

Title: Social Transformation and Cultural Change in Nicosia during the first Period of British Rule: Between Colonialism and Nationalism.

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### Abstract

The purpose of the thesis is the examination of the sports practices that developed in the capital of Cyprus, Nicosia, during the first period of British rule (1878-1931). Cyprus was integrated into the British Empire due to the Cyprus Convention of 1878. In sequence, the Cypriot society entered a period of modernization and progress, and new forms of sociability and leisure activities characterized social life. Specifically, in the period under examination, sports in Cyprus followed two parallel, and often intersecting, paths, of the modern sports and sports clubs that adopted British sporting culture, and of the gymnastics and the Greek sport, based on ancient Greece and influenced by the modern revival of the Olympic Games in Athens. These two directions responded to distinct social demands and invested in physical exercise by adopting heterogeneous value systems and ideological principles.

In the present study, an attempt will be made to examine the ideological and historical framework and dissemination of modern sports via the urban sociability networks that developed in the capital city of Cyprus, Nicosia, under the dominion of the British empire, beginning in 1878 until the outbreak of the rebellion of 1931. Furthermore, it surveys the process how civil and military officers, and the English School of Nicosia contributed to the dissemination of modern sports. At the same time, the Greek Cypriot agitation for “Enosis” (the union of Cyprus with Greece) contributed to the integration of the cult of antiquity and the narrative of national continuity and unity to the school lesson of gymnastics and the Gymnastic Association of Nicosia.

The text of the thesis is developed in three parts. The first part consists of the introduction, the methodology, the point of sport in international research, the historiographical trends, and the main part of the thesis, the second part, consists of three chapters which are developed chronologically. The third part analyses the conclusions.