that the bishops were first and that before executing them they "saddled them like horses, breaking their teeth as they thrust the bits into their mouths, and goading them with spurs." Philemon wrote that "the bodies of the bishops were exposed with the head of each on his back." *Excerpta Cypria*. p. 468. To Lacroix, "The gates of the palace were opened and the bleeding corpses were thrown out." p. 83.
 44. G.G. Gervinus. *Insurrection et Regeneration de la Grece* (Paris, 1863) in *Excerpta Cypria*. p. 464.
 45. Hill. IV. p. 131.
 46. *Kypriaka Chronika*. VI. p. 58.
 47. Carne. II. p. 166. Kepsiades. p. 14.
 48. Composed by Chr. Tzapouras of Cyprus, 1911.
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