

HISTORIES OF OTTOMAN LARNACA

Edited by

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THE ISIS PRESS
ISTANBUL

*To the memory of Phivos Stavrides
(1938-2012)*

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PREFACE

The city of Larnaca (Tuzla) held a particular place in Ottoman Cyprus as the island's main port and the residence of foreign Consuls and a sizeable European community. This particularity marked the city's historical course throughout the three centuries of Ottoman rule in Cyprus, rendering it not only significant in respect to the island's economy, but also, to a large extent, as was the case with other port-cities in the Empire, socially and culturally distinct from the other cities on the island. In this respect, we may cite the fact that, in the Tanzimat era, certain Ottoman Governors considered the possibility of transferring the capital from Nicosia to Larnaca, in order to facilitate the implementation of the modernizing reforms.

The present volume is part of the result of a two-year Internal Research Program, funded by the University of Cyprus between 2010 and 2012, which had as its subject the study of the history of Larnaca during the period of Ottoman rule (1571-1878). In terms of staff, this program marked the collaboration of two institutions, the University of Cyprus and the National Hellenic Research Foundation, with the additional contribution of young scholars from Cyprus, Greece and Turkey. Under the supervision of the editors of this volume, members of the program conducted research in archives in Turkey (Istanbul and Ankara), Bulgaria (Sofia), Italy (Venice) and France (Paris and Nantes), collecting archival material in Ottoman Turkish, Greek, Italian and French. Furthermore, with the help of graduate students, we studied most of the available secondary literature on this topic, creating an extensive database, which is expected to be a useful tool for researchers. The results of this research are currently being processed and will be published on the internet.

Besides the collection of archival material and the creation of a database, the Research Program also planned the publication of a collective volume on Ottoman Larnaca. The aim of the editors was to broaden the limited circle of the participants of the Internal Research Program, in order to include the results of the efforts of more researchers, approaching the history of the city and the region of Larnaca in the context of the history of the Mediterranean basin, the control of which was contested between the Ottomans and the Europeans. For this reason, the editors contacted scholars from various countries, who had in the past studied aspects of the history of Cyprus in the Ottoman period, asking for original contributions. The present volume contains original studies by the scholars who accepted the invitation and managed to complete their contribution within the limited time-constraints of the program.

This volume does not pretend to be a complete or chronological or linear history of Larnaca during the Ottoman period, nor does it claim to cover all aspects and periods of the city's history. Although the editors tried to include

contributions by specialists in various fields and periods of history, the thematic and chronological range of the studies contained in this volume has been dictated both by the interests of the contributors and by the availability of sources. In fact, the title of the volume, "Histories of Ottoman Larnaca", intends, among other things, to highlight the varied nature of the studies included in it.

The fact that the volume contains many more studies on the 19th century and markedly fewer on the earlier period, reflects, to a great extent, the relative availability of sources in the archives, since, in contrast to the plethora of sources from the 19th century, documents from the earlier periods, and particularly from the 16th and the 17th centuries, are scarce or were not available to the program's researchers.

In spite of the limitations, the organizers of the program chose to study not only the city itself, but also the agricultural hinterland of Larnaca, which made it possible for this significant regional commercial centre to function. Therefore, the volume's contributions also include studies, based on unpublished Ottoman sources, on the population and production of the forty-odd villages in the *kaza* of Tuzla, which presented a varied economy, since they included both mountain and lowland communities. Other studies indicate the division of wealth between the two large ethno-religious communities, Christians and Muslims, and underline the important role of the Europeans and their subjects in the island's economy. The range of the themes touched by these studies indicates, at the same time, extremely important and to a large extent unexplored aspects of the Ottoman period on the island. We hope that this effort can be continued with greater success in the future, not only for Larnaca, but also for other regions of Cyprus.

Closing this brief preface, we consider it our duty to thank all the contributors to this volume, who played an important role in the materialization of this common vision. We would also like to thank Dr. Elif Bayraktar, Mrs. Carol Haros, Mrs. Antoneta Kotsi and Mrs. Danielle Morichon for editing and correcting the texts, as well as the personnel of the National Hellenic Research Foundation and of Isis Press, which undertook the arduous task of processing, resulting in the publication of the present volume.

This volume was on its way to the printing press when news came of the death of Phivos Stavrides, the learned pharmacist of Larnaca, historian, man of letters and above all friend, who fondly collected the memories of Larnaca/Tuzla and its Scala. This ideal reader was eagerly awaiting the publication of this volume on the history of his city. The editors dedicate this volume to him *in Loving Memory*.

The words of the poet Giorgos Seferis from his collection of poetry

... Κύπρον ού μ'εθέσπισεν... (1955)

March 6, 2012