THE HELLENISATION OF CYPRUS:
TRACING ITS BEGINNINGS (AN UPDATED VERSION)¹

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ABSTRACT

Should one wish to learn more about the cultural identity of Cypriot society during the Early Iron Age, he/she would discover that almost all current textbooks on Cypriot history and archaeology supply us with the very same story: the island had been “colonised” and subsequently hellenised towards the end of the Late Bronze Age by numerous immigrants from the Aegean. The newcomers’ presence is substantiated by artifacts, tombs and architectural features of Aegean type as well as the introduction of the Greek language. Further support and inspiration for this hypothesis comes from various mythological traditions, according to which the historical Cypriot kingdoms were founded by Greek heroes that arrived at the island after the Trojan War. Despite the scepticism, which is being expressed by many archaeologists during the last decades on the basis of the many problems and inconsistencies inherent in it, the Hellenisation hypothesis remains quite popular among scholars and, consequently, the general public. In an attempt to elucidate this phenomenon, one should investigate both the course of Cypriot archaeology’s advancement from the 19th century until the present day and the socio-political developments during the same period. This is particularly so, as the promotion of self-determination and the development of a national identity has been of outmost importance for Modern Cypriots as a result of the successive occupations and invasions that the island has suffered during the past nine centuries. Furthermore, the foreign scholars dominating Cypriot archaeology, at least during its initial phases, while introducing new theories and methods, carried their own academic and/or political agendas. In this respect, Cyprus constitutes an excellent case-study of nationalism and politics interacting with archaeological practice.

The present paper aims at illuminating the interconnection between archaeological and socio-political development by means of reconstructing the course of the gradual formation and modification of the Hellenisation narrative from its first appearance during the 1840s until today. Special references will be made to the contributions of the 19th century historians, the first antiquarians to excavate on the island, John L. Myres, the members of the Swedish Cyprus Expedition and Arne Furumark, Porphyrios Dikaios and the French excavators of Enkomi, the prolific Vassos Karageorghis, Susan Sherratt, Maria Iacovou and others.

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Past ethnic groups and modern politics in the Eastern Mediterranean

The close, multifaceted, and largely problematic connection between archaeology and contemporary politics, a particularly common phenomenon in archaeological thought and practice focusing on the lands of the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East, has been long established and widely discussed during the past decades (Gathercole and Lowenthal 1989; Kohl and Fawcett 1996; Meskell 1998; Kane 2003; Galaty and Watkinson 2004; Kohl, Kozelsky and Ben-Yeruda 2008). One of this connection’s most frequent types of manifestation is associated with studies aiming at the identification of past ethnic groups, as well as the detailed reconstruction of their movements (Atkinson, Banks and O’Sullivan 1996; Díaz-Andreu and Champion 1996; Díaz-Andreu, Lucy, Babic and Edwards 2005; Insoll 2007). The complicated relationship between past material cultures and ethnic identities, in other words the ways in which archaeology may be employed towards the realisation of these targets, was not properly theorised before the late 1970s, if not later; this is when archaeologists acknowledged, with some help from the field of social anthropology, that ethnic groups should be viewed as dynamic categories with ever-changing characteristics and attributes, primarily based on the interaction between different groups (Barth 1969; McGuire 1982; Hall 1997, p. 19-26; Jones 1997, p. 56-60 and 72-74; Jenkins 1997, p. 9-15 and 90-91; Hall 2002, p. 9-29; Knapp 2008, p. 38-47 and 63-65). Until then, most archaeologists attempted to locate, and subsequently categorize, past peoples through the study of artefact/cultural trend distribution. This approach, generally known as « culture historical archaeology », has been disproven on the basis of ethnicity’s dynamic fluidity, which comes in striking contrast to the static and fragmentary nature of archaeological remains and categories (Trigger 1989, p. 161-174; Renfrew and Bahn 1991, p. 32 and 407; Hall 1997, p. 129-31; Leriou 2007, p. 565-66). The culture historical approach towards material culture characterized European and North American archaeological thought until the mid-20th century; one of the most important factors that prompted archaeologists and social anthropologists to invalidate it was its close association with Nazi ideology through Kossina’s nationalistic research on the origins of the German population (Trigger 1989, p. 163-67; Jones 1997, p. 2-5; Hall 1997, p. 129).

The systematic application of the culture historical approach towards material culture, a practice inherent in the development of European nation states and their corporate identities during the late 19th and early 20th centuries (Trigger 1989, p. 174-86; Sherratt 1992, p. 316-17; Díaz-Andreu 1996; Díaz-Andreu and Champion 1996; Díaz-Andreu 2007, p. 317-67), has resulted in the generation of several archaeological narratives reconstructing past peoples’ movements, with special emphasis on migrations and colonisations. By narrowing the focus of this discussion to the Late Bronze and Early Iron Age Eastern Mediterranean context, one may identify plenty of such narratives associated with, among others, the Minoans, the Mycenaeans, the infamous Sea Peoples, the Philistines and the Phoenicians (Castleden 1993, p. 116-21; Erlich 1996; Oren 2000; Markoe 2001, p. 170-90; Castleden 2005, p. 182-96; Killebrew 2005). Many of them are related to the transitional phase from the Late Bronze to the Early Iron Age, which has been traditionally connected to a series of post-destruction population movements along the shores of the Eastern Mediterranean (Desborough 1964, 217-63; Desborough 1972; Ward and Joukowsky 1992; Osborne 1996, p. 19-40; Morris 1997; Gitin, Mazar and Stern 1998; Snodgrass 2000, p. 304-27; Whitley 2001, p. 77-90; Karageorghis and Moris 2001; Dickinson 2006, p. 62-67), where the island of Cyprus seems to have had played a highly significant role (Karageorghis 2002, p. 71-117; Steel 2004, p. 187-213). It is since the early 20th century that archaeologists have been struggling to study and categorise the material cultures excavated in areas of the Aegean, Asia Minor, Syro-Palestine, Cyprus...
and Egypt, so as to employ them in their quest to recreate interconnections, commercial, political or other, and population movements through different reasons and the reasons that caused them. As these reconstructions have been largely based on the notorious equation between pots and people, which effectively summarises culture historical archaeology, they contain several misunderstandings and mistakes, most commonly indicated through classificatory problems and chronological inconsistencies.

Although the theoretical advancements briefly outlined above go back to the 1990s at the latest, the culture historical approach seems to remain the dominant attitude towards ancient material culture in many countries all over the world, since it may be employed to boost the pride, morale, self-determination and cohesion of ethnic groups and nations. This is particularly so for peoples whose national unity and collective rights are threatened by other, more powerful nations or serious internal division; it is also the case for ethnic groups whose past has been neglected or denigrated by a colonial approach towards archaeology and history (Trigger 1984, p. 358-60; Trigger 1989, p. 174-86, 205; Trigger 1995, p. 268-72; Skeates 2000, P. 90-92). Thus, the political turbulence that several regions across the Eastern Mediterranean coasts have experienced since the 19th century provides ample explanation for the strongly nationalistic character of archaeological practice, commonly manifested through the application of the culture historical archaeology. This tendency has provided Eastern Mediterranean with a rather conservative character; the latter is often evident even in the work of foreign researchers, who, of course, carry their own academic and, sometimes, political agendas (Silberman 1989; Silberman 1990; Silberman 1995, p. 256-60; Meskell 1998; Knapp and Antoniadou 1998, p. 31-32; Goode 2001; Meskell 2002; Given 2004, p. 164-66).

The case of Cyprus

Against this background, the island of Cyprus appears an ideal case study for further exploring the complicated relation of contemporary politics with the principle of archaeology. This is so, as the Cypriot population has experienced a very long period of successive occupations, namely the Ottoman (1151-1878) and the British (1878-1960), and, most importantly, the Turkish invasion (1974-present). These have endowed Cypriot archaeology with a strongly political character, which accounts for the still on-going use of culture-historical archaeology (Knapp and Antoniadou 1998, p. 19-23 and 29-32). Moreover, Cyprus has been associated with a series of ancient colonisation and migration movements that are generally thought to have had left perceptible cultural imprints on its people and material culture. The transition from the Chalcolithic period to the Early Bronze Age has been associated with a migration from Anatolia (Knapp 2001, p. 35-39; Mantzourani 2001, p. 83-87; Steel 2004, p. 126-28; Knapp 2008, p. 103-10). The final stages of the Late Bronze Age have been associated with the dynamic activity of the Sea Peoples and the arrival of large numbers of people from the Aegean, who settled several sites all over the island and eventually ‘hellenised’ it (Iacovou 1999; Karageorghis 2002, p. 71-141; Leriou 2002, p. 3-5; Steel 2004, p. 187-213; Knapp 2008, p. 249-51), whereas the 9th century is generally thought to have viewed the establishment of Phoenicians at Kition (Reyes 1994, p. 18-21; Karageroghis 2002, p. 144-49).

The present contribution focuses on the archaeological narrative of the Hellenisation of Cyprus, which has been subjected to plenty of criticism and reconsideration during the last decade, as it is thought to include many problems of classification, contradictions and inconsistencies, as well as a number of ‘factoids’ (Maier 1985, p. 32; Leriou 2002, p. 6-7; Leriou 2007, p. 564); nevertheless, it remains widely established and essentially
unchanged (Leriou 2002, p. 3-4). What follows is an outline of the most significant incidents of interaction between academic and political activity in the development of the Hellenisation narrative from the 1870s, i.e. when the British rule was established in Cyprus, until the present day. One of the principal aims of this discussion is the elucidation of a rather neglected aspect of the narrative’s development: its emergence from neoclassicism and the idealisation of ancient Greece, which dominated the thought of European classicists and historians during the 18th and 19th centuries. Thus, the narrative’s beginnings, which can be traced back to German historiography of the mid-19th century, will be reconstructed in detail.

### The Early Iron Age of Cyprus and 19th – early 20th European scholarship

The Hellenisation narrative was primarily based on a group of foundation myths, the earliest mention of which may be found in Herodotus’ *Historiae* (5.113). Analogous references describing the foundation of the Cypriot kingdoms by Greek heroes after the Trojan War may be found in the texts of various Greek and Roman authors, the latest being Stephanos Byzantios (Gjerstad 1944; Hadjioannou 1971, p. 46-67; Demetriou 1989, p. 88-93). These constituted the very first evidence for the reconstruction of the Cypriot Early Iron Age.

The earliest academic attempts to compile a general history of the island were undertaken during the first half of the 19th century. In 1841 the German classicist W. Engel published a monograph on Cyprus, containing information about the geography, the history, as well as the religion and the myths of the island with special emphasis on the cult of Aphrodite. Engel started his history from the ancient times and went as far as the Middle Ages and modern history. He stated that the island had been colonised by the Greeks and subsequently hellenised. This conclusion was supported by a detailed account of the foundation myths mentioned above. Engel was thus the first researcher to produce a more or less complete collection of them (Engel 1841, p. 210-29).

Some forty-five years later a similar but not as detailed list of the foundation myths appeared in the studies of another classicist from Germany, A. Enmann, who investigated the cult of Aphrodite on the island and suggested that it was introduced by the Greek colonists (Enmann 1886; Enmann 1887). Furthermore, the colonisation narrative together with extensive or more concise lists of the relevant myths are also to be found in 19th–early 20th century accounts of the history of the Greek world, usually in the chapter on the expansion of the Greeks after the Trojan War and the coming of the Dorians (Hoffmann 1841, p. 1272-300; Busolt 1893, p. 318-22; Beloch 1893, p. 50-52). According to Dowden the so-called « historical approach toward the myths », that is using myths as reliable historical sources, was a common practice in historical research during this early period, especially as far as ancient tribal migrations and movements were concerned (Dowden 1992, p. 23-24; Fitton 1995, p. 41-42). Moreover, as the principles and methods of archaeology were at elementary level, the almost complete lack of any archaeological corroboration of the mythological data was to be expected at that early stage (Trigger 1989, p. 65-67; Renfrew and Bahn 1991, p. 25-28). This was particularly so in regard to Cypriot archaeology, which was in its infancy (Marangou 1986, p. 310-14; Balandier 2001, p. 4-6); thus, the available archaeological information was particularly limited. It should be stressed though, that by the time of Enmann (1886; 1887), Busolt (1895) and Beloch (1924) some archaeological activity did exist; nevertheless, none of them considered it necessary to include material evidence in their arguments. The chronological framework for the historical phenomena described by the foundation myths was the almost totally unexplored at that time period following the Trojan War. On the basis of references in ancient literature the latter was
generally placed within the course of the 13th or the 12th centuries BC (Snodgrass 2000, p. 2-16; Vasilikou 1995, p. 2; Fitton 1995, p. 15-25).

The conclusions reached through the study of ancient written sources were firmly corroborated by linguistics: the existence of a Greek dialect in Classical Cyprus was detected through numerous Greek inscriptions, either in the Cypriot syllabary, which was deciphered around 1870, or less frequently the Greek alphabet. Realising that the Cypriot syllabary had been used to write Greek caused great enthusiasm among hellenocentric classicists; as a matter of fact, some of them exceeded the scholarly limits. Mitford notices that

« this enthusiasm was, however, speedily quenched by the uncritical approach of certain scholars, who gave their profound learning and their high ability to extracting Greek where Greek did not exist » (Mitford 1952, p. 153).

The Greek inscriptions had been found identified all over Cyprus, together with a limited number of inscriptions in the indigenous Eteocypriot language. The latter were inscribed in the Cypriot syllabary as well (Masson 1983, p. 18-19 and 48-51). The Greek-Cypriot dialect bore remarkable similarities to the one spoken in ancient Arcadia (Meister 1889, p. 125-31; Thumb 1909, p. 267-84; Buck 1910, p. 132-34). One of the earliest researchers of the Cypriot dialect (Thumb 1909, p. 279-80 and Buck 1910, p. 284-85 for references) was Meister, whose monograph on the Greek dialects contained a long chapter on it (Meister 1889, p. 125-315). In the introduction to this chapter the author tried to explain the presence of such a dialect and the consequent presence of a Greek population on the island by going back to the period, when colonists from the Aegean moved to Cyprus after the Trojan War. A brief account of the foundation myths with many references to the ancient texts was also provided (Meister 1889, p. 125-31). Meister’s conclusions were repeated in other studies of analogous content (Hoffmann 1891, p. 7-8; Thumb 1909, p. 282).

The hypothesis of a Greek colonisation of Cyprus was particularly welcomed in a period characterised by the strong, ever-growing European fascination by Greek antiquity. The rediscovery of the latter was initiated during the 17th century when the first European scholars, mainly French and English, undertook travels to Greece in order to search for the remains of her glorious past (Constantine 1984, p. xii and 7-65; Etienne and Etienne 1992, p. 34-41; Shanks 1996, p. 55-56). The great shift of interest from Rome to Greece did not occur before the mid-18th century. The idealisation of Greek antiquity was given a powerful boost by the revolutionary work of the German Johann Joachim Winckelmann. Through a stylistic examination of Greek statues, he demonstrated the superiority and perfection of Greek art and civilisation. Roman art, on the other hand, was characterised as decadent and imitative (Constantine 1984, p. 104-27; Etienne and Etienne 1992, p. 60-61; Whitley 2001, p. 20-23; Shanks 1996, p. 56-58). Winckelmann’s ideas were highly influential: numerous artists, poets, novelists, historians, philologists, philosophers, teachers, politicians etc. were deeply affected by them and a remarkably strong classical tradition, particularly evident in higher education, was eventually established in Germany (Shanks 1996, p. 68; Marchand 1996, p. 3-35; Morris 2000, p. 42-45; Diaz-Andreu 2007, p. 79-97). Bernal and other researchers have proposed that Winckelmann’s great impact should be viewed as a result of Protestant Germany’s cultural resistance to France, the self-proclaimed new Rome (Bernal 1987, p. 212-15; Morris 1994, p. 16-17; Shanks 1996, p. 58).
It was within this cultural and academic milieu that Engel and Enmann compiled their studies of the history and religion of ancient Cyprus. Their meticulous research focussing on ancient sources led them to the conclusion that Cyprus had been colonised by the Greeks after the Trojan War. This scenario fitted very well into the general idea that European, particularly German, scholars had about ancient Greeks: they were superior, highly civilised humans, who would be more than able to ‘visit’ less sophisticated peoples in remote places like Cyprus and establish colonies. This notion was effectively illustrated in a short study entitled *Die Griechen als Meister der Colonisation*, which was produced by the historian and archaeologist Ernst Curtius (1883), one of the initiators of the German excavations at Olympia during the last quarter of the 19th century (Trigger 1989, p. 196-97; Fitton 1995, p. 108; Hellenic Ministry of Culture 2005, p. 77-79). Thus, it does not seem coincidental that all scholars mentioned in the first part of this section were German. The idealisation of ancient Greece, however, was not an exclusively German academic phenomenon. As demonstrated below, British classicism played an important role in the development of the Hellenisation narrative. The beginning of British scholars’ active involvement in Cypriot archaeology goes back to the late 1870s, when the administration of the island was undertaken by Great Britain.

**The emergence of Cypriot archaeology and the first scholarly discussions of the island’s Early Iron Age**

Before the British rule’s establishment, the archaeological exploration of Cyprus was in the hands of looters and treasure hunters; among the latter were many foreign officials, the most infamous being the American consul Luigi Palma di Cesnola, who were undertaking excavations all over the island, while urging the villagers to trace, collect and provide them with antiquities. The interest of private collectors and the large museums of the West in Cypriot antiquities was gradually increasing; although not regarded as tasteful as the finds from Greece, the Near East and Egypt, Cypriot discoveries were already considered of significant academic value (Marangou 1986, p. 310-14, Goring 1988, p. 1-3 and 10-13; Åström 2000, p. 8-12; Balandier 2001). The British archaeologist Reginald Stuart Poole, in an article published at *The Contemporary Review* (August 1878), maintains that the exploration of ancient Cyprus « is interesting alone to the serious student of the remote annals of the Mediterranean. To him the antiquities of the island are a precious connecting link between Egypt, Assyria and Early Greece and the less attractive they are to the artistic eye the more valuable are they to his comparative vision » (Poole 1878; also cited in Balandier 2001, p. 4).

The antiquarians mentioned above would often publish extensive descriptions of their explorations and the antiquities they managed to accumulate (Sandwith 1877; Cesnola 1878; Land 1878; Goring 1988, p. 7-15). However they would rarely go into any kind of classification and interpretation of their material. Such an organised study was, of course, not to be expected at that early stage when Cypriot archaeology was a long way off being a systematic discipline. Furthermore, due to the fact that Mycenaean studies were practically non-existent at that time (Vasilikou 1995, p. 1-4; Fitton 1995; Fitton 2001), it would be too early for any associations of the Mycenaean and/ or Mycenaeanising material found on the island with the Hellenisation hypothesis. This is particularly evident in the fact that until the end of the 19th century researchers had been using the adjective « Greek » in order to describe the colonisation movements referred to in the foundation myths. The very first to
mention the « Mycenaean colonisation of Cyprus » was Arthur Evans in 1900 (Evans 1900), in other words some twenty six years after Schliemann had laid the foundation of Mycenaean archaeology through the discovery of ancient Mycenae (Trigger 1989, p. 162; Etienne and Etienne 1992, p. 110-11; Fitton 1995, p. 71-95; Fitton 2001, p. 149-50).

The first antiquarian to attempt a more systematic study was the British Thomas Backhouse Sandwith, who was appointed Vice-Consul in Cyprus in 1865. Sandwith classified Cypriot pottery and attempted a distinction between Bronze Age and the Iron Age vases. He also established a relative chronology for the various groups of wares he distinguished. Sandwith, educated at St. Catherine’s College, Cambridge, demonstrated a good power of observation and remarkable familiarity with the work of other investigators (Sandwith 1877; Goring 1988: 13-15; Merrillees 2001). Nonetheless, Sandwith’s work was quite amateurish. For this as well as for the reasons mentioned in the previous paragraph, he was hardly in a position to discuss in detail the Aegean presence on the island. He did, however, employ the term « colonisation » in an effort to explain the presence of red-figured vases at Salamis. He stated that « Salamis was a Greek colony and the arts were introduced from Greece herself » and placed this colonisation in the historic era, probably during the Classical period (Sandwith 1877, p. 137). Strangely enough he did not mention anything about the foundation myths and it seems that he was not very familiar with them. However, he must have had been aware of them as well as of the colonisation hypothesis in a rather general way, as the latter was a well-established story among classicists and historians since the first half of the 19th century (Lang 1878, p. 19-23). Luigi Palma di Cesnola, for example, made frequent references to them throughout his book (Cesnola 1878, p. 199, 219-20, 234 and 298-99). One could attribute Cesnola’s thorough knowledge of Greek mythology on his desire to emulate Schliemann by making great discoveries at important sites, namely the capitals of the kingdoms that had been founded by the Greek heroes (Karageorghis, Mertens and Rose 2000, p. 4-6).

A further reason for the apparent hesitation to associate Cypriot antiquities with the Greek world might be the fact that many of these antiquarians and early travellers regarded Cyprus with its palm-trees, minarets and camels as part of the Orient (Ohnefalsch-Richter 1893; Lang 1878, p. 11-12; Stewart 1908, p. 106-107 and 229-31; Louis Salvator of Austria 1983; Given 1998, p. 11-12). This tendency should be viewed in association with the 19th century academic phenomenon of Orientalism in archaeological and historical studies. According to Bernal, the majority of scholars during the years 1830-1885 were particularly willing to acknowledge influences of the Phoenician culture everywhere (Bernal 1987, p. 337-66). The decline of this phenomenon around the end of the century was observed also in Cyprus:

« Three related factors began to trouble this ideological self-confidence: Greek Cypriot claims to Hellenic identity, growing philhellenism among educated Britons, and a dramatic fall in the prestige of the Phoenicians » (Given 1998, p. 11).

The decisive hellenocentric push was given around the end of the 19th century by the fundamental work of John Linton Myres, which ensued the British taking over the administration of the island.

The beginning of the British rule witnessed the promotion of Cypriot archaeology to an academic discipline. Excavations increased in number, became more systematic and acquired a scientific character. This resulted in the accumulation of a considerable amount of material; in 1883 the Cyprus Museum was established
The excavated material included, as one would nowadays expect, plenty of Mycenaean pots. These were first identified as early as 1886 by the German archaeologists Furtwängler and Löschke, who recorded thirty seven pots and argued that there were many more in several private collections all over the island (Furtwängler and Löschke 1886, p. 24-31). Furthermore they identified a remarkable typological difference between Cypriot and mainland Greek Mycenaean vases, which they attributed to the special tastes of the Cypriot market:

« Kauften die Cyprier mit Vorliebe, wie es scheint, grosse Kratere, die mit Wagenscenen bemalt waren und Flaschen, die durch Imitationen der Jahresringe des Holzes an « Geometrischen » Decorationen errinnerten » (Furtwängler-Löschke 1886: 24-31).

They did not go as far as exploring the possibility that these pots were of local manufacture and almost automatically assumed that they were Aegean imports. The study of Mycenaean pottery had not yet reached the sophistication required for the distinction of regional styles and imitations. All that early researchers, such as Furtwängler and Löschke, could say was that this pottery was made in Late Bronze Age Mainland Greece. However they neither speculated about how it reached the island of Cyprus nor did they connect it with colonists from the Aegean.

The reasons for this rather surprising omission in the light of the then current views are not clear. The hypothesis that Furtwängler and Löschke were totally unfamiliar with the theory of the Greek colonisation of Cyprus seems highly improbable given their German academic background. Furtwängler’s work falls within a period when « the process of de-throning the Classical » had began (Whitley 2000, p. 37). Archaeological material of Mycenaean, Geometric and Archaic date was coming up in large numbers in the various excavations, conducted mainly by Germans, in Greece. Whitley maintains that

« such objects simply could not be fitted into Winckelmann’s idea of Classical Art. They had to be studied for different reasons and with different methods. So German scholars (notably Furtwängler and Dörpfeld) applied the ‘scientific’ principles of taxonomy and philology to the material remains of Ancient Greece » (Whitley 2000, p. 37; also Marchland 1996, p. 75-115).

Furtwängler’s early studies focused on inventoring thousands of bronzes, potsherds, figurines etc. and resulted into the development of a method for historical stylistic categorising and an eye particularly keen for stylistic distinction (Marchand 1996, p. 87 and 105-106; Whitley 2001, p. 34). It is believed that his reliance on these « tools » resulted into a relative disdain for written sources (Marchand 1996: 145), which is very obvious in the discussion of the Aegean pottery that was found in Cyprus. Whatever the case, Furtwängler and Löschke’s contribution was of great importance: the identification of pottery from the Aegean within Cypriot contexts would soon be employed to materially support the colonisation hypothesis, in a period when all archaeologists would accept without any hesitation the equation between pots and peoples.

The hellenocentric scholarship of John Linton Myres
The very first scholar to clearly and directly associate the Mycenaean and Mycenaean-looking pottery found within Cypriot contexts with a colonisation of the island by Aegean people was Sir John Linton Myres (Megaw 1988, p. 282-83; Åström 2000, p. 12-13; Koelsch 1995; Coldstream 1998, p. 5). This happened at the end of the 19th century, in other words more than ten years after the publications of Heinrich Schliemann’s excavations of the legendary Mycenaes, Tiryns, Orchomenos and the site identified as Homer’s Troy had appeared (Runnels 2002, p. 28-58). During the last decade of the 19th century, Myres, a promising young student at the British School of Athens, went to Cyprus to supervise some of the British excavations (McGillivray 2000, p. 113). In 1894 he was asked by the High Commissioner to examine, classify and organise the ever growing collection of antiquities in the Cyprus Museum. Myres’ work with the collaboration of the German archaeologist Max Ohnefalsch-Richter (Marangou 1986, p. 317; Goring 1988, p. 18; Buchholz 1989; Fivel 1996; Merrillees 2000, p. 13-15) resulted in the first scholarly catalogue of the material in the Cyprus Museum (Myres and Ohnefalsch-Richter 1899). The catalogue constitutes the earliest major scientific classification of the Cypriot material, which was further refined in the guidebook to the famous Cesnola collection in the Metropolitan Museum of Art published fifteen years later (Myres 1914; Karageorghis, Mertens and Rose 2000, p. 8).

Through extensive study Myres became highly familiar with the antiquities of Cyprus. Being an archaeologist with a strong Aegean background, he attempted to distinguish between the « genuine » Mycenaean pots from the local imitations on the basis of fabric description (Myres and Ohnefalsch-Richter 1899, p. 40; Myres 1914, p. 50-53) and focused almost exclusively on the problem of the formers’ precise provenance: they could have been manufactured in Mainland Greece, Rhodes, Crete or in Cyprus itself by Mycenaean potters. The last hypothesis seemed more probable, as there were some Cypriot peculiarities in the shape repertory of the vases. Thus ignoring completely possibilities associated with trade and exchange, Myres regarded these vases as the tangible result of proof for the colonisation of the island by people from the shores and the islands of the Aegean Sea and Crete at the time of the collapse of the Minoan world around 1400. These populations « brought with them their own remarkable culture and industries » (Myres and Ohnefalsch-Richter 1899, p. 40, 180-82 and 183-86; Myres 1914, p. 45-46 and 374). Subsequently, the Aegean artefacts that were found along the Syro-Palestinian coast lead Myres to the conclusion that « similar colonies founded on the Syrian coast rather later, became eventually the seat of the Philistine power…Thus in the Late Bronze Age, not Cyprus only, but all this end of the Mediterranean became for a while a strong outpost of Western civilisation » (Myres 1914, p. xxx).

His strong belief in the historicity of mythological information, for which he would be criticised by later researchers (Myres 1930, p. 297-99; Gjerstad 1944, p. 107 note 1), left no space for doubts that the legendary Greek colonisation of Cyprus had actually occurred.

Myres’ conclusions were quite typical of the period, in which they were formulated. The major academic trends that have significantly influenced him, as well as the majority of European archaeologists during the late 19th–early 20th century were a) the culture-historical approach towards material culture, b) the idealisation of ancient Greeks and c) the belief in the historical value of mythological tradition. The former was established in Great Britain through the fundamental work of Gordon Childe (Trigger 1980; Trigger 1989, p. 167-74), who
happened to be one of Myres’ fellow-students at the University of Oxford (Trigger 1989, p. 169). Myres’ studies on the Cypriot material (Myres and Ohnefalsch-Richter 1899; Myres 1914) predate Childe’s *Dawn of the European Civilisation* (1925), through which « the archaeological culture became the working tool of all European archaeologists » (Trigger 1989: 169). Nevertheless the concept of archaeological culture does appear, although not as systematically (Trigger 1989: 168), in the catalogues of the Cyprus Museum (Myres and Ohnefalsch-Richter 1899, p. 17-20) and the Cesnola collection (Myres 1914, p. xxviii-xxxiii). The belief that archaeological remains are inevitably a reflection of ancient ethnicity is inherent in Myres’ work, through which the equation of pots with peoples was implemented within the context of Cypriot archaeology. The Hellenisation of Cyprus was promoted from a historical reconstruction based on literary, that is to say intangible, evidence to an established archaeological fact.

Myres admired the Greek world and devoted his life to the study of its culture (Myres 1930). Like Engel, Enmann and the rest of their German fellow-scholars mentioned above, he believed deeply in the superiority of the Greeks, which would have made the colonisation of Cyprus a simple venture. The strong hellenocentric character of Myres’ scholarship should be viewed against the background of 19th century British classicism. Myres was born in Preston, Lancashire, in 1869. He studied and later taught at the University of Oxford in a period when, as mentioned above, Western Europe was trying to revive ancient Greece (McGillivray 2000, p. 81-82). Britain was also actively involved in this intellectual movement: degrees focussing on the ancient Greek language, literature and history were established in Oxford and Cambridge as early as 1807 and 1824 respectively. The same subjects became central in upper and upper-middle class secondary education (Bernal 1987, p. 318-21; Morris 1994, p. 19; Hingley 1996, p. 137). The British Museum, as well as the other big museums in Britain, had a strong interest in acquiring antiquities from Greece (Etienne and Etienne 1990, p. 67-75; Whitley 2000, p. 35-37). Neoclassical architecture was very popular and ancient Greece had become the source of inspiration for numerous British artists and writers (Jenkyns 1980, p. 1-20; Turner 1981; Clarke 1989).

The idea of a Greek colonisation of Cyprus was firmly corroborated by ancient literature and also by the archaeological material, which was however examined last and through the already sizeable colonisation lens. Myres’ conclusions illustrate perfectly the above-mentioned historical approach towards the myths (Dowden 1992, p. 23-24). The physical remains of the past, if there were any available, would simply have to fit into the already constructed historical scenario. This attitude seems to originate from the ancient Greeks’ belief that « myths preserve the great deeds of the past » (Buxton 1994, p. 182; Dowden 1992, p. 39-53). Another typical example of it is the initiation and development during the 19th century of the research into the heroic age of Early Greece, as a result of the rising interest in Greek mythology and particularly in the Homeric poems (Fitton 1995, p. 41-46). In other words it was the very same attitude that urged Homer-struck Schliemann to identify the settlement at Hissarlik with legendary Troy (Fitton 1995, p. 46-103) and also placed the foundation myths on the basis of the construction of the colonisation theory.

**Arthur Evans and the Cypro-Minoan script**

The decipherment of the island’s Iron Age syllabic script gave great impetus to Cypriot epigraphy. The similarities between a number of characters of the Cypriot syllabary and some signs of the Minoan linear writing systems, which had been observed by Arthur Evans as early as 1895 (Evans 1895, p. 79-80 and 83-85), provided further emphasis to the connections between Cyprus and the Aegean world. Some ten years later, Sayce
demonstrated that the Late Bronze Age Cypriots were using a script, which was similar to the Classical syllabary (Sayce 1905, p. 254; Evans 1909, p. 72; Casson 1937, p. 72). In 1909, Evans undertook a more detailed study of this Late Bronze Age script, which he named « Cypro-Minoan », and concluded that it was a provincial offspring of the Minoan linear scripts (Evans 1900, p. 216-17; Evans 1909, p. 68-77; Daniel 1941, p. 249; Hirschfeld 2001, p. 187-88).

The development of the Cypro-Minoan script was regarded by Evans as the result of an extensive influx of settlers from the Aegean and Crete during the Late Minoan period (Evans 1909, p. 68-72). Quite similarly to Myres, who happened to be a close friend and colleague in Oxford (Myres 1941; Trigger 1989, p. 168-69; Fitton 1995, p. 122; McGillivray 2000, p. 81, 103 and 252), Evans admired deeply the prehistoric civilisation of Greece (Fitton 1995, p. 120) and regarded it as much more advanced than its Cypriot counterpart:

« The indigenous Bronze Age culture of Cyprus was incomparably behind that of Minoan Crete. It was from a Minoan source that the first elements of high civilisation reached its shores » (Evans 1909, p. 68).

Consequently, the presence of the Aegean newcomers, who brought the Cypro-Minoan script on the island, could be easily identified through the significant changes that were observed in the material culture:

« Side by side with survivals of the old barbaric products of the Cypriot potters we now note the wholesale intrusion of new ceramic types of finer fabric, which in their paste, glaze and decoration are inseparable from the Late Minoan and Mycenaean class » (Evans 1909, p. 69).

Evans eventually realised that there was a big chronological gap between the Aegean/ Minoan colonisation and the one that occurred after the Trojan War and was described in « Greek foundation sagas » (Evans 1909, p. 74-75). His historical approach towards mythological information, as well as the identification of many Aegean elements in the archaeological record from the Early Iron Age led him to the conclusion that there had been two waves of Aegean immigrants into Cyprus (Evans 1909, p. 76).

The date of the introduction of the Cypro-Minoan script and consequently its connection to the colonisation narrative became a subject of great controversy after Evans’ initial suggestions. When publishing the results of the excavation at Knossos, Evans argued for an Early Bronze Age date and proposed that the Cypro-Minoan script should be viewed as a local development (Evans 1935: 758-63). An Early Bronze Age chronology was suggested also by the Cypriot archaeologist Porphyrios Dikaios (Dikaios 1940, p. 82). Casson and Persson on the other hand were supporting a Late Bronze Age date and relating the introduction of the script with an immigration-wave from the Aegean. Following Myres’ reconstruction, Casson dated this wave around the end of the 15th century on the basis of ceramic evidence (Casson 1937, p. 59-60), while Persson placed it before the Dorian invasion, which was thought to have had occurred some time after 1225 BC, according to a number of inscriptions from Boghazköy (Persson 1930, p. 13-16; Daniel 1941, p. 250-51).

The main reason for this disagreement was the extremely limited amount of available material (Evans 1935, p. 759; Casson 1937: 75-76). Thus, the discovery of more examples of the Cypro-Minoan script at the Late Bronze Age settlement of Episkopi-Bamboula near Kourion, which was excavated during the late 1930s
(Daniel 1939; Daniel 1940), as well as the systematic re-classification of the material by Daniel (1941), the excavator of Bamboula, put an end to this debate: the script seemed to have developed during the course of the Late Cypriot I period (Daniel 1941, p. 251-52; Mylonas 1948, p. 218; Mitford 1952: 151). Later discoveries, mainly from Enkomi, justified Daniel’s conclusions fully (Dikaios 1971, p. 882-83; Chadwick 1987, p. 50-51; Merrillees 1993, p. 13-15). Furthermore, the firm establishment of a Late Cypriot III date for the arrival of the Mycenaean immigrants that was achieved by the Swedish Cyprus Expedition during the 1930s disconnected the two historical phenomena completely.

**British colonialism and hellenised Cyprus**

The classical past played a special role for Britain, as it offered ample excuse for her colonial activity: Winckelmann and many others after him regarded ancient Greece as the childhood of Europe. Ancient Greeks were generally considered as the spiritual and intellectual ancestors of Europeans, who consequently thought themselves as the descendants of an ideal and superior civilisation (Herzfeld 1987, p. 1-5; Shanks 1996, p. 82-86). This assumption was widely used to legitimise European colonialism in areas with a supposedly primitive, inferior civilisation. The aim of colonial archaeology is to substantiate the existence of a « huge » cultural gap between the colonisers and the native population. This is achieved through the systematic glorification of the past of the former and the simultaneous demonstration of the primitiveness and lack of accomplishments of the latter (Trigger 1984, p. 360-63; Lyons and Papadopoulos 2002).

The case of Cyprus was particularly complicated as the greater part of its population was Greek-Cypriots (Knapp and Antoniadou 1998, p. 20), who consciously related themselves to Greece and its glorious past. Cyprus had been under Turkish occupation since 1571 (Hunt 1990a). When Britain undertook the island’s administration in 1878, the Greek Cypriots reacted with great enthusiasm. They regarded Britain as a great philhellenic power that would liberate them from the « barbaric » Turkish yoke and help them unite with mother Greece (Knapp and Antoniadou 1998, p. 21). When Sir Garnet Wolseley, the first High Commissioner, arrived at the port of Larnaca, he was welcomed warmly by Sophronios, Archbishop of Kition, who declared:

« We accept the change of government inasmuch as we trust Great Britain will help Cyprus, as it did the Ionian islands, to be united with mother Greece, with which it is naturally connected » (cited in Hunt 1990, p. 265).

At the beginning, the British colonisers made no attempt to belittle the natives’ past, but rather tried to emphasise its Greek character as much as possible. Myres, the first scholar to interpret Cypriot antiquities in the light of the Mycenaean colonisation, not only was British but had also been employed by the High Commission. His conclusions became immediately widely accepted by all researchers working in Cyprus, whose great majority was of British nationality. Cypriot archaeology was literally in the hands of the colonial authority, who showed strong interest in protecting and conserving the island’s heritage through a series of laws controlling excavation and prohibiting massive exportation of antiquities (Marangou 1986, p. 319-22; Goring 1988, p. 21-22). In 1887, the British School of Athens together with the Society for the Promotion of Hellenic studies and the University of Cambridge founded the Cyprus Exploration Fund, which supported financially various research-projects including Myres’ study (Megaw 1988, p. 281; Goring 1988, p. 22-23; Knapp and Antoniadou 1998, p. 30). During the last decade of the 19th century, the British Museum conducted a series of excavations at
various sites like Kourion, Enkomi, Maroni that were mainly chosen for their apparent association with the Mycenaean/Greek world (Evans 1900; Fitton 2001). Steel emphasises that these excavations established irrevocably the connection between the Aegean and Cyprus during the Late Bronze Age and maintains that much of the confusion and misunderstanding pertaining to the Hellenisation narrative is a result of these early British excavators who «too readily ascribed a Mycenaean identity to their Late Bronze Age finds» while almost totally ignoring indigenous development during the same period (Steel 2001, p. 163-64).

The British attitude towards the past and the antiquities of Cyprus may be viewed as one aspect of a more general scheme to establish a good rapport with the colonised population, which was officially still under the sovereignty of the Turks. Unlike the latter, the British were (=thought and/or presented themselves as) liberal philhellenists, bearers of justice and equality (Given 1997, p. 11-12). This policy was mainly reflected in the remarkable autonomy that the Cypriots, both Greek and Turkish, were enjoying in the field of education. They were entitled to use their own languages and manage their schools, appoint teachers of their choice, compile the curricula and choose or even produce schoolbooks (Hunt 1990, p. 266-67; Pavlides 1993, p. 244-48; Merrillees 1993, p. 4-5; Given 1997, p. 64-65).

The Greek Cypriots used these liberties wisely to reinforce their Hellenic identity, thus supporting the ever-growing nationalistic movement demanding «enosis» with Greece: they followed the curricula and used the books of the Greek schools and very frequently appointed Greek teachers. Consequently, Greek Cypriot students were being taught classical Greek language and literature, Greek history and geography (Hill 1952, p. 492-93). This hellenocentrism in Cypriot education was particularly evident in the architecture of school buildings, which acquired neoclassical characteristics like columnar facades, pediments, sculptured decoration etc. (Given 1997, p. 66-69). The Pancyprian Gymnasium in Nicosia, constructed in 1893, was the best example of this kind of architecture and was, thus, considered the flagship of Greek education in Cyprus (Given 1997, p. 67 fig. 1).

The ever-growing Cypriot nationalism, which culminated in the burning down of the Government House at Nicosia in October 1931 (Hill 1952, p. 548; Hunt 1990, p. 270-73; Pavlides 1993, p. 297-304), urged the British to undertake drastic action: their liberal educational policy became more controlled and centralised, while further measures preventing straightforward association with the Greek world were taken, e.g. the flying of the Greek flag was prohibited (Hill 1952, p. 553; Given 1997, p. 65 and 69-71). Given has proposed that this climate of political unrest caused by the development of the Cypriot nationalism urged the colonial authority to consider ways of minimising the connection of the island’s early history with ancient Greece, as the Greek Cypriot intelligentsia drew upon it in order to legitimise its demands (Peristianes 1910; Zanetos 1910, p. 102-218; Given 1998, p. 3-4 and 12-15). The only possible way that this could be achieved was through the identification of an ancient autochthonous population that remained largely unaffected by more recent colonisation and immigration and would make ancient Cyprus look less Hellenic. The coincidence of the discovery of the Eteocypriots by the Swedish scholars that had been excavating on the island since 1927 must have been a happy one (Given 1998, p. 18-20). Nevertheless, it should be emphasised that it does not seem to have been anything more than that. The evidence does not suffice to support the possibility of a conscious collaboration between the colonial authority and the Swedish expedition in order to manipulate the ethnic identity of the Cypriots according to the former's best interest. However both the Swedes and the British
administrators were coming from the same intellectual background that favoured the superiority of the ancient Greek and consequently Western world over the Orient.

The Swedish contribution to the Cypriot Hellenisation

The members of the Swedish Expedition reached Cyprus in 1927, after an invitation by Luke Zenon Pierides, the Swedish consul in Larnaca. For four years they conducted numerous excavations and surveys all over the island in order to

« determine the main historical outlines, with a periodic division that could be compared to with those of nearby countries, and to elucidate the chronology of Cyprus until the Christian era » (Westholm 1994, p. 7-8).

The Swedes, born, bred and educated in a Western European country and within a climate of academic positivism, came to Cyprus with clearly set, although rather optimistic, scientific targets. Through their fieldwork they introduced a new approach towards archaeological material that was based on stratification and systematic chronological association. The publication of the Swedish finds and results was done in four massive volumes and was combined with a thorough reconstruction of the Cypriot history from the Neolithic down to the Roman period (Gjerstad 1933; Karageorghis 1993, p. 334-35; Westholm 1994; Windbalch 1997; Åström 2000, p.14-18).

The members of the Swedish Cyprus Expedition mostly interested in researching and reconstructing the Late Bronze and Early Iron Ages were Einar Gjerstad (Åström 1971, p. 35-37; Åström 1985; Åström 1994; Karageorghis 1985), and Erik Sjöqvist (Åström 1971, p. 72). Together, they managed to work out a sequence of events for the 12th and 11th centuries (Gjerstad 1926; 1944; 1944a; 1948; Sjöqvist 1940). Their basic research tool was detailed pottery analysis. Gjerstad believed that pottery could be regarded as the most positive evidence for connections between different cultures, as it is

« fragile and of little value and therefore unsuitable as an exchange article and is not carried too far from the place of manufacture: it proves the closest and direct relations. Whole and precious things often pass from hand to hand: in themselves consequently they only give evidence of indirect relations, but on the other hand they may supplement the evidence given by pottery » (Gjerstad 1926, p. 292).

Gjerstad’s methodology was very similar to that employed by Myres; both researchers positioned pottery analysis in the centre of their study, as the key to identifying different ethnic groups. His results, however, were remarkably different. Myres had proposed that all Mycenaean pots, the earliest of which dated from the 14th century BC, had been locally produced; he consequently placed the date of the Aegean colonisation as early as the 14th century BC. His conclusions were based on the relatively limited amount of archaeological data that was available at his time. The Swedes, on the other hand, had excavated a remarkable amount of material, which allowed ample space for observation and comparison. They suspected that the large number of Aegean pots could not have been wholly produced on Cyprus and therefore focused on the question of their provenance.
Were they imported, the result of trade, or locally manufactured, the product of immigrants from the Aegean? After careful observation and scrutiny resulting in detailed typologies of the Late Bronze and Early Iron Age wares (Gjerstad 1926, p. 88-228; Gjerstad 1944a; Sjöquist 1940, p. 28-97), Gjerstad and Sjöquist managed to establish some distinctions between imported and local ceramic products.

Einar Gjerstad examined closely the fabric, shape and decoration of the 14th-13th century pots and concluded without any doubt that they were of Aegean provenance. He did not accept the possibility that some Mycenaean pots might have been produced locally and suggested that they had all been imported, thus proving Myres’ suggestion for a 14th century colonisation from the Aegean invalid. Consequently he attributed the peculiarities of some of the Mycenaean vases found in Cyprus to special preferences of the Cypriot market as Furtwängler and Löschke had suggested forty years before him (Furtwängler and Löschke 1886, p. IX; Gjerstad 1926, p. 218-20 and 326-27).

Erik Sjöqvist, on the other hand, suggested that the Mycenaean pottery of Cyprus although very close to the wares of Mainland Greece (Sjöqvist 1940, p. 65-73), presented considerable differences, which hinted to its provincial nature. Furthermore, a number of Cypriot and Syrian characteristics in the shape repertory led him to regard this ware of Levantine origin and therefore named it « Levanto-Helladic » The fact that numerous similar pots had been found also in Cilicia, Syria, Palestine and Egypt offered further support to this hypothesis (Sjöqvist 1940, p. 94-96). Levanto-Helladic pottery was most probably produced in many « different littoral localities in the Levant working under much the same conditions in a lively intercourse with each other » (Sjöqvist 1940, p. 96). The manufacture of this pottery was considered as the result of interaction between small groups of peoples from the Aegean, mainly merchants and artists, who had settled in the Levantine centres and the indigenous population. This settlement was of small scale and mercantile character and in no way a major colonisation movement from the Aegean world (Sjöqvist 1940, p. 205-206). Sjöqvist went as far as corroborating his conclusion with anthropological evidence: a group of skulls from various tombs at Agios Iacovos and Enkomi dating from the Middle Cypriot IIIC down to the Late Cypriot IIC periods was found to be of more or less the same type suggesting that

« the racial stock of Cyprus underwent no material changes from the Middle Bronze Age down to the close of the LCIIIC; these skulls belong to the Armenoid brachycephalic type and « show no affinities to the contemporary Achaean population of the Greek mainland » (Sjöqvist 1940, p. 205).

The Mycenaean colonisation of Cyprus was placed both by Gjerstad and Sjöquist within the course of Late Cypriot III, as the local wares of this period were characterised by a remarkable fusion of Aegean and Cypriot elements. At the same time the production of the traditional Late Bronze Age Base Ring and White Slip wares appeared to have completely stopped (Gjerstad 1926, p. 278-85; Kling 1989, p. 79). Sjöquist identified a group of Levanto-Helladic pots that seemed to have been produced locally during this period and were consequently classified as « Painted Submycenaean » (Sjöqvist 1940, p. 73-74 and 97). According to Sjöqvist, this local ware as well as the rest of the material culture of Late Cypriot III Cyprus featured considerable Anatolian affinities. This led him to the conclusion that the newcomers included a large population from Anatolia (Sjöqvist 1940, p. 207-209); in an effort to combine both elements, he suggested that
the scattered Achaeans, who in small bodies, had been resident on Anatolian soil for a century or more, headed the tribes of the Phrygians and other Anatolians, and accompanied the migrating hoards towards the South-East, raided Cyprus and gradually settled in newly established petty principalities» (Sjöqvist 1940, p. 208).

Gjerstad, on the other hand, managed to distinguish two distinctive classes of pottery within the Late Cypriot III ceramic production

« the first representing a debased variety of Levanto-Helladic pottery, and the second being a forerunner of the White Painted ware of the Iron Age. I therefore suggest calling the first class Debased Levanto-Helladic and the second class Proto-White Painted » (Gjerstad 1944a, p. 75).

Various chronological correlations between groups of the excavated material allowed Gjerstad to establish that the Debased Levanto-Helladic ware was typical of the first half of the Late Cypriot III while the Proto-White Painted pottery was common during the second half of the period. Both wares were characterised by a fusion of Aegean and Cypriot elements; the latter, however, was thought to reflect a more advanced stage of this fusion. Based on his three stages of contact between two different cultures and the way these are reflected through pottery (Gjerstad 1926, p. 293-94), Gjerstad claimed that both classes of pottery reflected a colonisation from the Aegean, but in the second case this movement was more fundamental (Gjerstad 1944a).

Besides pottery, the Swedish excavations unearthed more categories of evidence supporting the Hellenisation hypothesis. At Lapithos-Kastros a new type of tomb of clearly Mycenaean origin was discovered: chamber tombs with long dromoi that were dated to the beginning of the Iron Age on the basis of the pottery they contained (Gjerstad 1931, p. 61; Gjerstad 1933, p. 267; Gjerstad 1980, p. 44-45; SCE I, p. 172-265). A relatively large number of similar chamber tombs would later be located at various sites all over the island and subsequently constitute one of the strongest arguments for a Mycenaean colonisation. Moreover the sanctuaries at Aghia Irini and Idalion with their small roofed shrines seemed completely different from the earlier Cypriot cult places and reminded Gjerstad of the domestic sanctuaries in the Minoan palaces and houses (Gjerstad 1933, p. 267).

Further corroboration of the colonisation theory came from Gjerstad’s analytical study of the foundation myths (Gjerstad 1944). Although he believed that there was some historical essence in mythological information, Gjerstad did not, in emphasised contrast to J. L. Myres (Gjerstad 1944, p. 107 note 1), consider all myths of the same « historical » / documentary value. He thus attempted a critical examination of the foundation myths, in order to evaluate their « historicity ». The results of this examination enabled Gjerstad to arrange the myths in two groups: the first one contained legends reflecting some historical truth while the second consisted of legends « that are instances of political mythology and of aetiological speculation » (Gjerstad 1944, p. 122). Although the second group’s myths were altogether dismissed as unoriginal, the first group was thought to contain enough information to adequately support the Hellenisation hypothesis (Gjerstad 1944, p. 122-23). Moreover, the Mycenaean origin of Cypriot kingship during the Classical period was characterised « indisputable » and was corroborated by the 4th century use of the Homeric title « anaktes » for the kings’ brothers and sons (Gjerstad 1948, p. 445-46 and 498; Hadjiioannou 1971, p. 172-75 nos. 66.43-66.43c; Iacovou

Elucidating the details of the colonisation narrative was one of the major objectives of the Swedish Cyprus Expedition. At the same time they were interested in the interaction between the newcomers and the native population. Were the Mycenaeans ruthless invaders or had they come in peace? Did the native Cypriots resist them? Did they maintain their identity or were they absorbed by the Greek culture? After thorough study of the material culture of Early Iron Age Cyprus Gjerstad concluded that as soon as they arrived, the newcomers became the « Herrscherklasse » and imposed their culture on the natives (Gjerstad 1933, p. 267-68; 1980, p. 44-47). In the final publication of the Expedition’s results he stated:

« The Mycenaean colonists and conquerors were the lords of the country, but the descendants of the Late Bronze Age inhabitants, whom we may call the Eteocyprians, formed the majority of the population, and for some time parts of the island still remained entirely Eteocyprian. No foundation legends refer to cities in the interior of the island or to places on the south coast between Kourion in the West and Salamis in the East. In the interior of the island there were « barbarian », i.e. Eteocyprian cities at least down to the Classical period » (Gjerstad 1948, p. 429).

What led Gjerstad to the above conclusions seems to had been his academic view of the Greek civilisation as a superior one rather than the excavated material itself, which does not support any kind of strict distinction between the newcomers and the « urkyprisch » indigenous peoples. The latter’s presence is substantiated solely by a relatively small group of indecipherable inscriptions, which were assumed to have been produced by them. On the basis of the concentration of these inscriptions in the area of Amathus, Gjerstad and his colleagues concluded that after the arrival of the Mycenaeans the Eteocypriots concentrated in an ethnic pocket in the city of Amathus.

The Swedes’ eagerness to identify and study the indigenous population and its culture must have made them particularly welcome by the British administrators of the island. Ronald Storrs, the High Commissioner during that period, supported the Swedish research in all possible ways. He helped with land appropriation, provided police to guard excavation sites and even went as far as changing the Antiquities Law so that the excavators could take a proportion of the finds to Sweden (Storrs 1945, p. 491; Given 1998, p. 16). The Swedes, on the other hand

« considered themselves objective scholars who used scientific procedures to establish historical truth. Nonetheless they were clearly sympathetic to the colonial regime, and were working in the same general European ideological system of cultural history and racial hierarchy » (Given 1998, p. 16).

Einar Gjerstad, the leader of the expedition, is responsible for the establishment and systematic use of the term « Eteocypriots » in parallel with/ opposition to the term « Greeks of Cyprus ». His belief in racial
hierarchy, as well as his classical education had led him to the conclusion that the mythical colonisation of Cyprus by the superior Greeks was an incontrovertible historical fact (Gjerstad 1933, p. 267-68).

The systematic research undertaken by the Swedes upgraded the hypothesis of the Mycenaean colonisation to a widely published and therefore most probably true historical fact. A detailed account of it appeared in the comprehensive *A History of Cyprus* that was written by the British George Hill and published in 1949. Hill based his reconstruction mainly on the results of the Swedish Cyprus Expedition. Furthermore, he corroborated the conclusions of Gjerstad and Sjöqvist through many references to classical or even later Greek and Cypriot texts, which demonstrated that besides their language and arts, the Mycenaeans had introduced place names, institutions and a variety of cults (Hill 1949, p. 82-94). It should be mentioned, however, that in the epilogue of the chapter entitled « The Greek Colonisation » Hill wondered « how far the Cypriot nation was Greek » (Hill 1949, p. 93). This politically sensitive question was answered by means of referring to the famous passage from Aeschylus’ *Suppliants* (Reyes 1994, p. 12 note 8), where the Cypriots are presented as a distinctively foreign population with its own peculiar customs and features. Hill regarded this passage as enough evidence to counterbalance the numerous excerpts that he himself had used to prove the historicity of the Greek colonisation and concluded that

« Obviously, in the face of such a fact, attempts, which have been made, and will doubtless continue to be made, to prove that the Cypriots were pure Greeks, must be futile » (Hill 1949, p. 94).

This statement smells strongly of politics and should be viewed against the background of the British colonial policies concerning the demand of the Cypriots to unite with Greece (Given 1997, p. 69), which were thoroughly discussed in the previous section.

**The Eteocypriots and their language: development of the argument**

The decipherment of the Cypriot syllabary around 1870 revealed that this script had been used to write both Greek as well as an unidentifiable non-Hellenic language. This conclusion was based on a relatively small number of unintelligible syllabic inscriptions, which had been most probably found in the area of Amathus (Masson 1983, p. 85 and 203-206 nos.192-195; Given 1998, p. 19). In 1914, the German linguist Kretschmer suggested that through the inscriptions

« ist nicht nur eine vorgriechische Bevölkerung von Cypern, sondern auch das Fortbestehen ihrer Sprache bis mindestens ins V. Jahrhundert v.Chr. gesichert, ähnlich wie das der eteokretischen Sprache auf Kreta durch die Inschriften von Praisos » (Kretschmer 1914, p. 260).

During the same year Sittig, another German linguist, published a 4th century bilingual inscription from Amathus written in Greek and an unknown language (Masson 1983, p. 206-209 no.196). Sittig examined this unknown language against the background of various ancient literary sources, which maintained that the Amathusians were the indigenous, pre-Greek population of Cyprus (Sittig 1914, p. 1-2). He concluded that this inscription proved beyond doubt that during the 4th century the autochthonous Amathusians were speaking an
unknown, pre-Hellenic language, which might have been related to the Minoan (Sittig 1914, p. 2; Kretschmer 1917, p. 252). The direct association of Amathus with an indigenous population challenged its Phoenician character (Sittig 1914, p. 2) that was until then a common belief (Cesnola 1878, p. 249-51; Myres 1914, p. xxxix; Hill 1937, p. 485-86; Given 1998, p. 19; Petit 1999, p. 110). Given notices that Sittig’s suggestions fall into line with the rising anti-Semitism that characterised the beginnings of the 20th century and was partly responsible for the hellenocentric attitude of the researchers who established the Mycenaean colonisation hypothesis (Given 1998, p. 11-12, 19; Papadopoulos 1997, p. 194).

In 1932, the German linguist Johannes Friedrich coined the term « Eteokyprier » , i.e. « True Cypriot », to distinguish the autochthonous population of Cyprus, who used this unknown language, from the Greek immigrants (Friedrich 1932, p. 49). Until the arrival of the Swedes, the available evidence for the existence of the Eteocypriot population was exclusively linguistic. The Swedish excavations at Amathus located a considerable number of tombs of a peculiar shape and construction consisting of a rectangular rock-cut shaft roofed with stone slabs. These shaft graves dated from the Cypro-Geometric I to the Cypro-Archaic I (Gjerstad et al. 1935, p. 138-41; Westholm 1942, p. 31). Westholm compared these tombs with the Mycenaean-style chamber that were thought to be the norm in most of the Cypriot cemeteries during Cypro-Geometric I-II and suggested that the Amathusian tombs were older on typological grounds. Consequently they should be attributed to the oldest inhabitants of the island. This conclusion was supported through references to ancient Greek texts maintaining that the Amathusians constituted the autochthonous population of Cyprus, as well as Hill’s rejection of Amathus’ Phoenician character (Westholm 1942, p. 30-31 and 52-53). Gjerstad added some analogous Cypro-Geometric I tombs found at Lapethos-Plakes to the Eteocypriot material and maintained that while the native community was using the cemetery at Plakes the newcomers buried their dead in the chamber tombs at nearby Kastros. This separation was regarded as indicative of a remarkable differentiation between the two ethnic groups at this early level of interaction. The gradual moderation of this contrast in burial architecture, which was illustrated by the appearance of Eteocypriot shaft tombs at CGII Kastros, was thought to denote gradual assimilation of the Mycenaean and Eteocypriot cultures (Gjerstad 1948, p. 432-33).

Since Gjerstad’s conclusions, the presence of the native Eteocypriots in Early Iron Age Cyprus has been regarded as an established historical fact (Hill 1937; Hill 1949, p. 53-54 and 101; Karageorghis 1968, p. 68; Karageorghis 1982, p. 114; Karageorghis 1990, p. 109-110; Coldstream 1990, p. 52-53; Pavlides 1991, p. 67-68; Iacovou 1995, p. 102-103 and 107; Courtois 1997, 305-307; Karageorghis 2002, p. 136-37; Iacovou 2003, p. 84). The Eteocypriot hypothesis was viewed as corroborative of the Hellenisation narrative, since the presence of a native population, who was forced to concentrate in the area of Amathus after the Mycenaean had overwhelmed the island, made the arrival of the latter a much more convincing story. Consequently, their position was significantly modified: initially considered by Gjerstad as a culturally strong and resistant majority (Gjerstad 1948, p. 429-31), the Eteocypriots were eventually attributed a minor role and were viewed as « remnants of a past that was radically changed by the superior Greek colonising forces during the Late Bronze Age, the Golden Age for the Greek Cypriot national myth » (Hamilakis 1998, p. 109).

Epilogue: the Hellenisation of Cyprus in the 20th century
The fundamental work of the Swedish Cyprus Expedition promoted Cypriot archaeology to a systematic academic discipline and attracted the attention and interest of several researchers and institutions all over the world (Knapp and Antoniadou 1998, p. 30). In 1935, the Department of Antiquities was founded. Finally, a local specialised institution would protect and preserve the antiquities, establish local museums throughout the island and conduct excavations. The first director of the Department was Arthur H. S. Megaw, a Dubliner educated at the University of Cambridge, who was assisted by the Cypriot archaeologist Porphyrios Dikaios (Dikaios 1961, p. ix-xvi; Åström 1971, p. 27-29; Karageorghis 1972; Nicolaou 1973; Marangou 1986, p. 331-32).

By the mid-1940s, Gjerstad’s two-wave Hellenisation narrative was widely established among archaeologists and historians, despite the objections expressed by some scholars, principally Casson, Schaeffer and Daniel. Based on the assumption that Mycenaean pottery was being locally manufactured on a large scale from as early as the 14th century, they were arguing, similarly to Myres, that the Aegean colonisation occurred during that period (Casson 1937, p. 41-71; Schaeffer 1936, p. 75-80; Daniel 1940, p. 11-12; Daniel 1942, p. 290-93; Schaeffer 1973, p. 287-89). The controversy associated with the origin of the large numbers of 14th and 13th century Mycenaean pots found in Cypriot contexts would not be definitively settled before the systematic application of scientific methods investigating clay provenance during the 1960s; this is when Hector Catling and a group of pottery scientists managed to ascribe an Aegean, mostly Argolic, provenance to the vast majority of the Mycenaean pots that the Swedes had classified as imported (Catling and Jones 1986, p. 603-609; Wijngaarden 2002, p. 125-28).

It was well before these developments, however, that Gjerstad’s narrative had become widely accepted. After the foundation of the Department of Antiquities, research had become more organised. The provenance issues mentioned above, were being tackled through numerous typological discussions, which were being made on the basis of the steadily increasing excavated material (Stubbings 1951, p. 31-44). Furthermore, the uncovering of the sites of Sinda and Enkomi during the 1940s and 1950s respectively constituted one of the most decisive points in the development and establishment of the Hellenisation narrative. Sinda, a small inland settlement in the Mesaoria plain excavated by the Swede Arne Furumark, produced large amounts of a ‘pure’ Mycenaean ware that was clearly locally produced. This pottery, classified as Mycenaean IIIC:1b by Furumark, was typical in Greece during the period 1200-1150 (Furumark 1941, p. 541-75; Furumark 1941a, p. 110-15; Mountjoy 1993, p. 90-91; Furumark 1965, p. 100; Kling 1989). At Sinda, it was found in association with the reoccupation level that was covering an extended destruction stratum. The settlement had been destroyed and consequently repaired. The people who repaired it were thought to had been producing and using Mycenaean IIIC:1b pots (Furumark 1965).

A quite similar picture emerged during excavations at Enkomi in eastern Cyprus, conducted by a French mission in collaboration with Porphyrios Dikaios and the Department of Antiquities. According to Dikaios, Enkomi was destroyed around 1230 BC. The date of the destruction was estimated on the basis of ceramic evidence (Dikaios 1971, p. 511). A short time after its destruction the town was repaired and reoccupied: the reoccupation level is characterized by the introduction of locally produced Mycenaean IIIC:1b style pottery (Dikaios 1967; 1969; 1971). Both Furumark and Dikaios associated the Mycenaean IIIC:1b pottery, which was coming up in impressively large numbers, with an extended influx of people from the Aegean. They were not certain whether that the newcomers were also to be held responsible for the destruction of the settlements or not.
The Mycenaeans’ involvement in the subsequent rebuilding, repairing and general reorganizing of the towns was undisputed. Dikaios correlated the destruction of Enkomi with the destruction of Troy VIIA (while Mycenaean IIIB style pottery was still in use) and the consequent but slightly later (Mycenaean IIIIC:1b) arrival of Achaean heroes on the island as colonists (Dikaios 1971, p. 512-520).

The results of the excavations at Enkomi and Sinda promoted the colonization narrative into an established archaeological fact beyond doubt. Such was the enthusiasm of archaeologists that they completely overlooked the fact that Furumark had excavated only a small proportion of the settlement at Sinda and that Enkomi had not been fully investigated. Mycenaean IIIIC:1b pottery from several other sites throughout the island, i.e. Pyla-Kokkinokremos, Maa-Palaeokastro and Kition (Dikaios 1971, p. 895-912; Karageorghis 1976; Kling 1989, p. 40-44), added further strength to the argument (Kling 1989, p. 1).

Since the excavation of Enkomi the Hellenisation hypothesis has been developed and refined gradually, particularly under the light of more discoveries during the 1960s and the 1970s. It received a remarkably powerful boost when Vassos Karageorghis (Åström 1971, p. 44-47 and 85; Åström 2000, p. 24-25; Hadjiioannou 1992) became director of the Department of Antiquities at 1963, three years after the establishment of the independent Republic of Cyprus (Hunt 1990b). Karageorghis had a strong classical background. Born in 1929, in Trikomo, a village under Turkish occupation since 1973, he grew up in a period when the demand for enosis with Greece was particularly intense (Hunt 1990, p. 273-79; Karageorghis 2007, p. 1-11). He studied at the Pancyprian Gymnasium of Nicosia that provided him with a classical education. The latter constituted the basis for the construction of his hellenocentric identity, which is evident everywhere in his written work (Karageorghis 1999, p. 56-59). An illustrative example: while discussing the occurrence of many ancient Greek words in the modern Cypriot dialect he states:

«These and many other similar incidents (of coming across ancient Greek words within the colloquial dialect) made a great impression on my youthful mind and I vowed that the purpose of my career as an archaeologist would be to investigate the Hellenic physiognomy of Cyprus and to come to a better understanding of this, in many ways odd phenomenon of a Greek island in the far reaches of the Eastern Mediterranean, 500 miles away from Athens» (Karageorghis 2002a, p. 31, parenthesis mine).

Karageorghis, however, is not only a Greek Cypriot with a strong ethnic identity. He is also an inspired man, who was particularly keen in promoting Cypriot archaeology abroad; thus, he placed much emphasis on the Greekness of the Cypriot culture in order to make it look more interesting and attractive to foreign archaeological institutions. Prestigious Greek antiquities seemed to be the main focus of research while Cypriot studies were more or less underdeveloped. As director of the Department of Antiquities (1963-1989), Karageorghis systematized archaeological activity and organised excavations at numerous sites throughout the island, many of which he conducted himself. Additionally, he strongly encouraged foreign missions to undertake research projects (Karaheorghis 1994-1995, p. 853-65; Karageorghis Karageorghis 2000; Karageorghis 2002b, p. 34; Karageorghis 2007, p. 71-93).

Karageorghis’ efforts were intensified after the Turkish invasion in 1974 (Hunt 1990c: 289-90). Since the early 1970s, he has organised several international conferences, most of them concentrating on the relations between Cyprus and the Aegean throughout antiquity. Moreover, Karageorghis has participated in numerous colloquia with enthusiastic papers focusing on the transitional period between the Late Bronze and the Early
Iron Age and the Hellenisation of Cyprus. Being a prolific writer he has produced a significant number of books and articles (Karageorghis 2007, p. 140-42 and 206-11) on, among many others, the same topic.

Following the footsteps of Gjerstad and Dikaios, Karageorghis regarded the arrival of Mycenaeans during the 12th-11th centuries as an established historical fact and studied systematically their material culture. His excavations at the Late Bronze Age urban centre of Kition (1962-1981; Karageorghis 1976; Karageorghis and Demas 1985) enabled him to contribute towards the development of the general historical framework for the Late Cypriot IIIC-IIIA period as well as its refinement on the basis of new discoveries. He later excavated the fortified outposts at Maa-Palaekastro (1979-1986; Karageorghis and Demas 1988) and Pyla-Kokkinokremos (1981-1982; Karageorghis and Demas 1984), which had been initially investigated by Dikaios. Karageorghis followed Dikaios’ interpretative line and ingeniously incorporated his results into the Hellenisation hypothesis. Further information came from the 11th century cemeteries at Alaas (Karageorghis 1975) and Palaepaphos-Skales (Karageorghis 1983) and various small-scale excavations over the island, which he undertook during the course of his long service at the Department of Antiquities, Cyprus. Under the light of the archaeological discoveries and typological advancements made by Karageorghis, as well as other researchers the narrative had evolved to an elaborate construction, much more complex and multifaceted than Gjerstad’s reconstruction, as the Hellenisation was no more considered the result of a clean-cut, two-episode procedure; it was viewed as a series of intertwined developments that affected all aspects of human life on Cyprus during the period in question (Iacovou 1999; Karageorghis 2002, p. 71-141).

Systematic fieldwork and prompt publication of its results, easy access to various classes of archaeological material as well as the determination to demonstrate the Hellenic roots of the Cypriot civilisation have pushed Karageorghis into the protagonist’s role in the construction of the colonisation narrative for the last forty years. His method is similar to that of his predecessors, namely Myres, Gjerstad and Dikaios. By applying the culture-historical approach to the archaeological record from the Late Cypriot III-Cypro-Geometric I period and expanding it beyond the limits of pottery analysis (Karageorghis 1990a, p. 1-2), he has managed to assemble a seemingly effective historical framework, where all classes of data seem able to fit (Karageorghis 1990a; 2000a). Tireless repetition in numerous articles has promoted the colonisation hypothesis into a series of incontrovertible, historical facts.

During the past twenty years a relatively large number of studies challenging the ‘official’ Hellenisation narrative have seen the light of day. Given the problems associated with the narrative’s theoretical basis, i.e. the culture-historical approach towards material culture, as demonstrated in the first section of this paper, this is something that one should by all means expect. These studies consist of systematic reassessments of various classes of archaeological evidence, the results of which indirectly question various parts of the narrative (Hult 1983, p. 62 and 88-90; Kling 1989; Sherratt 1991; Pilides 1994; Webb 1999; Leriou 2002, p. 6-7; Leriou 2007, p. 564). Moreover, there are several new readings and interpretations of the archaeological record achieved through the adoption of different perspectives or methodological tools (Voyatzis 1985; Maier 1986; Negbi 1986, p. 111-14; Cook 1988; Sherratt 1992; Sherratt 1994; Sherratt 1998; Negbi 1998; Sherratt 1999; Webb 1999; 2001; Hitchcock 2000; Iacovou 1999, p. 10-11; Iacovou 2001; Iacovou 2005; Iacovou 2006; Leriou 2007, p. 564-65; Collard 2008; Knapp 2008, p. 250-52). Although many, the researchers attempting to promote a reconsideration of the Hellenisation hypothesis have not managed to instigate a proper debate between them and the ‘official’ narrative’s supporters, who seemingly chose to ignore the discussions mentioned above. Only two
sub-issues have so far become subjects of controversy: the existence of the Eteocypriots (Reyes 1994, p. 13-17; Given 1998, p. 15-24; Petit 1999) and the date of the Cypriot kingdoms’ establishment (Rupp 1987; Rupp 1989; Steel 1993). Nevertheless, this controversy was not strong enough to have a palpable impact on the Hellenisation narrative, the strength of which derives largely from its nationalistic character (Leriou 2002, p. 3-6). Thus, it is going to take more than a couple of decades until a drastically revised version of the Hellenisation hypothesis will be making the headlines, particularly the non-academic ones.

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