

# ETUDES HELLENIQUES

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# Cypriot Writers of the Diaspora

Maria Herodotou\*

## RÉSUMÉ

Dans cet article un effort est fait de présenter les auteurs chypriotes grecs de la période après la Seconde Guerre Mondiale qui résident dans les plus grands centres de la diaspora grecque (ou qui y ont vécu pour un certain nombre d'années), comme la Grande Bretagne, l'Australie, le Canada et les États-Unis, où ils produisent leur œuvre littéraire. Mon but est de fournir aux chercheurs ou aux lecteurs intéressés un guide sur la vie de ces auteurs et leur œuvre, aussi bien que de faire reconnaître leur contribution à leur mère patrie et leur nouveau pays. Les auteurs sont présentés par ordre alphabétique. Cette présentation n'est pas complète, comme beaucoup de facteurs ont limité l'étendue de ma recherche. J'espère que celle-ci sera mieux étoffée plus tard.

## ABSTRACT

In this paper an attempt is being made to present Greek Cypriot writers of the post-World War II era, who reside in major centres of the Greek Diaspora (or who lived there for a number of years), such as Great Britain, Australia, Canada and the USA, where they have produced their literature. My aim is to provide interested researchers or readers a guide to these writers and their work, as well as to acknowledge their contribution to both their homeland and their new country. The writers are presented alphabetically. This presentation is not complete, as many factors have limited the scope of my research. I hope that it will be expanded at a later stage.

The movement of people from country to country either as colonists or as migrants (for various reasons) is an ancient phenomenon. The experience of migration is marked in Cyprus, which throughout its history has experienced invasions, occupations and political crises that have resulted in difficult social and economical situations for its people. In this paper, I will focus on the literary production of Cypriot writers who migrated to other countries in the post war period<sup>1</sup> and mainly after the Turkish invasion of 1974, which

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constitutes an important turning point in contemporary Cypriot migration. Many Greek Cypriots became refugees and were forced to migrate to countries such as England, Australia, Canada, the USA, Greece, etc. Cypriots, who migrated after 1974, were better educated in comparison with those who migrated during previous eras. Furthermore, the receiving countries were developed countries providing them with more educational and social opportunities. In this paper I will not be concerned with those Cypriots who settled and created literary (and other forms of intellectual) work in Greece or with isolated cases of writers in different countries. Writers who created their work in Greece did not experience the cultural and language conflict that the writers experienced in other countries. Rather, its main focus is on contemporary migration to Great Britain, Australia, Canada and USA, which have the greater concentration of Cypriot migrants. We will also include writers of Cypriot descent who were born, raised and created their work in the Diaspora, whose work exhibits their preoccupation with Cyprus and the Cypriot identity.

An important and controversial issue is the incorporation of these writers into a literary corpus. For example, for many years it was debated whether the literature created by Greek writers in Australia should have been considered a part of Australian or Greek literature. The literature of Cyprus itself and the meaning of the term “Cypriot Literature” was a contentious issue. Many views and suggestions were expressed regarding this topic. This issue, however, will not be discussed in this particular paper. My aim is to present (albeit incompletely) the literary works by Cypriots and of Cypriot descent writers from the countries mentioned above.

The Cypriot writers of the Diaspora constitute a subgroup of the Greek literature of the Diaspora. Most of them (as previously mentioned) migrated in more recent years in comparison with those who migrated from Greece. We must also take into consideration that most of these writers grew up on the island and received basic or advanced education either in Cyprus, Greece, or other countries and hence their first language is Greek. This is an important factor for the creation of literature and the use of language. In decades to follow, however, literature will be written in English.

The tumultuous political situation on the island and the dramatic events of 1974, which directly or indirectly caused their migration -and in many cases

their refugee status- formed the main subject matter of their work. Although their thematic scope was gradually expanded, topics relating to Cyprus, as well as topics about preserving the Greek-Cypriot identity, the cultural conflict they experienced, or their nostalgia about their birthplace remain very important in their literary production.<sup>2</sup>

The greater part of this production consists of poetry. In comparison, prose works are limited in number. There is an evident preference towards short stories or short prose narratives, narrative poems, plays, *chronographimata*, short plays in the Cypriot dialect, and children's literature. Lengthy and complex works such as novels or novellas are very limited<sup>3</sup>.

I will now endeavour to present Cypriot writers who have created literature in major Greek centres of the Diaspora (*paroikies*). This presentation is not complete, as many factors have limited the scope of my research. Firstly, many of these writers published their work at their own expense or have it published by small publishing companies and thus distribution and accessibility of these works are very difficult. Secondly, many of the works produced in earlier years are not easily found. My aim is to provide to interested researchers or readers a guide to these writers and their work. This presentation is also an acknowledgement of their contribution to both their homeland as well as to their country of settlement. The writers are presented alphabetically.

### ***GREAT BRITAIN***

**Kypros Alasios** (Nicosia 1944- ) His real name is Dimitri Symeou. He went to England to study after graduating from the Pancyprian Gymnasium and settled in London. He has published one poetry collection titled *Ypostasi* (1971), short stories and plays.

**Sophocles Andreadis** (Gialousa 1921), who migrated to England in 1938 and settled in Manchester, wrote poetry motivated by nostalgia about his homeland.

**Tefkros Anthias:** One of the most significant and prolific writers, who lived abroad, is without a doubt Tefkros Anthias. Some may argue that it is difficult to classify him as a writer of the Diaspora as he was constantly on the move. However, because he lived in London for more than fifteen years<sup>4</sup>, where he died, I am including him as well. He was born in Kontea in 1903 with the real

name Andreas Pavlou. He studied at the Lyceum of Commerce and the Theological School of Larnaca and after his graduation he worked as a schoolteacher in both Cyprus and Greece where he lived for seven years. In 1930 he returned to Cyprus and worked as a journalist in different newspapers [*Proti, Eleftheria, Neos Democrates, Charavgi*]. During his stay in Cyprus he became actively involved in the socialist movement. In London he also worked as a journalist and a correspondent for *Charavgi* and editor of the community newspaper *To Vima*.

His socialist ideology influenced his writing in which he projects social and political issues and themes on: social inequalities, social outcasts, people who are looked down on, the homeless and vagrants, etc. These themes reflect a social realism that is found in the work of many writers of the time like, for example, the work of Kostas Varnalis. Anthias wrote poetry, plays, prose, children's plays, folk poems, *chronographimata*, and literary criticism. He was also the editor of various journals. He usually signed his works using pseudonyms. He published more than thirty-three poetry collections<sup>5</sup>, prose and plays. I am not going to expand on a detailed report or evaluation of Tefkros Anthias's work on which there is a rich bibliography<sup>6</sup>.

**Antonis Eliakis** was born in Anafotia in 1930. When he graduated from the Commercial Lyceum of Larnaca, he went to England for further studies where he settled permanently. He published poems, treatises, and short stories, as well as essays on theatre and painting, in journals and other media publications in both Greece and Cyprus. His poetry is groundbreaking for its time. His collection of poetry is titled *Gothic Windows* (Famagusta 1958) and his narrative story *White Flowers Worth Twenty Pounds. Diary Entries (Λογία Αξίας Είκοσι Λιρών. Εγγραφές Ημερολογίου)* [Limassol, Kyprogeneia Publ. 1999]. The main theme of his narrative story, which he formulated as diary entries, is the death of a young man from AIDS. It is a dramatic story without being melodramatic. The writer succeeds in subordinating the personal to the art of narration. This work was awarded the prize for best novel by the Cyprus Ministry of Education and Culture. Some of his poems in both languages (Greek and English) were included in anthologies.

**Pantelis Kakolis** was born in Liopetri in 1933 and studied for a short period of time at the Lyceum of Famagusta. In Cyprus he worked as a farmer until his migration to England in 1956 (first to Blackpool and then permanently to

Manchester). He has been writing poetry since 1964. His poems were published in newspapers of the Greek Community of England and in magazines in Cyprus. He mainly writes following the *poiitariki* tradition but has also produced poetry using the conventional style. Some of the main themes of his poetry are the juxtaposing of meanings of life and death, as well as love and social issues. He uses his poetry to protest against social institutions and customs. He also wrote poems expressing his feelings about Cyprus and his migration. Cyprus remains a nostalgic place where he wants to end his life, not willing for a death in England. He also wrote lyrical poems with the apparent influence of Greek mythology.<sup>7</sup> He published the following collections of poetry: *Τα Φύλλα της καρδιάς μου*, Nicosia 1978 (*My Heart's Leaves*), *Το Αλφα τζαι το Βήτα*, Nicosia 1979 (*The A and B*), and the bilingual collections *Κομμάτιν που τον Κόσμον μου*, Nicosia 1984 (*Part of my World*) and *Στην Μέση δκνο Πολιτισμών* (*Between two Cultures*) translated by the poet himself with the help of his friend David J. Melling.

**Giannis Katsis** was born in Kalopanagiotis in 1919 and settled in London in 1954. He writes poetry following the *poiitariki* tradition as well as conventional poetry, which has been published in the newspaper *Democrat* (Cyprus), *Vima* and *Parikiaki Charavgi* (London). Cyprus and its history are central themes of his poetry.

**Chambis Konteatis** (Kontea 1918-London 1986) settled in London in 1974 and was actively involved in the affairs of the Cypriot Community in London. His poetry is both *poiitariki* and conventional. He published two poetry collections titled *Worries of my Father* (*Έννοιες του Τζηπού μου*) and *Echoes* (*Antilaloi*).

**Zacharias Kosta** born in Kontea in 1925 worked as a farmer and as an interpreter for the army, before studying English literature in England. He then studied Medicine in France. He published the poetry collection *Redemption* (*Αύτρωση*).

**Christakis Kotsiamanis** (Morphou 1950) After finishing high school in his town, Christakis Kotsiamanis went to study in London where he graduated in 1975. He settled in London. He began writing poetry and chronographimata and started publishing them in journals and newspapers in Cyprus. Since settling in London he has been writing poetry in both Greek and English.

**Kostas Lavithis** was born in Nicosia in 1914 where he received his secondary education at English School. He worked as a radio journalist and then went to Great Britain for a number of years before returning to Cyprus. He published poetry and short stories in *Kypriaka Grammata* and literary criticism in *Philologiki Paphos*. In his work he uses satire and irony to a great extent. He also wrote *chronographimata* and *humorous stories*.<sup>8</sup>

**Julia Lara** (real name Eleni Papaioannou) was born in Kellaki. In 1926 she migrated to Egypt and in 1962 to Leeds, England. She published poetry, short stories and *chronographimata* in Greek newspapers and journals in Cyprus, Egypt, Greece and London. She published the following collections of poetry: *Νυχτολούλουδα* (1959), *Πολύ και Λίγο* (1968), *Εμπειρίες* (1972) and *Λιθοδομή* 1975. Short stories: *Από το Βυθό* (1981).

A selection of her work was published in 1984 in a volume titled *Συγκομιδή*.

**Andreas Lazarou** was born in 1940 in Nata in Paphos and lives in London where he has been working as a teacher. He has written a School Reader titled *Learning to read easily*, in addition to poetry. His Poems focus on Cyprus and the pain felt by its people due to the Turkish invasion.

**Stavros Lillitos** (1919-1971) was born in Gialousa and migrated to England in 1936 where he studied English literature (in Essex) and later medieval English literature in London. He worked in business and was elected president of the Cyprian Community of London. He wrote short stories and poems, which were published in the journal *Spotlight*, and also plays. His play *The old suitcase* (Η παλιά βαλίτσα) was presented on Cyprus Television. His plays *Down the Carob Trees* (Κάτω στις τερασιές) and *the Migrant* (ο Μετανάστης) were written in the Cypriot dialect.

**Lia Apostolide-Pavlou** was born in Nicosia, studied at the Pancyprrian Gymnasium and then Music and Classical Dance in Athens. She worked as a teacher. She migrated to London where she lives. She published poetry and music criticism in journals and newspapers. Poetry collections: *Μονόλογοι*, *Ηλιοτρόπιο*, *Ηλιοτρόπιο 2*.

**Pantelitsa Kokkinou Tims** was born in Ammochostos. Her family migrated to England when she was very young and later worked in Liverpool at the Greek Embassy (1963-1975). Since 1976, she has been living in Manchester where she has been working as an interpreter at the “Alexandra” hospital.

**Panagiotis Vasileiou** was born in Davlos in 1946. After graduating from the A' Gymnasium of Famagusta, he studied Physics in London where he settled. He has written mostly poetry.

Other poets who have written in Greek are: Efthymia Christodoulou (born in Ayios Elias, Karpasia in 1923, migrated to Manchester in 1974), **Anthos Chrysos** (was born in Goudi, Paphos in 1930, studied Philologia in Athens and settled in England. He wrote poetry and Drama), **Kyriacos Erakleous**, **Sergios Florides** (Lapithos 1903-London 1988), **Lisa Georgiou** (born in London in 1966, studied English Literature and writes in both languages), **Lyssandros Ioannou**, **Xenia Gerolemidou**, **Giannis Kamenos** (born in Anafotia 1916, migrated to London and has written poetry using the Cypriot dialect), **Efie Mita** (born in Xero in 1949. Poetry collection *Εικόνες*, 1984), **Andreas Nichola**, **Lenin Evanthis Nikolaides**, **Evipridis Ornitharis** (who was born in 1963 in Kato Akourdalia, Paphos and has been living in London since 1977), **Roulla Pampou** (published the poetry collection *Step/Vema*), **Vasilis Panagi** (born in Syghari in 1947, migrated to London in 1975 and has been working as a correspondent for the newspaper *Charavgi* and as an actor in theatre and movies), **Stas Parashkos** (Anafotia 1933, studied Art-painting in England), **Nedi Tofali** (Evrychou 1946, settled in London in 1963), **Antri Voukanari** (was born in Famagusta. When she was three years old her family migrated to London. She holds a BA in Geography, Psychology and Sociology. She writes poetry mostly in English. She has also written children's poetry).<sup>9</sup>

The following poets write in English:

**Rozanna Achilleos** was born in London in 1951 where she studied classical dance. She lived for a few years in Cyprus after she finished her studies but returned to London in 1978).

**Louset Kobbatzis** was born and grew up in England, wrote poetry and plays. Her poetry collection is titled *The Realization of Skipped Time*.

**Robert Arnold Papaleontiou** born in Liverpool in 1959, studied English literature at the University of Cambridge and worked as a teacher in Manchester. He published poetry in English. His collections are titled: *People Within* (1974) and *The Fred* (1989).



**AUSTRALIA**<sup>10</sup>

**Emilio Fintikides** was born in Famagusta in 1965. After the Turkish invasion he took refuge in Nicosia with his family where he finished his secondary education. In 1986 after completing his military service, he went to the USA. In 1989 he migrated to Australia and settled in Adelaide. He studied Social Sciences. He writes poetry and prose. In his poetry he uses irony extensively to convey the unreasonable facts of life and society. His memory of Cyprus acts in an oppositional way i.e., a wound and simultaneously a salvation, pain and hope.

**Andria Garivaldis** was born in Zodia in 1958 and attended the B' Gymnasium in Morphou until 1974 when she was forced to leave after the Turkish invasion. She continued her studies at the Pancyprrian Gymnasium. She migrated to Melbourne in 1975 where she studied Computer Technology and then she obtained her Diploma in Translation and Interpreting. She also holds a BA in Greek and English Literature. She did postgraduate studies on the Greek literature of the Diaspora. She worked at state schools in Victoria and at Greek Community Schools. She has been writing literature since her high-school years. She has published a great number of poems in Greek journals in Melbourne such as *Antipodes* and *Logos*. She has published the poetry collections *Ανάλευση* in a collective volume with collections by three other poets of Melbourne, which has the indicative title *Tetralogia* (Nautilus Publications, 1996)<sup>11</sup> and the collection *Κνηπία* (Nautilus Publications, 2001). She has received many awards in various literary competitions. Her second collection received the prize for best children's literature in Nicosia. Many of her poems were included in anthologies in Australia, Greece, Cyprus, and America<sup>12</sup>. The themes of her work are usually centered around the consequences of the tragedy of Cyprus, the migrant experience, and the pursuit of the individual for a better life.

In many of her poems Andria Garivaldis focuses on her homeland, Cyprus, and its present situation; A tragic situation, which the poet identifies with its pain, which she projects from different perspectives (the invasion, prisoners of war, the missing, and the partition). Garivaldis uses her art to awaken the consciousness of her readers, to preserve the memory of those events, as well as to maintain a sense of duty in her readers mind to continue the struggle for the vindication of the island and its people. She does not accept for a fact

that in a Greek place, where the Greek tradition is deeply rooted, there is not a Greek “soul” left. At the same time she recreates the beauty of the island in general and the beauty of her birthplace (Zodia) in particular, in a nostalgic way. She constantly returns in spirit to that place with a romantic mood. On the contrary, her new country is mostly absent, creating in this way an intentional void. It remains a foreign land (*Xenitia*). It is a place where the dream and the reality are in constant conflict.

In another group of her poems she deals with various topics such as peace, love, loneliness, existence, death, as well as topics about poetics. She experiments with different poetic forms such as rhyming versus, strict poetic tempo, and freestyle. Her poems are lyrical and elegiac in tone.

**Mihalis Pais** was born in Lysi in 1945 where he was living until 1974. After the Turkish invasion he became a refugee and lived in Cyprus for approximately two years until 1976, when he migrated to Melbourne. He is interested in Science, Philosophy and Cosmology. He is an amateur astronomer. He published many poems in Greek journals in Melbourne such as *Antipodes* and *Logos*. His first Poetry collection was published in *Anthologia* a collective publication of six poets. He then published in bilingual editions (Greek-English) the poetry collections *From the Diary of the Century/ Από το Ημερολόγιο των Αιώνων*, Melbourne 1987 (translated in English by Iakovos Gavriel) and the *Adventures of the Sun/ Οι Περιπέτειες του Ήλιου*, Mount Copper Press Publications, 1990 (translated in English by Pavlos Andronikos). A new poetry collection is ready for publication and he is also working on another poetic synthesis.

The Turkish invasion of Cyprus became the starting point for Pais' literary production. In his earlier poems he expresses his sorrow and despair about the loss suffered as well as his anger about what he believed was a betrayal. Gradually, his emotions are controlled by art with significant verses. The personal and subjective aspect of his poetry is replaced by universal meanings and ideas, which are expressed with metaphorical and elliptical images. There is also the agony about the success of his efforts as a poet.

**Babis Rakis** was born in Alexandria to Cypriot parents. He finished the *Averofeion* Gymnasium in 1950 and soon after he began collaborating with the Greek newspaper of Alexandria *Tachydromos*. The political crisis in Egypt forced his family to return to Cyprus and to settle permanently in Nicosia. Rakis worked as a journalist for Cyprian newspapers and started writing short

stories. After the Turkish invasion of 1974 his family became refugees and were forced to migrate to Australia (in 1975). They settled in Sydney where he began to work again as a journalist for the Greek newspapers *Panellenios Kerykas*, *Nea Patriida* and the magazine *Hellenis* of Sydney. He then worked at the multicultural Radio SBS (Special Broadcasting Services) for about ten years until his retirement in 1995. Since his retirement he has been working for the newspaper *Hellenikos Kerykas* writing the page “Paroikiakoi palmoi”, which includes interviews, reporting, social and cultural issues pertaining to the Greek community.

In Cyprus Babis Rakis published short stories in various magazines, as well as the collection of short stories titled *The Young ones/ Oi Néoi* (Nicosia 1959), drawing his inspiration from the anti-colonial struggle of the Cypriots against the British. The same year he published the travelogue *Old and New China* (Nicosia, 1959). In Australia he has been writing notable short stories most of which have been published in magazines. In his writing he employs social realism to deal with topics such as the uprooting and refugee status of many Cypriots in Australia and their inability to adapt to their new country, aspects of the life and feelings of Greek migrants in Australia, their new way of life and their nostalgia for the past. His use of language convey the meanings in a lucid way.

**Erma Vasiliou** was born in Limassol in 1947, and migrated with her family at a very young age to the former Belgian Congo where they lived until 1974. She studied at the bilingual primary school of Bunia (Greek French), and was also taught the local language, Flemish. She continued her secondary education at the bilingual Greek-French School of Saint Joseph in Athens. She migrated to Australia in 1987 and settled in Melbourne. She worked for a short period of time as a journalist for the newspaper *Greek Herald* in Sydney and the state radio station, SBS (Special Broadcasting Services). She studied Linguistics and conducted research on the medieval Cypriot dialect.

Erma Vasiliou is a prolific writer with significant literary work (which is mostly poetry), prose and narrative poems. She has also published treatises, essays, and literary translations (Baudelaire, L. Brett and Balzac). She is currently translating the medieval historical document written by Estienne de Lusignian titled “Description de Toute L’ Isle de Chypre” from medieval French into Greek and into English, while simultaneously compiling the first

grammar and syntax book of Medieval Greek Cypriot dialect. She has been awarded many prizes by many organizations. She also writes poetry in French. The focus of her work is Greek identity (including the Greek language), her personal need to be identified with Hellenism or to be part of a homeland, the position of women and others. Most importantly she is particularly interested in themes such as poetics, and finding means of expression (i.e., symbolism) which become the means by which she defends her individuality<sup>13</sup>. She holds a special place in the literature of the Greek Diaspora. Her writing (poetry and prose) is impressive, demanding and complex and her use of the Greek language exceptional. Vasiliou is successful in utilizing the pouch («μάρπουος») to use her own symbol, that is, a place where someone exists, develops and matures emotionally outside the main body. She has published the following literary work: Poetry: *H Θέαλλη* (*The Storm*), Owl Publishing 1993, *Εώρακα* (*I have seen*), Collections Books 1996, *H Αγγελιοφόρος Α'* (*The Messenger A'*), EKEME 2003 (six poetry books in one volume), *H Αγγελιοφόρος Β'* (*The Messenger B'*) EKEME 2005 (six poetry books in one volume).<sup>14</sup> Prose: *Καλένδες* (*Calends*), Collections Books 1995, *Κλέλια* (*Clelia*), EKEME 2000 (novel).

Other writers in Australia who have produced literary works are: **Pavlos Andronikos** who has written modernist poetry, music and literary translations, **Maro Gemeta** (has written, poetry and short narratives and short play-some of which in the Cypriot dialect/ κυπριακά σκετς), **Maro Nikolaou**, **Tefkros Panagiotou**. These writers have been publishing their work in magazines.

### CANADA

**Stephanos Constantinides** was born in Pentalia, Paphos. He graduated from Athens and Paris Universities where he studied philology. He also holds a PhD in Political Sciences from Sorbonne. He has been living in Montreal since 1976. He lectured in Political Sciences at Quebec University in Montreal, Laval University and University of Montreal. He is the Director of the Centre for Hellenic Studies and Research Canada-KEEK and the editor of the scientific bilingual journal (English-French), *Etudes helléniques/ Hellenic Studies*. Professor Constantinides published extensively in the fields of Sociology and Political Sciences. Constantinides is also a writer of significant poetry in which he expresses his anxiety on political and social issues. He transforms politics into poetry. He combines the ideal and the ordinary, and using irony he undermines

the ideal to emphasize the prevalence of the ordinary. There is an evident sarcasm (including self-sarcasm) pertaining to the migrant and his futile attempts to maintain his identity or to create a new one. He exploits different forms of writing, modernistic in style, with impressive results. He has published four poetry collections, short stories, literary criticism and essays. He has also many poems ready for publication. His poetry was translated in French and English.

Poetry Collections: *Εναλία Κύπρος: ο θάνατος του Ονήσιλλου στα 1989 μ.χ.* (1990), *Anthumes* (1984), *Παρακαλείσθε μην πύετε εντός του λειψορείου* (1979), *Επένδυση στο χρόνο ενός ονείρου και κάποιων μαρτυριών* (1969), *Προκρούστη του Εναρέτου* (2008), Short Stories Collections: *Ο γυρισμός του Αρχιερέα* (1980), *Η επιστροφή του Αρχιερέα* (2012).

**Savas Patsalides** was born in Kyrenia in 1950. After completing his secondary education and his national service in the Cyprus army he went to Thessaloniki where he received his BA from the *Aristoteleion* University and continued postgraduate Studies. He then went to Canada for further postgraduate studies and received an MA from McGill and a PhD from Montreal Universities. He did his postgraduate studies in the fields of American prose writing and theatre/ drama. He has written and published extensively in these fields. Currently, S. Patsalides is a Professor of theatre at the *Aristoteleion* University in Thessaloniki and a theatre critic. He is considered as one of the most important theorists of post-modern theatre in Greece. He has written poetry, which was published in journals and newspapers of North America and the collection of poetry titled *Photoskiaseis (Φωτοσκιάσεις)*. In his poetry he tries to formalize his agony as a poet who is constantly trying to investigate his own existence as well as to balance reality and the imagination.

**Pavlos Leontiou Ioannou** lives in Toronto. He was born in the village Assia in Mesaoria in 1946 but soon after he was born his family moved to Nicosia. He started writing poetry from a very young age. His first poems were published in the magazine *Ephivos* of the Pancyprian Gymnasium of Kykkos. He was a regular contributor to the literary magazine *Kypriaka Chronika*. While in Cyprus he was very active in terms of his contribution to the cultural life of Cyprus. He was a founding member of the literary magazine *Krikos* and of the *Kypriakon Logotechnikon Omilo Neon (KLON)*. For a number of years he was the literary co-editor (with Kostas Olympios) of the newspaper *Telegram*. He worked as a nurse at the psychiatric hospital in Nicosia and in 1969 he went

to Canada to study Psychology. When he completed his studies in Social Services and Individual Psychology, he wanted to return to Cyprus. However, the 1974 coup d'état and the Turkish invasion of Cyprus prevented him from returning. Since then he has been living in Toronto. He is the Director of the Special Services of the Toronto Social Services Division. He has also been playing an active role in the activities of the Greek and Cyprus Organizations/Communities of Canada.

Pavlos Leontiou Ioannou has been writing poetry in Greek. He published the following poetry collections: *Επιμαρτυρία*, Nicosia 1968, *Καταμαρτυρία*, Toronto 1978, *Πάμε με τ' Αλακάτι*, MAM Publications, Nicosia 2002 and *Οι Οραματισμοί της Πρωμοσύνης*, Nicosia 2004. Since 2005, however, he has been writing in English in an effort to be included in the Canadian literary tradition and has become a member of the Ontario Poetry Society. He has been publishing his work in the Society's literary magazine *Verse Afire*.

Cyprus as a place, culture and history is the focus of his poetry. It becomes part of the very existence of the individual. In his collection with the revealing title *Οραματισμοί της Πρωμοσύνης*, in a Homeric way gives us in twenty-four "rhapsodies" a synthesis of his vision of the history of Cyprus and his development as a poet. He owes this development/creation to his birthplace and its history. In his poetry there is an evident Elytian influence. There is a conflict between good and the evil, light and darkness, justice and injustice. Powerful images create surrealistic yet easily understood poetry due to the underlying diachronic history of the island, which has a connecting effect. His poetic language is enriched with Cyprian dialectic elements, which reinforce the identity and the projection of his existential agony.

In his poetry in English he is preoccupied with contemporary man and social problems, alienation, emptiness and loneliness. War and its consequences is a central theme in these poems formalized with daunting and cruel images. There is also the theme of the aimless man, who has no more weapons left to fight and a feeling of hopelessness and surrender to the cruel fact that Greece and Cyprus remain a vision, an ideal that cannot be reached, a place where man wants to escape and find refuge to no avail. Ultimately the only escape is poetry itself.

**Popi Sotiriou** was born in Nicosia in 1950 and migrated to Canada in 1969. She published a poetry collection titled *Προορισμένα*. Her writing is modern

with extensive use of symbolism and metaphor. It is also enriched with the use of images and scenes from Cypriot history. These images from the distant past reappear in her memory and hence the reader loses their sense of time.

**Thalia Tassou** was born in Kalopanagiotis, Cyprus and completed her Studies in Sociology and in French philology and education in Paris. In 1976 she went to Canada where she settled. She worked as a teacher at colleges and Greek Community schools in Montreal and then she studied law. She now practices law. She has been writing poetry and short stories for a number of years. Her work has been published in various literary magazines such as *Nea Esperia* (New York) and has been included in *Anthologies*.

Cyprus and the inevitable changes that time has caused, is a central theme in her work as well as the political situation of the island which is expressed in a direct or indirect way. In her writing there is a feeling of nostalgia about the place and the people who she left behind and have now become a distant memory. She compares her life 'then' and her life 'now' from the perspective of her migrant experience. She comes to the bitter conclusion that a death has occurred, in a metaphorical way. In her short stories and in her poems nostalgia and memory bring together past and present, Cyprus and Montreal. There is also the topic of the position of women and the unfulfilled expectations of the new country and the inability to adapt. There is a dramatic questioning about whether what has been achieved in the new country is worth the sacrifices that the individual has made. There is a search for a way out, a tendency to escape. Her writing is clear, prosaic, and very dramatic.

## USA

**Polys Kyriacou** was born in Nicosia in 1957, graduated from the *Panteion* University in Athens and migrated to USA (New York) in 1982 where he is still residing. He completed his postgraduate studies (Graphic and Communication Design) at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn. He was the Director for the Arts of the Greek American newspaper *Proini* for a short period of time. Since 1986 has been a Graphic Designer/ Art Director. He is an active member of the Cyprian Federation of America and has served in various positions. He is a member of the Radio "Cosmos FM" Management Committee and the producer of the Greek programs: "We have to say" and "A World of Greek Song". He was member of many organising committees for political

and cultural activities (concerts, music festivals, etc.) of the Greek Community of the USA. He writes poetry and song lyrics. He published poems in Greek journals in Greece and Cyprus and has also written music and lyrics, several of which have received prizes in competitions. Music for his own song lyrics was written by acclaimed composers (P. Thalassinos, F. Pliatsikas, G. Andreou, L. Pliatsikas, Al Di Meola, S. Gadelli et al.). He has published the poetry collections: *Schimata* (A' prize for a new writer-Cyprus Ministry of Education, 1977) and *Metaschimatismoi* (1979).

**Loukia Marouletti** was born in Egypt to Greek-Cypriot parents in 1930 and died in 2005 in New York. During World War II her family left Egypt and went to Cyprus and lived in Famagusta until the 1974 Turkish invasion of the island. Becoming a refugee she moved to London for a short period of time and then decided to migrate to USA. She settled in Astoria, New York, where she spent the rest of her life. Her contribution to the cultural life of the Greek community, as well as her contribution to the promotion of the Cypriot culture in USA has been vast. She was the cofounder of the Cyprian cultural organization *CYPRECO* and *AKTINA* Productions Inc. The latter was co-founded by her daughter who then produced TV and Radio programs. *Aktina* is the sponsor of the bilingual radio program and the English language television program *Aktina TV*. She co-hosted the radio program "Cyprus Horizons", a highly rated folk arts show.

Loukia Marouletti was a translator and a prolific writer. She translated the works of Greek poets, Greek-Cypriot folk poetry, mythology and ancient Greek plays into English. She established annual theatrical productions of ancient Greek plays in New York, which she translated herself and for which she designed the costumes. Her productions were so successful that she was nominated for several awards by the organization *Spotlight on Theatre*. Marouletti was a prolific writer. She published the following works:

Plays: *Days of Wrath/Μέρες Οργής* (which includes two plays: "Ένα Τριαντάφυλλο για την Ιωάννα", "Η Λουκία του Αυγόρου"), *The Diner/ Η Ντάινα*

Novellas: *AR RI ANDHE, Ariadne/ Της Αριάδνης, He Marikkou/ Η Μαρικκού* (unpublished).

Poetry (bilingual editions): *The year Being 1990.../ Εν Έτει 1990... , Παιάνες και Θρήνοι, Έρωσ Ανίκατε*



Chroniko: *The Echo of my Footsteps/ Η Ηχώ των Βημάτων μου*

Anthologies: *Anthology of Cypriot Poetry* (translated into English), *Cypriot Folk Poetry* (translated into English), *Once upon a time* (Cypriot folk tales translated into English)

Translations: *The Diary of Lt. Donisthorpe Donne/ Το Ημερολόγιο του Υπολοχαγού Donisthorpe Donne* (into Greek)

Translation of plays into Greek: Tennessee Williams, *The Glass Menagerie*, Tennessee Williams *Summer and Smoke*, Tennessee William, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, Harold Pinter, *The Caretaker*, Terrence Rattigan, *The Winslow Boy*, Eugene O'Neill, *Before Breakfast*, Samuel Beckett, *Waiting for Godot*, Jean Zenet, *The Maids*, Pirandello, *The Man with a Flower in his Mouth*, John Steinbeck, *Burning Bright*, Bertoldt Breht, *The Caucasian Circle*

Translation of plays into English (and adaptation): Euripides *Bachae*, *Ιφιγένεια Εν Αυλίδι*

Sophocles, *Οιδίπους Τύραννος*

In Press: *Καστελλότισσα. Ενθύμημα, Νοέμβριος 2001*

**Petros Petrides** was born in Nicosia in 1961. He has been living in New York where he studied production of TV and radio programs in New Jersey. Since 1988 he has been the producer and presenter of the program “Our Cyprus”, the first such program on American TV. He was also the founder and director of the Theatrical Group of the same program. Petrides has staged various plays with national and cultural content in New York and other States, and furthermore produced plays with Cypriot ethnography content.

Petros Petrides is also a photographer. The subjects of his photographs are scenes of every day life of the Cypriots in America, social activities and historical moments of Cyprus. The artist wants to promote the history of Cyprus as well as the struggle of its people for freedom. He also expresses the love of the Cypriots who live abroad for their mother country and their efforts/ agony to maintain their heritage and culture.

He is also a poet. He has published the poetry collections *Επιστροφή* and *Νύχτες της Σιωπής*. The central theme of his poetry is also the culture, the history and the struggle of Cypriots for freedom. The Turkish invasion, the missing, the agony about the fate of the island are projected in a lyrical and emotional

way. Furthermore, he depicts life in a modern developed city like New York with its multifaceted aspects and dangers such as the isolation and alienation of modern man. His writing is direct and sensitive without complex poetic images.

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*I would also like to thank all writers who gave me their biographical notes, their work, interviews and other materials.*

*Thanks also to my colleague Dr Despina Michael for proof-reading the paper.*

### NOTES

1. Undoubtedly the interwar period has been a very important period for the Greek Cypriot letters as well as the Cyprus ethnic aspirations. Many Cypriot writers created major literary works in other countries such as Egypt (G. Alithersis, Th. Pierides, M. Roussia, G. Pierides), France (Valdaserides) and Greece (L. Akritas, P. Krinaios, B. Zenon, et al.).
2. I have focused on the theme of cultural identity in the literary works of Greek-Cypriot writers in Australia in another paper (Herodotou, 1999: pp 235-251).
3. Notable novels have been written by Yola Damianou-Papadopoulou, who was born in Nicosia and grew up in Congo. Since 1969 she has been living in Nigeria. She has published, among other works, the collection of short stories, *Μπατούρε* and the novel *The Whispering of the Forest*, Nicosia 1992 (*Ο Ψιθυροσ του Δάσους*), which is the story of a woman and her family who lived in Congo and experienced the political uprising of the rebels.
4. He first went to England in 1948 and lived in London until 1953. He then went to Cyprus and returned to London in 1957 where he lived until his death in 1968.
5. For a full list of his published works see Ph. Stavridis, L. Papaleontiou and S. Pavlou (2001: 102-108), Ch. Andreou, *Anthology of Cypriot Literature* (Poetry, Vol B', pp 377-378) and K. Ioannides (1986: 153-158).

6. For full bibliography on T. Anthias, see Ph. Stavrides, L. Papaleontiou and S. Pavlou (2001: 102-108).
7. See samples of his poetry in demotic Greek in Pavlou-Apostolide (1990: 28-30).
8. For a full list of his literary work see Ph. Stavrides, L. Papaleontiou and S. Pavlou (2001: 210) and K. Ioannides (1986: 287).
9. See samples of their work in Pavlou-Apostolide L. (1990). Ms Pavlou-Apostolide's Anthology has been a valuable source for writers who reside in England.
10. Here we will refer to the work of the writers in Australia who migrated after 1974. Writers of earlier years are presented in the paper written by Professor George Kanarakis in this special issue.
11. The other three collections which are included in this volume are: *Σκυφτές Ανεμώνες* by Soula Mousoura-Tsoukala, *Ψηφίδες* by Giannis Liaskos και *Απορροές* by Giannis Katsaras.
12. Anthology *Re-telling the Tale/ Με δικά μας λόγια*, Μελβούρνη: Owl Publishing 1994, by Nickas H. & Dounis, K. (eds); Aik. Georgoudakis, *Ποιήτριες Ελληνικής Καταγωγής στη Βόρεια Αμερική, Αυστραλία και Γερμανία: Ακροβατώντας ανάμεσα σε δυο πατρίδες*, Θεσσαλονίκη: University Studio Press 2002; *Ανθολόγιο της Διασποράς*, Ρέθυμνο: Πανεπιστήμιο Κρήτης, Ε.ΔΙΑ.Μ.ΜΕ 2004; *Ξενιτειά* (Ανθολογία), Βιβλιοθήκη Κυπριακής Διασποράς, Αρ. 1», Λευκωσία: Εκδόσεις Γραφείου Προεδρικού Επιτρόπου 2003; Εφημερίδα *Η Ζώδια* (Εκφραστικό Όργανο του Συλλόγου Αποφοίτων Ανωτέρων Σχολών Ζώδιας), Κύπρος; *Poetic Voices of America*, Sparrowgrass Poetry Forum, Inc. Sistersville, 1997.
13. For example, she is interested in finding her roots (in *Kornelia Treppa*), in the trial of the symbols of her writing, in the subject of tolerance (in *Brunswick Street*), the acceptance of life where every negative element is transformed into a positive (in *Megalos Ayiasmos*), the revolution of love in life (in *Ta erotica Onomata tis Parastasis*), the survival of the individual among many adverse circumstances in order for someone to feel special (*Planitis via ena Katiko*), the role of harmony (*Anthos Armonias*), the primitive past and the attraction of the positive elements through memory (*He porta tis thalassou*) the preservation of youthfulness and innocence (*Prasino Stahi*).
14. Η Αγγελιοφόρος Α' (The Messenger A') includes the collections: *Πλανήτης για ένα κάτοικο*, *Τα ερωτικά ονόματα της επανάστασης*, *Σύμβολα Χαρίτων*, *Ωδές Αδύτων*, *Ωδές Υδάτων*, *Η μάρσιπος*.  
Η Αγγελιοφόρος Β' (The Messenger B') includes the collections: *Άνθος αρμονίας*, *Τα ποιητικά αίτια του έμυλον*, *Η τοξοβόλος*, *Η πόρτα της θαλάσσου*, *Χρονογραφία*, *Πράσινο στάχυ*.

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