

Architecture, Visual Arts, and Literature in the Light of the Venetian Renaissance and Cyprus (1474-1571)

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Abstract : The two objectives of the research are to enlighten the significant role of Venice as an agent of “transporting” the features of the Italian Renaissance in Cyprus, as well as to assess the countercheck that the Cypriots might have exercised in opposition to the Venetian influence and to what extent they left their own mark on the Serenissima and influenced the Venetian Renaissance. This will be achieved in the backdrop of Venice’s interaction and dichotomy with the Ottoman Empire during the Venetian rule over the island (1474-1571). The research is carried out within the interdisciplinary domains of architecture, visual arts, and literature. Such studies have already been carried out extensively for other ex-Byzantine centers and consecutively Venetian possessions, like, for example Crete. Cyprus, however, has largely been left on the periphery of scholarly interest, and the author will strive to fill this gap as much as possible. The nature of much of the Venetian Renaissance Architecture on Cyprus was dictated by the Ottoman threat to the island. On the other hand, the vast majority of the Cypriot Renaissance literary production was done in Italy, a little before and after the Ottoman conquest of Cyprus in 1571. This conquest was an enormous crisis for both Venetians and Cypriots, and it led to migrations, mutual Venetian-Cypriot interaction in arts and literature, the formation of cultural landscapes, the shaping of Cypriot identity/ies, dialect and diasporas in Italy, etc., which makes the current research very important.

Keywords : architecture, arts, Cyprus, gender, identity, linguistics, Ottoman Empire, Venice

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