

Book Reviews

Doros Alastos, *Cyprus in History: A Survey of 5000 years*, London, Zeno Publishers, 1976, pp. xvi+426.

Cyprus in History, is the story of the island of Cyprus. It ranges from the Neolithic times to the present (late 1950's). Over five thousand years in time, condensed into four hundred pages in the book. So it is evident that it is at best a generalized picture rather than a detailed study. In this reissue of the book out of print since the late 1960's the text appears in its original form, with the addition of a short preface by the author. The book is divided into seven chapters with helpful descriptive maps and interesting photographs. The island of Cyprus, one of the world's smallest nations, because of her strategic location, throughout her history, was invaded by different maritime powers. As a German critic once observed, "he who would become and remain a great power in the East must hold Cyprus in his hand"; and in Cyprus the East met the West. The passage of different people through the island naturally left its mark on the Cypriot people and culture, but from the earliest Greek settlements on the island, Cyprus retained a strong Greek character and the Cypriots maintained strong cultural contacts with mainland Greece from ancient times to the present. The long episodic and at times melancholy history of Cyprus and the Cypriots is told in one volume by Mr. Alastos in a scholarly and comprehensive way, incorporating different phases of Cypriot history and culture with special emphasis on the Church and social aspects. This is a useful, thoughtful and very readable survey of the historically rich and very charming island of Cyprus. A book warmly recommended to all who are interested in Cypriot culture and civilization.

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JOHN T. A. KOUMOULIDES

John T. A. Koumoulides, *Cyprus and the War of Greek Independence, 1821-1829*. Foreword by Douglas Dakin. Revised and enlarged edition. London, Zeno Booksellers & Publishers, 1974, pp. xiii+117.

With the continuing tragedy of Cyprus playing such a major role in current world tensions, there is understandably a greater interest in the island's long neglected early modern history, and thus the new edition of this excellent study by Professor Koumoulides is especially welcome. First published in Athens in 1971, the book has now been both revised and expanded, forming part of the growing *Bibliotheca Historica Cyprica*. In this edition it should receive the wider attention it so clearly merits. As Professor Dakin observes in his foreword, the author "has done for Cyprus what others have done for Crete, Chios, Epiros, Thessaly and Macedonia" (p. ix), explaining the Cypriots' role in Greece's national struggle.

The title of the work is almost too modest since the study actually begins with a carefully documented but readable short history of the island since ancient times. From the beginning of the nineteenth century the narrative moves more slowly. Chapter II discusses local Greco-Turkish relations during 1800-1820. It was a critical era. "In the years 1785 to 1820 the powers of the archbishop, the bishops, and the dragoman of the serai of Cyprus

reached their 'highest point' ". Not since Byzantine days "had an archbishop and the bishops enjoyed such power and influence" (p. 28). Yet trouble was growing. The great authority of Hajigeorgakis Kornessios, dragoman for more than thirty years, ended in 1809 when he was executed by the Turks. In a related move against the Cypriot power structure the venerable Archbishop Chrysanthos was removed in 1810 after forty-three years in office. As Professor Koumoulides explains, both imperial policies and local rivalries aggravated the situation, embittering Christian-Turkish relations.

Chapter III deals with the tragic year of 1821. It was a year of hope for all Greeks and those of Cyprus were no exception. But it was also the year in which the barbarous governor Küçük Mehmed massacred many hundreds of Christians, including Archbishop Kyprianos and his aides, and plunged Cyprus into more than a decade of widespread terror from local authorities and occupying armies. The rest of the book deals with the aftermath of that terrible year. Throughout the account Professor Koumoulides stressed the special plight of Cyprus: it was too near Turkey and too far from mainland Greece to be part of the central military action of the long war, but it paid dearly for its willing contributions of men, supplies, and money to the Greek cause. Thus while Cypriot sacrifices helped to make possible the liberation of the Greek heartland, the suffering island experienced depopulation and economic ruin through the flight of refugees and the disruption of trade, without the *enosis* so many Cypriots desired ever having been a real possibility.

A very special strength of this consistently outstanding work is that it tells of events through the words of contemporary participants. The author has used the available records to weave a carefully constructed narrative in which people and events come humanly and strikingly to life. Perhaps the only weakness in using this profusely documented approach is that not all facets of the situation can be reconstructed. Thus the author searched church and diplomatic archives and found many materials. Yet he also discovered that relatively few written records were kept and some that may exist are now lost in poorly organized archives. For such reasons it is all the more to Professor Koumoulides' credit that his work achieves such balance and humanity.

Scholars and serious readers will also be pleased with the various aids included in the book. Four informative appendices (covering production, commerce, population, and finances) provide valuable background. The author's composite data on population divisions (pp. 101-102) should prove particularly helpful to readers. There is a selected bibliography that is nevertheless quite extensive (pp. 105-112) and includes documents and works from many sources and languages. In addition the book has photographs, a fold-out map, and a carefully prepared index. All these features underline the respect for scholarly thoroughness and detail that make this work such a fine historical study of a neglected but important period.

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RICHARD WIRES

John Chadwick, *The Mycenaean World*, New York, Cambridge University Press, 1976, pp. 201.

John Chadwick's *The Mycenaean World* is indeed a unique reference work, the most comprehensive one-volume illustrated survey of culture from pre-history to the era of pre-classical Greece. This must be considered the definitive book on the subject. The world's leading authority on the hellenization of Greece provides a unique practical guide in word