

Book Reviews

Stamatoula S. Zapanti, *Kephalonia 1500-1571, The Structure of Society Upon the Island*, University Press, Thessaloniki 1999, pp. 455.

In this doctoral thesis of hers Ms S. Zapanti successfully undertakes to present the history of Kephallonia during the long period 1500-1571, when new conditions were created on the island by the inception of Venetian rule. This together with the influx, after the loss of Methone, Korone, Monemvasia and Navplion, of new settlers with their different cultural and social standards resulted in realignments; care for the defence of the island and for repelling a probable attack from the Turks caused collaboration between the *Stradioti*, full of demands yet essential to Venice, and the refugee Cittadini who formed new social layers with the common characteristic of Orthodoxy and the Byzantine tradition. The Venetian authorities assigned to these settlers holdings *in feudo*, thereby creating not only strong families but strong settlements.

In the Introduction to her book, the author examines Kephallonia during the closing years of the 15th century: Byzantine tradition because of the presence of Byzantine families, the demographic profile, the departure of families from the island under Ottoman rule, the economy, production, the power of leadership possessed by the Orthodox Church, and the Latin Diocese.

The first chapter of part one deals with the conditions under which, on December 24th 1500, the conquest of Kephallonia took place, with the native people taking the side of the Venetians; then follows the mass immigration of the inhabitants of Zakynthos and the establishment of a new, Venetian, administration (*proveditor, cancellier, cavalier, Castellan alla Forfezza, capitano dell'Isola, scontro al libro di intrada*).

In the second chapter Ms Zapanti examines the Venetian provision of defence for the island, which was entrusted to Italian mercenaries and to Greek or Albanian *stradioti*, the *cavallaroti* (cavalry) and the mercenary soldiers (*fanti* or *soldati*): the *stradioti* originated in Methoni, Koroni and Navarino; the author supplies a list of them together with their responsibilities and obligations, their salaries and their formation into corps. The defence of the island had many weaknesses owing to the *stradioti*'s resentment when their salaries were delayed, to their quarrels with the *fanti* of the guard, to conflict between the different corps of the *stradioti*, to indiscipline and to raids by pirates. A separate chapter examines the officers on the island: the *pro-*

veditor (governor), the *castellan* (garrison commander), *capitano dell'Isola* (administrator of the island), *cancellier* (registrar), *cavalier* (leader of the army corps), *capo di cavallaroti* (leader of the cavalry of the guard), *scontro* (auditor-paymaster), *maistro massato* (minister and keeper of the public stores), *interprete* (interpreter), *kontostavli*, etc. The author sets out the names and responsibilities of the office-bearers during the period 1500-1571, and deals in a similar manner with justice as dispensed by the *proveditor* and also by the market inspectors (*grustizieri*) along with the *cavalier*, as well as by the local "judges" chosen from among the leading local personages and the "elders" (*vecchiardi*) of the villages. As for public finances, these were supplied by the raising of taxes, such as the tax on inhabitants (*livello*), the tax on animals (*datio del momistro*) and the taxes on wine, cheese, needles and flax. Supervision of power was exercised by the superintendent (*sindico*), the *proveditor*, the examiner (*inquisitor*) and the ambassadors extraordinary of Venice.

In the second part of her book, Ms Zapanti addresses the subject of *Society* on the island. First she examines its demography and the surviving censuses (1546-14,000 inhabitants, 1548-15,304, 1564-39,000), the shifting and resettling of the population, the conscriptions, the taking of prisoners (as during the Ottoman attacks between 1538 and 1540), the number of families (961 families, of which 249 were native, 461 incomers and 251 of unknown origin) and a list of their names. The inhabitants lived in the Castle, both inside and outside the fortress, with shops, storehouses, workshops, the soldiers' quarters, the villages and settlements with the various changes brought about by earthquakes and the incursions of pirates; our attention is drawn to the fact that many of the villages and settlements of that period (1500-1571) are preserved to the present day. Land ownership comprised three categories: the big properties (baronies, fiefdoms) which operated as *Jus patronatus*; the small properties of the *stradioti*, and the lands belonging to the Orthodox and the Latin Churches and to the monasteries. The organization of society on the island and the occupations of the inhabitants are also examined by the writer; the social strata consisted of the ruling class which governed life on Kephallonia, the prosperous landowners, the small farmers, the craftsmen, and the notaries who were in a special category and as such are carefully analysed by Ms Zapanti who provides a catalogue of 39 notaries of the period 1500-1571; a smaller category is that of practical doctors and craftsmen, whose 127 names and areas of competence are listed by the author. In the same context is placed the cultural level, which was low because the introduction of Italian education to the island had been delayed, as it was not in Kerkyra, Crete, Monemvasia etc. The educated people of the island were by definition

the notaries and the priests who used in their documents a peculiar Greek dialect with words of pidgin Italian intermingled. Another category of inhabitant was the *protevontes*, the elite and the counsellors of society, the *miser* or *sior* (gentlemen) of the notaries' documents who logically would have played some part in the administration of the island as representatives of its citizens even without specific areas of responsibility; the catalogue is specially extended to include 206 *miser* of the period 1500-1571. The economic activities of the inhabitants are concerned with basic production (oil, wheat, farm produce, grapes, animal feed, timber, salt); small industries (mills, winepresses), shipping and trade are the chief occupations of the people of Kephallonia; the list of names of craftsmen and merchants is useful. The author deals not only with the system of raising taxes but with those who rented the right to collect taxes, rates and tithes; these tenants often transgressed the law and used extortion upon the inhabitants whom they brought to the point of despair.

Ms Zapanti devotes a special chapter to the Church (both Orthodox and Latin) and stresses not only the absolute majority of the Orthodox Christians and their devotion to the Ecumenical Patriarch, but also the lack of involvement of the Catholics in their affairs, unlike the situation in Kerkyra, Crete and elsewhere. There was no lack of occasions, however, when the Orthodox priests were obliged to pay rates to the Catholic vicar or were pressed to staff the Catholic monasteries. However, it was not unusual that the Orthodox bishop of the island Gerasimos Loverdos remained in office for a long time in the absence of a Catholic opposite number. And here the catalogue of Orthodox bishops of Kephallonia-Zakynthos as well as senior archimandrites, bursars, exarchs, honorary treasurers and senior notaries of the period 1500-1571 is very useful. The author studies in turn the living conditions of the inhabitants of the island and the obstacles to their improvement: numbered among the latter are the earthquakes of 1502, 1513 and 1551, the incursions and taking of prisoners (such as the Ottoman invasions of 1538 and 1540), the ransoming of slaves and/or captives, as well as the arbitrariness of those in power (of the *cavallaroti*, for example, and the renters of taxes, and the seizure of animals), lawlessness and criminality, service in the galleys and compulsory unpaid labour as, for example, repairing the garrison. Their habitations as described by the author were simple, though there were palatial houses for dignitaries. Oxen, mules and donkeys were used as means of transportation.

At the end of her book the author sets out her conclusions, a list of Greek and Italian documents, a summary in Italian, a bibliography and an index.

With this book Ms Zapanti makes an especially important contribution to

the history of Kephallonia during the long period 1500-1571, using a wide range of archival material from the Archivio di Stato di Venezia, the Bibliotheca Marciana, General State Archives, the Archives of the Prefecture of Kephallonia, the Historical Archive of Kerkyra etc., material which she combines with a bibliography that is rich in terms of her theme. This significant work, which demanded much time and effort and knowledge of both Italian palaeography and the typical Greek records of this period, will in future constitute a valuable tool for historians of Kephallonia and of the Ionian Islands generally.

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Andrew Borowiec, *Cyprus: A Troubled Island* (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger Publishers, 2000), pp. XVI plus 193.

"Semper aliquid novi Africam afferre", Pliny the Elder, Natural History, viii. 17
To paraphrase Pliny the Elder, *"There is always something new out of Cyprus"*.

The most eastern of the Mediterranean islands, Cyprus, has been a very popular holiday and retirement destination for the Europeans, and in particular, the British, for many years. The bigger islands of the Mediterranean have rather cruel histories. Sicily, Corsica, Rhodes, Sardinia, Cyprus and Crete, all of them have been invaded and liberated, and invaded again. Cyprus has had numerous rulers over the centuries —Phoenicians, Egyptians, Greeks, Romans, Venetians, Ottoman Turks and British— and they all have left their mark on the culture and architecture of the island. Cyprus emerged from British colonial rule to become an independent state, the Republic of Cyprus, on the 16th of August 1960. In December 1963, the constitutional order of the Republic was shaken by intercommunal conflicts between the Greek and Turkish communities of the island. In 1974 Turkey invaded Cyprus. On the 15th of November 1983, Mr. Rauf Denktash, leader of the Turkish Cypriot community proclaimed the unilateral independence of the "Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus", recognized only by Turkey. Since Turkey invaded Cyprus in the summer of 1974, 37% of the island —in the northern part— has been under Turkish occupation with more than 35.000 troops from mainland Turkey stationed there in violation of numerous United Nations Security Council resolutions. In fact, most of the Turks now living in the occupied areas of Cyprus are not Turkish Cypriots but are Turkish settlers from mainland Turkey. Cyprus is a treasure island for historians and archaeologists with many sites being discovered. The majority of the artifacts are removed to local museums.