

GEORGE LANITIS

ΝΑΣΟΣ ΤΑΣ ΑΦΡΟΔΙΤΑΣ

CYPRUS

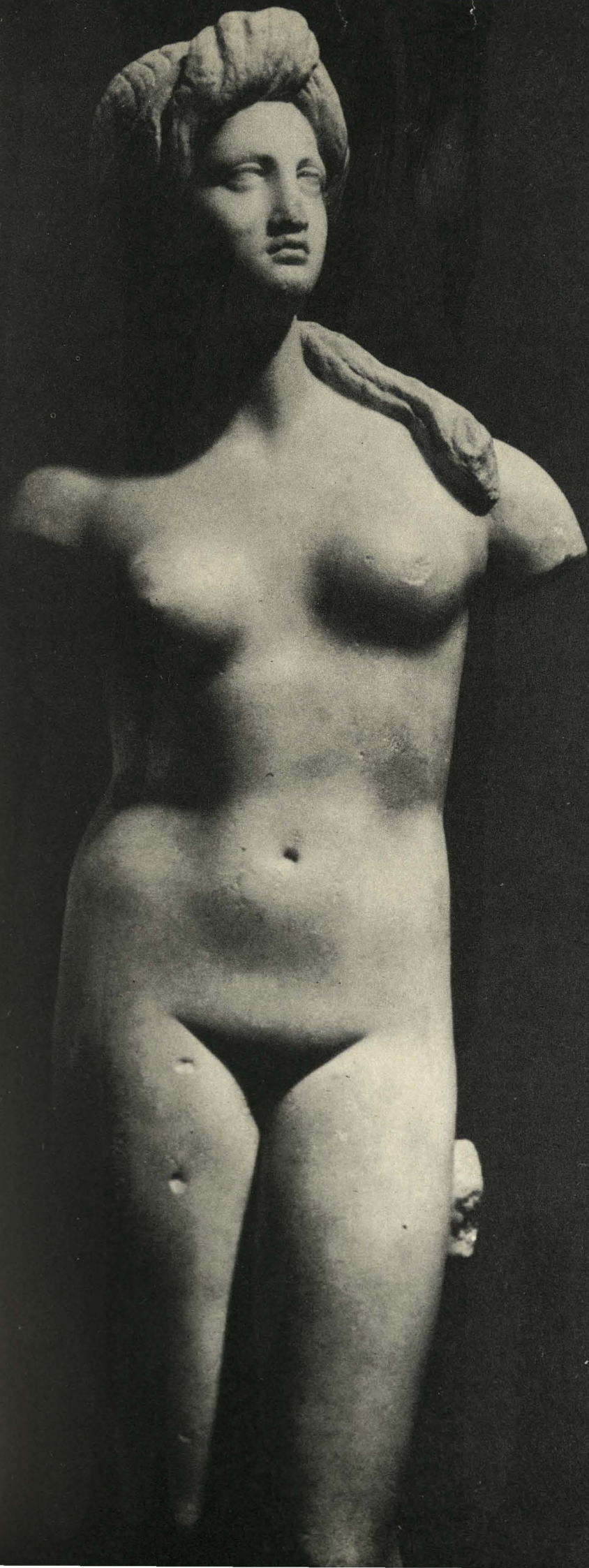
ISLAND OF APHRODITE

NICOSIA 1965

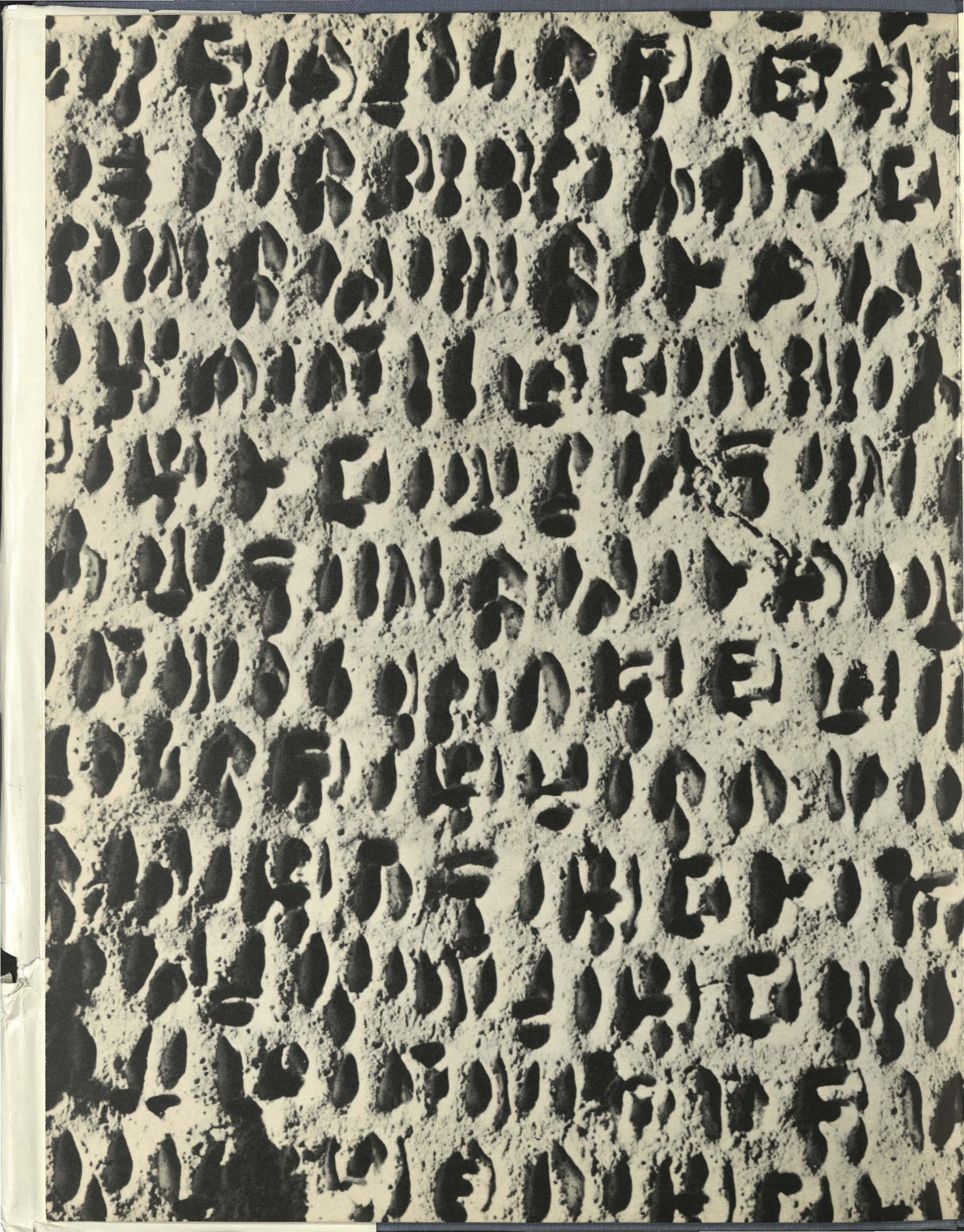


George Lanitis is in his late twenties. He had a classical education in Cyprus, where he was born, and then studied photography and art at the London College of Printing and Graphic Arts. He is a Fellow of the Royal Photographic Society of Great Britain and also of the Royal Society of Arts. He has travelled widely, but has settled in Cyprus, which he knows step by step. He now works for Cyprus Television and specialises in making documentary films.





CYPRUS



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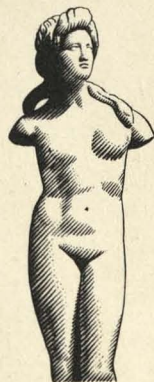
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CYPRUS

ISLAND OF APHRODITE

FOREWORD BY DILYS POWELL

INTRODUCTION BY ANDREAS CHRISTOFIDES



NICOSIA 1965

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To Nicole and Nicholas

I dreamt that I talked with the Cyprus-born
Homer 'Epigrams'

FOREWORD

It is always a pleasure to recognise friends and friendly places, and Mr. Lanitis's beautiful photographs of Cyprus have given me moments of pure delight; for here are the figures and the scenes I know. I have travelled by that bus which you see standing in the village street. Only the other day, it seems, I was talking to that solitary man treading his grapes. The girl holding the pack-animal and the goat is an acquaintance of mine. And so it goes on, memory after memory from this land of vineyards and orange-groves and majestic landscapes: the graceful lines of the caique in the harbour; the immemorial gestures of the net-mender, the potter, the reaper; the proud authority of the Church. It is a land of contrasts: on the one hand the headless antique figure by the ruined columns, on the other the neon lights and the cup on the table in the town café; not only the monumental groups of black-scarfed village women, but the elegances of high fashion on the beach or in the city; both the hands which tend the grapes, and the machines which suddenly bring together tradition and the new world of technology. Especially it is a land of unforgettable faces: the grave child, the old wrinkled woman, the smiling old man.

And now I have to make a confession. I have never been in Cyprus. Many times I have planned to go there; yet something has always deflected me towards Athens, or the Cyclades, or Crete, or the Argolid, or some other region of Greece which I have already visited. Life is short, the journey is long, and it is not easy to deny oneself another look at the well-loved places. But now with these photographs, so reminiscent of the Greece where I have lived and travelled, Mr. Lanitis has persuaded me that the scenes in his delicately composed landscapes and townscapes are in fact familiar, that I have truly encountered the people of his sympathetic portraits.

After this book I begin to fancy that I have known Cyprus all my life.

DILYS POWELL

INTRODUCTION

Cyprus — the island where, according to legend, Aphrodite, the Goddess of Love, arose from the sea — lies in the Eastern Mediterranean where Europe, Africa and Asia meet.

The island has had a long and troubled history. The earliest signs of life discovered by archaeologists go back to 6,000 years before the birth of Christ. Stone houses belonging to this period have been found at Khirokitia and on a small island off the north coast, known today as Petra tou Limniti. People in these Neolithic Age settlements used to bury their dead under the floors of the houses in which they dwelt. Excavations at Troulli, Kalavassos, Sotira and Erimi have thrown further light on the life of the people during those early times.

The discovery of copper, about 2500 B.C., was a landmark in the history of Cyprus. As the word spread abroad that the island had rich copper deposits, men from many lands sailed across the seas to mine its wealth.

Another important factor which attracted the invaders was the strategic position of the island. Cyprus lies at the crossroads between East and West and, even in those far-off days, the world's great powers were quick to realise that they had to take possession of the island if they were to gain supremacy at sea.

About 1500 B.C. the Hittites of Asia Minor and the powerful kings of Egypt were desperately trying to gain control of the island. It was at this time that the Greeks came from the north-west and began settling here. Hittite inscriptions of the time speak of protests to the King of the Achæans against these "invasions". However, the "invasions" continued, and they were destined to become the third and most important of the factors that shaped the island's history. The Greeks brought with them their own gods, their art and their legends, and Greek culture soon took root here. Cyprus became another Greek island in the Mediterranean. Its fate was from now on closely linked with that of Greece.

Whenever Greece was weak, envious eyes were cast on Cyprus and the invaders came — Phœnicians, Assyrians, Egyptians, Persians. But in times when she regained her strength, the struggle began to liberate captive Greek lands.

The fifth century B. C. was an eventful period for the island. Onesillos led a revolt against the then Persian rulers, the Athenian General Kimon made a further attempt to liberate Cyprus, and at the close of the century Evagoras defeated the Persians and became King of Salamis, the most renowned of all the ancient Cypriot kingdoms. When Greece itself finally defeated the Persians, and Alexander the Great marched towards Asia, the Kings of Cyprus sent 220 warships to assist him at the siege of Tyre.

In those days, Cyprus was already contributing to Greek culture. Indeed, Stoic philosophy — one of the essential characteristics of the Hellenistic period — was originated in the island by Zeno of Kitium.

With the decline of Greece, the Romans, in the course of their conquest of the Mediterranean lands, became masters of Cyprus.

At this time, a new and far-reaching change came about in the life of the island, for St. Paul and St. Barnabas called here at the start of their journey to Greece to preach the word of Christ. The people embraced the Christian faith and St. Barnabas, himself a Cypriot, became the founder of the Church of Cyprus. Five centuries later,

the Church of Cyprus was granted complete independence and several special privileges by the then Byzantine Emperor Zeno.

By this time, the Eastern Roman Empire had come to be known as Byzantium. Cyprus became a part of this Greek Empire, either as a district of Byzantium or as an independent self-administered province.

Then came the Crusades. As in other wars, the strategic position of Cyprus made it of greatest importance. In 1191, a ship carrying Berengaria of Navarre, the fiancée of Richard Cœur de Lion, took shelter from a storm off the coast of Limassol. The Byzantine administrator of the island, Isaac Comnenos, held Berengaria captive and Richard, in swift retaliation, conquered the island. While in Cyprus, Richard married Berengaria at Limassol, and there Berengaria was crowned Queen of England.

Shortly after, Richard sold Cyprus to the Knights Templar, but they held it for only one year. Because of popular unrest, they too were forced to sell it — this time to the Frankish ex-King of Jerusalem, Guy de Lusignan. The Lusignans had been expelled from Jerusalem by the Saracens, and it was customary for them to have themselves crowned as Kings of Cyprus in Nicosia and as Kings of Jerusalem in Famagusta. During the Frankish occupation, which lasted three hundred years, many monasteries and churches were built which are treasured today as fine examples of Gothic architecture.

After the Franks the Venetians took possession of the island and ruled it until 1570. Old castles were reinforced, new ones were built. In the meantime, Cypriots produced the first prose writings of modern Greek literature — the Chronicles of Makhairas and Vustronios. They also made their contribution to Greek folk poetry and Byzantine art.

As the Ottoman Empire extended its control over the Middle Eastern countries, Cyprus was wrested from the Venetians by the Turks. Their rule lasted for three centuries. In 1821 Archbishop Kyprianos was hanged, together with other senior clergymen and leading citizens, for their suspected part in the Greek War of Independence. Fifty-seven years later, Turkey ceded Cyprus to Disraeli's England "on rent".

The Archbishop of Cyprus, as the leader of his people, greeted the first British Governor and expressed the hope that his arrival was the first step towards the liberation of Cyprus and its union with the rest of Greece.

During the years of British rule the people of Cyprus twice rose in rebellion, first in 1931 and then again in 1955.

As a result of the second rising, British rule ended in 1960 and Cyprus was declared an independent republic. However, its independence was curtailed by international agreements which made it possible for foreign powers to interfere in the affairs of the island. To this day, the people of Cyprus are struggling for the right to decide their own future.

It is difficult to foresee what the future has in store for the troubled island. Its riches no longer attract foreign powers, and, in the world of today, its strategic position can only be of slight or transitory importance. However, Hellenism — the most decisive of the factors which have determined the course of the island's history — remains eternal.

ANDREAS CHRISTOFIDES

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am greatly indebted to His Beatitude Archbishop Makarios, President of the Republic, whose kind understanding and encouragement assisted me immeasurably in the publication of this book.

I would also like to express my gratitude to Andreas Christofides, Frixos Petrides, Lysandros Avraamides and Charilaos Papadopoulos for all the help they have given me; and to the Shell Company of Cyprus Ltd., whose assignments afforded me the opportunity to take the photographs of birds and flowers included here.

Finally, to my wife, Myra, who retained her patience and humour when mine were lost, my deepest appreciation and thanks.

G. L.

THE PLACE

*Voice of the Lord upon the waters.
There is an island...*

Aeschylus 'Persians'



Rock of Romios, Birthplace of Aphrodite

...And so soon as he had cut off the members with flint and cast them from the land into the surging sea, they were swept away over the main a long time: and a white foam spread around them from the immortal flesh, and in it there grew a maiden...

She came to sea-girt Cyprus and came forth an awful and lovely goddess, and grass grew up about her beneath her shapely feet. Her, gods and men call Aphrodite and the foam-born goddess, because she grew amid the foam, and Cyprogenes, because she was born in billowy Cyprus, and Philommedes, because she sprang from the members...

Hesiodus 'Theogonia'

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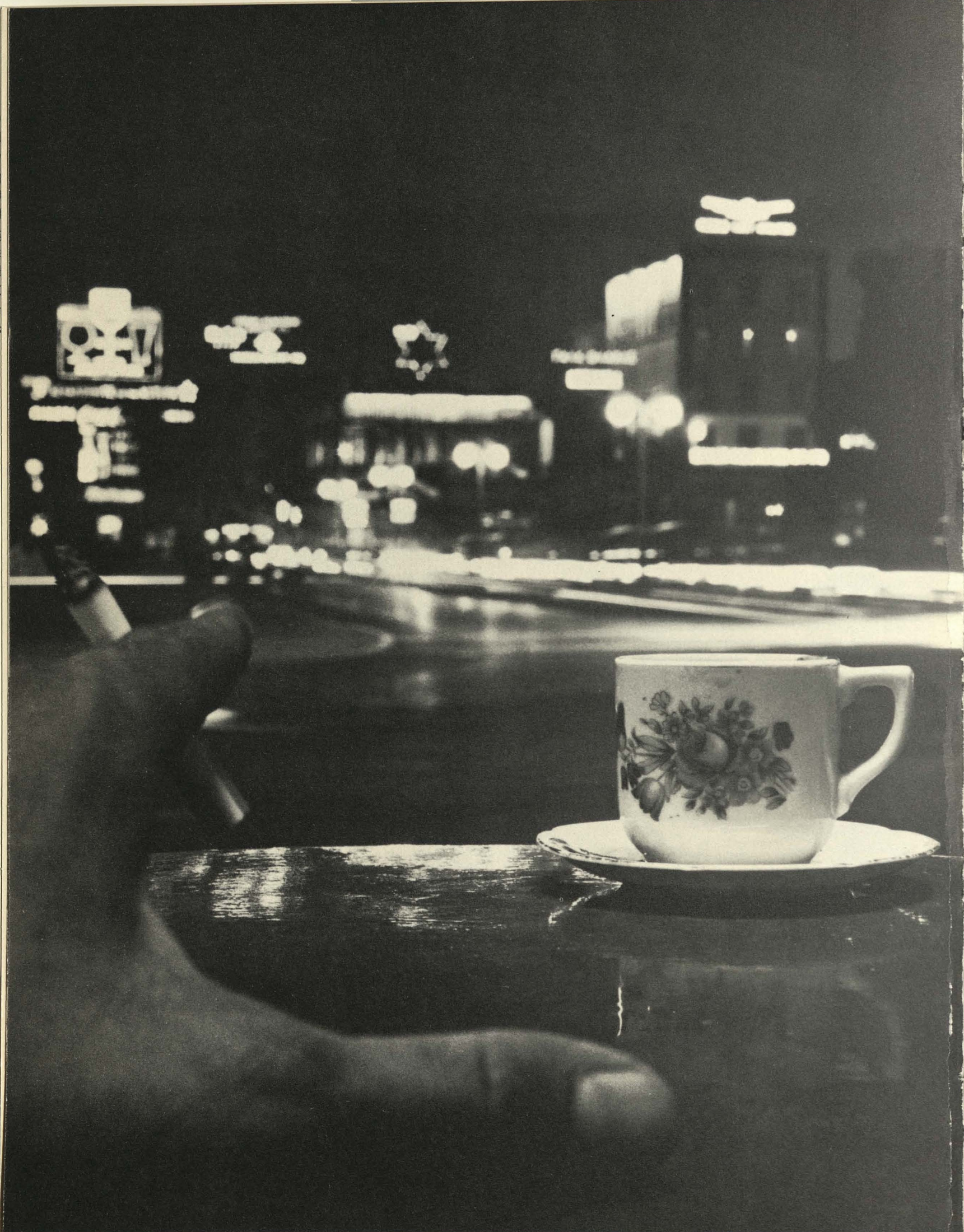
Famagusta Harbour

Lo there, now wave is still and wind is still
Theocritus 'The Spell'

Salamis

*To sea-girt Cyprus, where Apollo bade
that I should dwell, and,
for the homeland's sake,
give it the island name of Salamis...*

Euripides 'Helen'



Hadjisavvas Coffee Shop, Metaxas Square, Nicosia



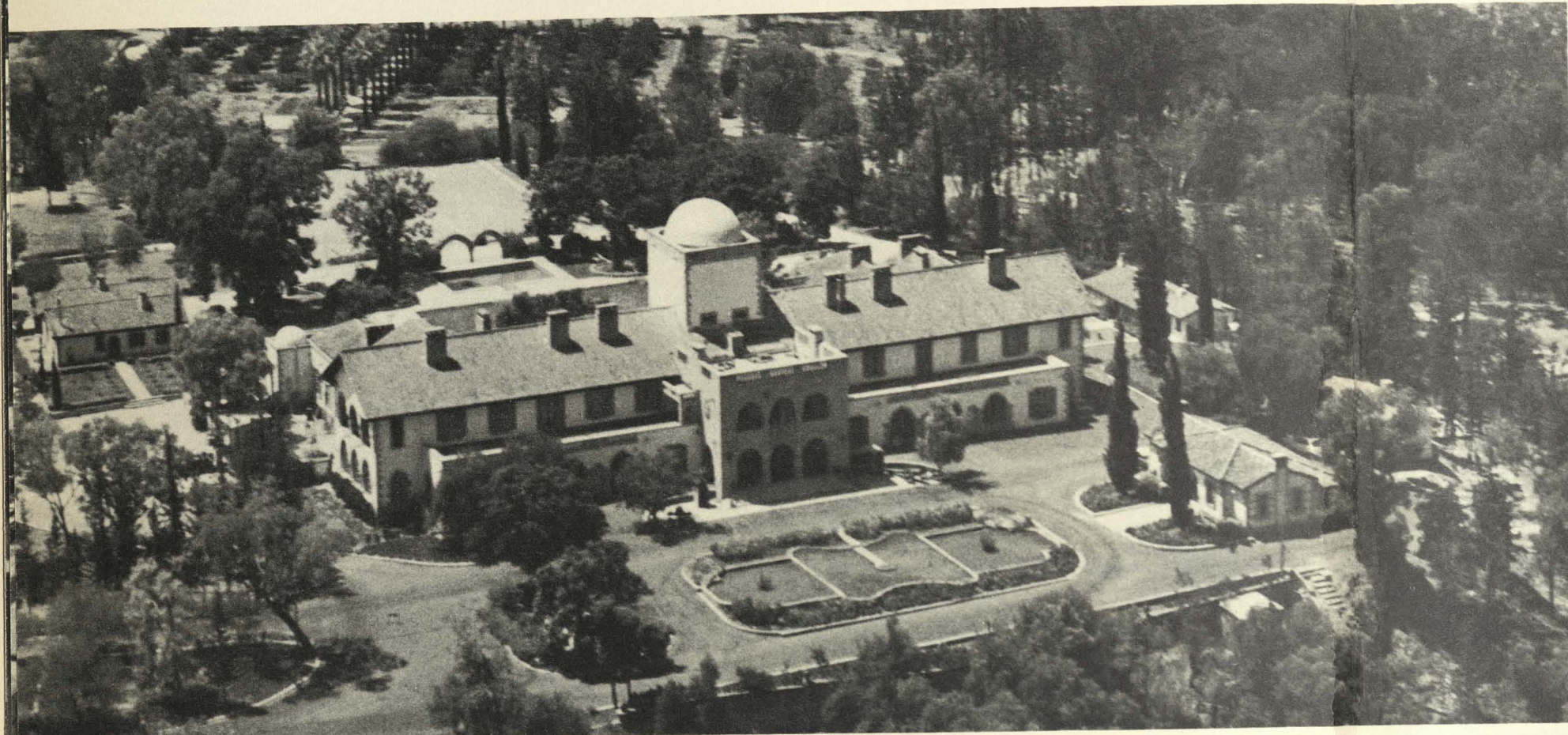
Golden Sands, Famagusta



Nicosia

Nicosia (in Greek, Lefkosia) is built on the site of the ancient city of Ledra and named after Lefkon, son of Ptolemy the Saviour, who founded the new city during the Hellenistic period. Nicosia became the capital in the Middle Ages.

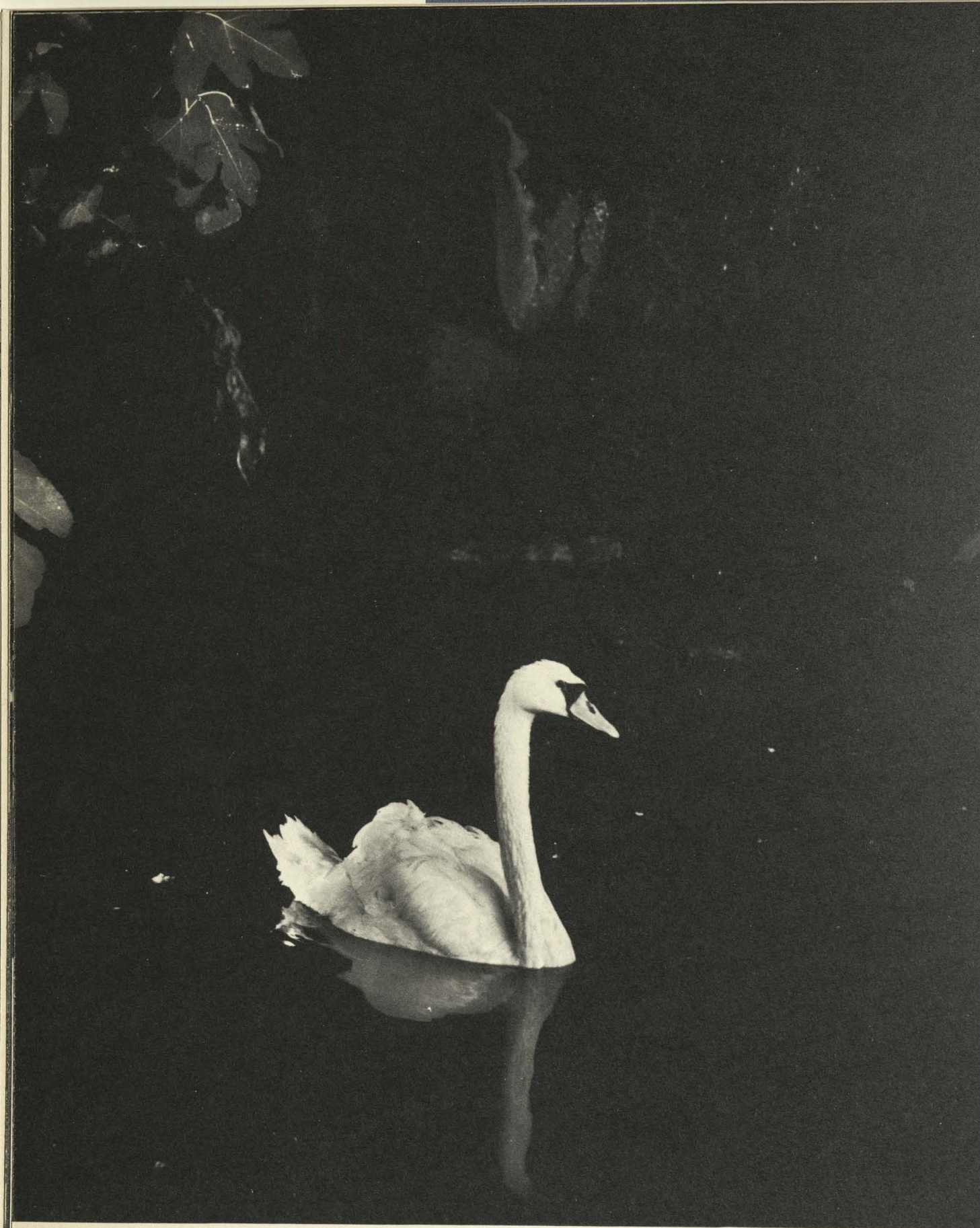




The Presidential Palace, Nicosia



Kykko Gymnasium, Nicosia



Fontana Amorosa

There is a slope of seven miles in length which rises gradually from the seashore, planted with myrtle, cedar, bitter oranges and laurel, and many other aromatic trees, bushes, roses and lilies, crocuses, giving a very beautiful smell which the sea breeze wafts from the earth and carries into the sea.

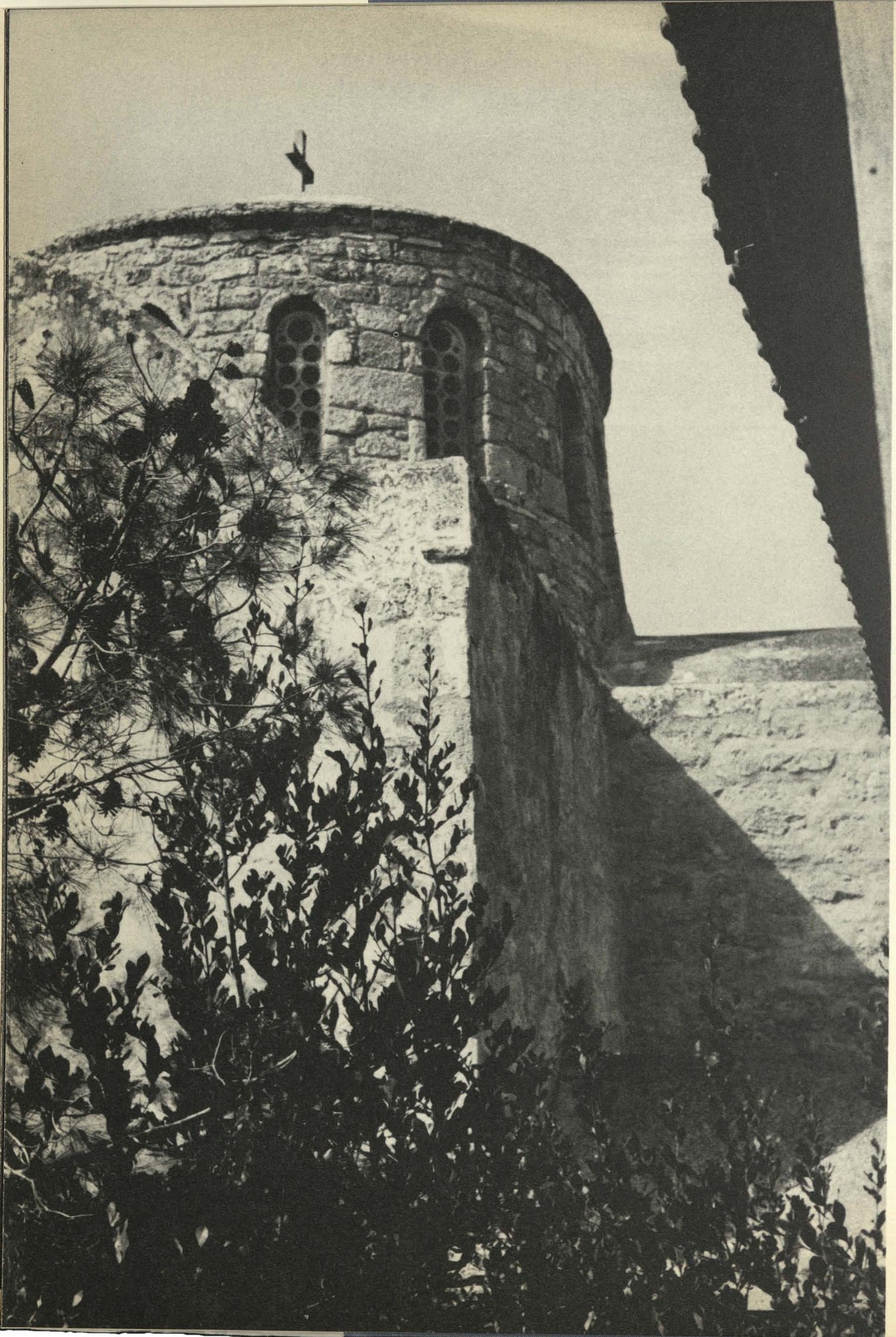
From a crystal spring a stream has its origin which traverses this zone which, with all the enchanted surroundings, are dedicated to Aphrodite...

Ariosto, Orlando Furioso,
15th - 16th century, A.D.



The Pentadaktylos Mountain Range

A Byzantine legacy to Cyprus was the legend of the hero Dighenis Akritas. It was believed he possessed superhuman powers, that he could jump across the sea from Asia Minor, that he could leave the imprint of his hand on a mountain top—the Pentadaktylos—and that he could hurl a stone from one end of the island to the other.





St. Nicholas Church, Khlorakas

St. Barnabas Monastery

...Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them...

So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed into Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus

The Acts, Chap : XIII



Peristerona



Kykko Monastery

*Also there is in Marathasa at Kykko the picture of the Very Holy Mother of God...
And the Mother of God revealed Herself to the monk, telling him to seek the picture which is in the palace of the Emperor in the City, and that they should bring it here...
And the Emperor was loath to give it, but seeing the pains of the monk and the healing of his daughter, he was greatly moved and gave it to him. And he took it with him, and came to Cyprus, and men rejoiced much and built a church and put monks there; and in time of drought it works marvels without end; and this is a work of the Apostle Luke...*

Makhairas 'Recital Concerning the Sweet Land of Cyprus entitled "Chronicle"'



Stavrovouni, the Bell Tower



Stavrovouni Monastery

... And St. Helena embarked and came to Cyprus. And when they arrived and cast anchor by land, she brought out the chest and the two crosses and ate meat at Vasilopotamos. And when she had finished eating, she lay down, being wearied by the sea, and fell asleep, and she saw a dream that a young man said to her: 'My lady Helena, as you did at Jerusalem, building many churches, so do here also, for it is commanded that in this same land men shall dwell until the end of all things, and it shall not be destroyed for all ages. And build a church in the name of the Venerable and Life-giving Cross and put in it of the Holy Wood which you have with you'...

Makhairas 'Recital Concerning the Sweet Land of Cyprus entitled "Chronicle"'



Trimiklini





Harvesting, Messaoria





The Tree of Idleness, Bellapaix

Ἱμερόεσσα Lapithos

*In the interval is the city Lapathus,
with a mooring place and dockyards;
it was founded by Laconians and Praxander...*

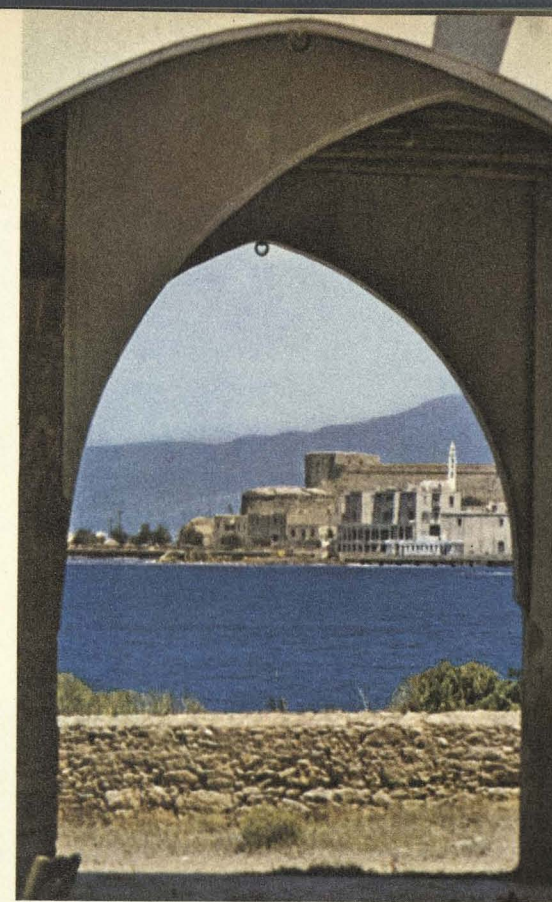
Strabo



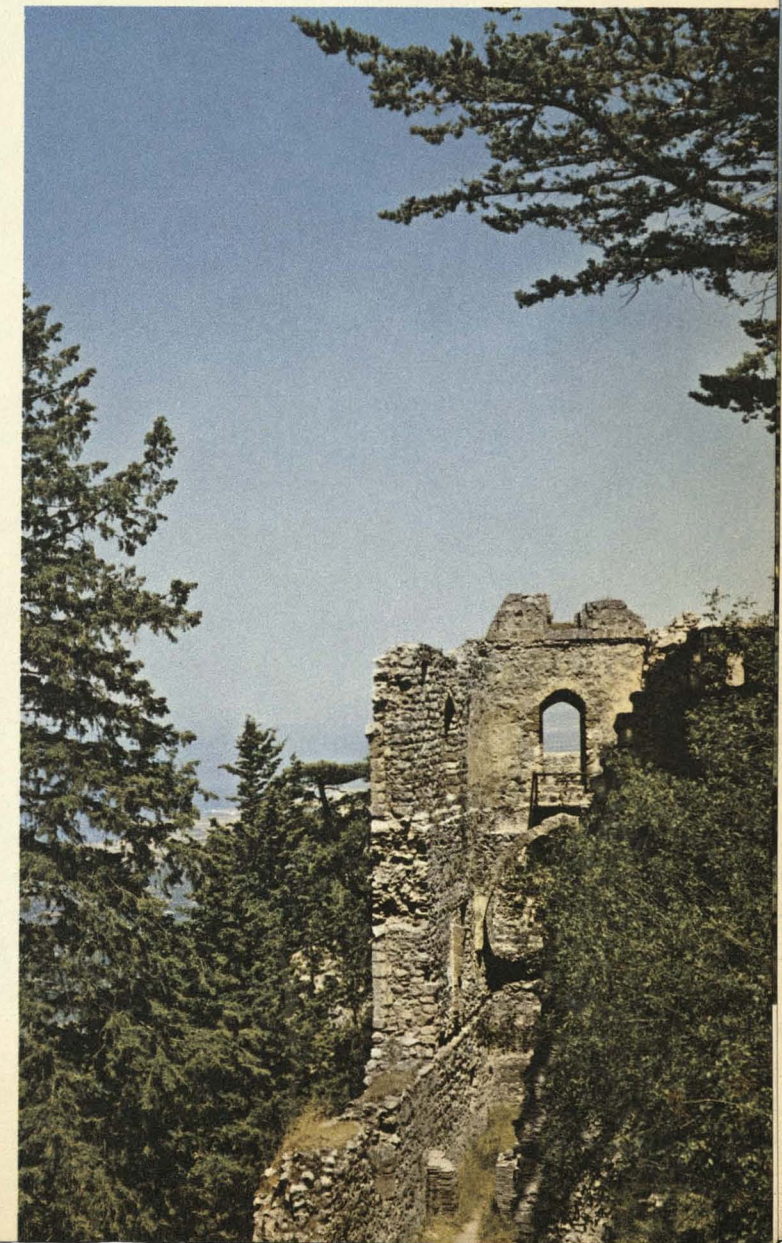


Kyrenia, the Harbour and the Castle

*This world is not ours,
it's Homer's*
George Seferis 'The Suburbs of Kyrenia'



Kyrenia, from the Church of Glykotiassa



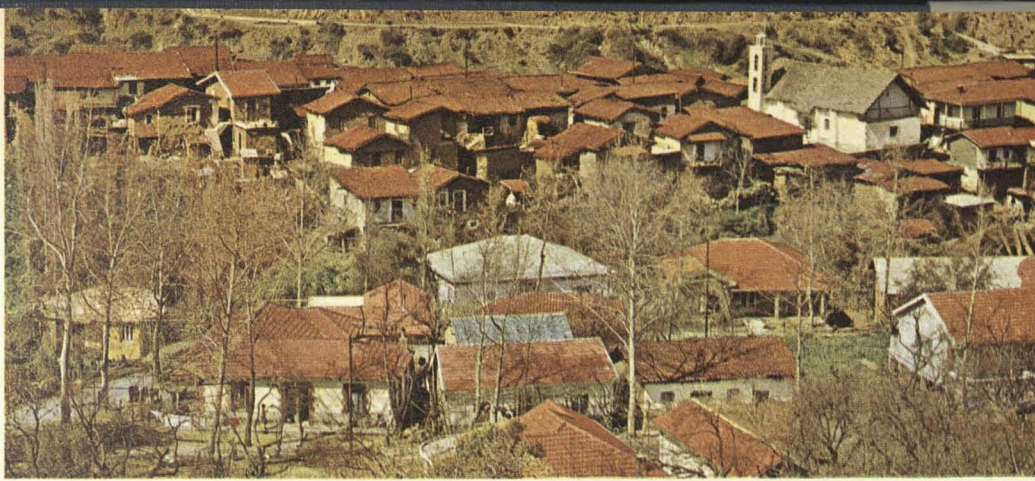
St. Hilarion Castle



Caledonian Falls, Platres



Springtime, Limassol



Autumn, Old Kakopetria



Cedars, Stavros Psokas



The Sanctuary of Apollo Hylates



Hypochæris sp.



Black Cap

There are in Cyprus wild rams which are not found in other parts of the world. But they are caught with leopards—in no other way can they be taken

L. Von Suchen
'De Terra Sancta et Itinere Hierosol'



Mouflon



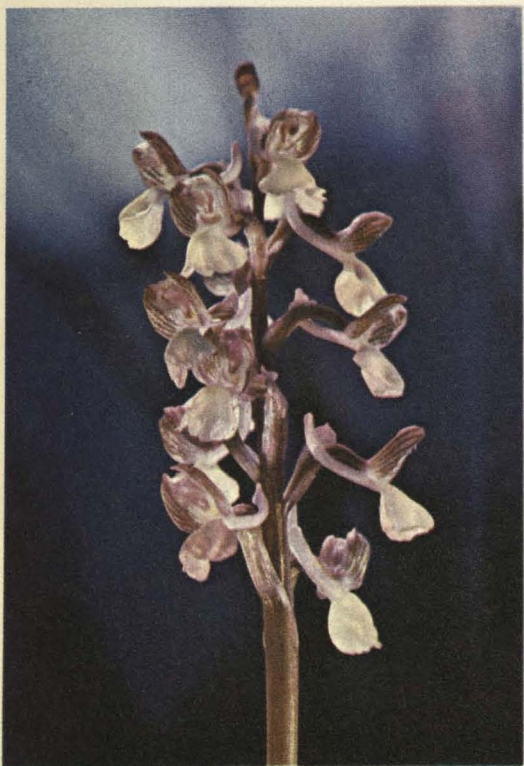
Tulip



Anagallis Arvensis

A view of Cyprus' flora, and comparison of the modern and popular uses of the plants with those of ancient Greece, gave me hopes of ascertaining several of the more obscure plants... My expectations have in some measure succeeded

Sibthorp, Leake, Hume, Sestini, Browne
'Travels in Various Countries of the East'



Orchids



Robin



Rock Partridge





Famagusta Beach



Lefkara

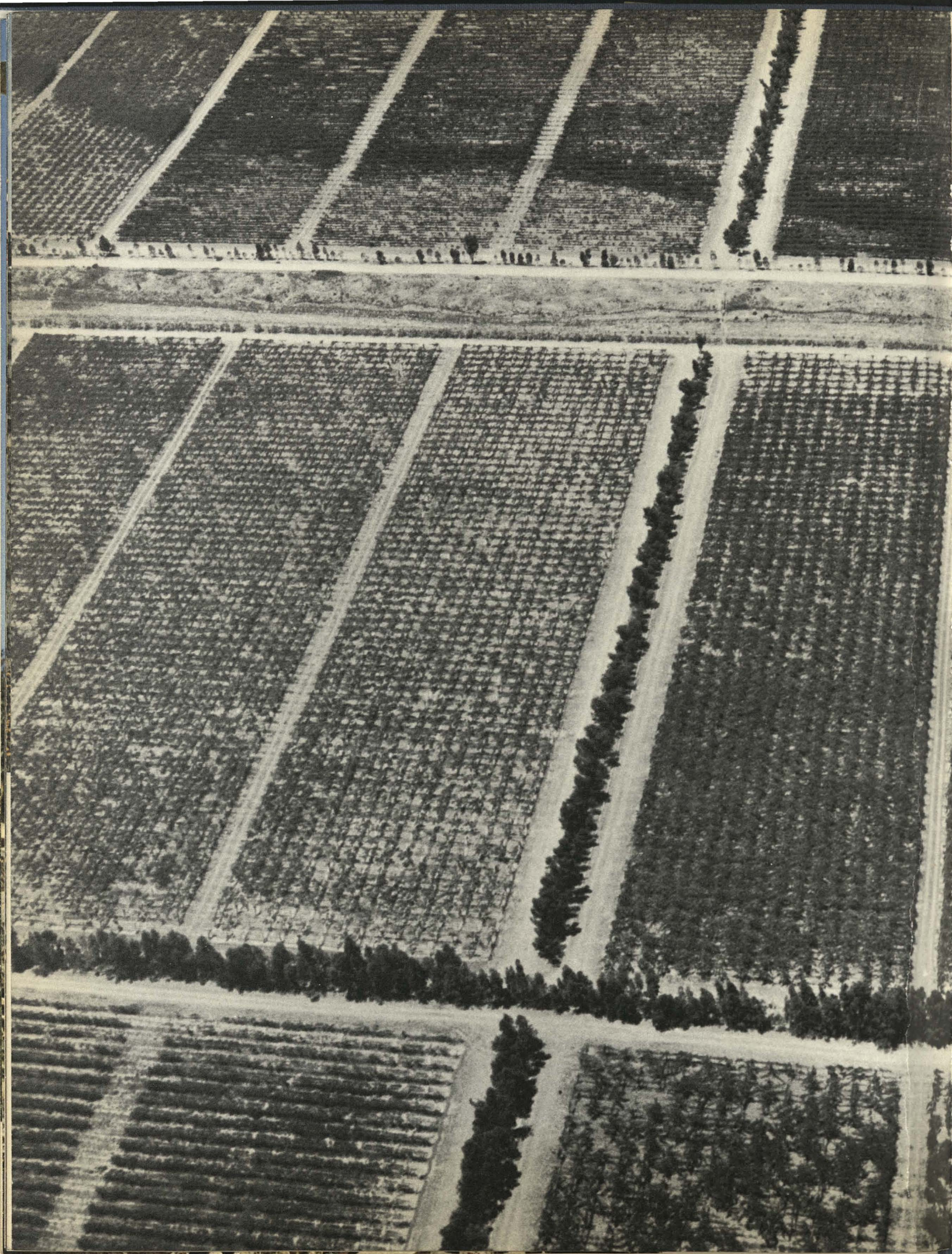


Othello Tower, Famagusta

*...Great Jove, Othello guard,
And swell his sail with thine own powerful breath,
That he may bless this bay with his tall ship...
And bring all Cyprus comfort!*

Shakespeare 'Othello'







Citrus Plantation, Limassol

Cyprus has been noted for her citrus fruit for many centuries. There are nearly 20,000 acres planted with citrus trees, giving an annual harvest of 300 million oranges and 100 million lemons. About 80% of the production is exported, while 12% is processed in Cyprus for juice and oil extraction.

Grape Plantations, Nicosia

Cyprus annually produces over 120,000 tons of several varieties of grapes. More than half of this production is used in the manufacture of local wines. Early varieties, such as Sultana and Rozaki, are exported to Europe for table fruit.



Open Pit Mining, Foucassa

Did the island give its name to, or receive its name from, the metal copper?
Sir George Hill 'History of Cyprus'



Exporting Copper, Morphou Bay

*...And I have heard the greeting of my brother,
and I will bring to thee as a present two hundred talents of copper*

The King of Alasia to the King of Egypt, Epistle no: 1,
18th Century B.C.



Asbestos Quarries, Amiandos

Asbestos (chrysotile) occurs in the Troodos area 4,500 feet above sea level. The rock is crushed, sorted and treated and the graded fibre is exported; small quantities are consumed locally in the manufacture of asbestos-cement sheets.



Soft Drink and Juice Extraction Plant, Nicosia

Although industry is not as yet the main occupation of the people of Cyprus, industrial development during the last ten years has been rapid and important. Industry, including construction, transport and power generation, but excluding mining, contributes some 26% of the gross national income of the island and the trend is upward.



Sunset at Ayianapa

*And you see the light of the sun, just as the ancients used to say,
Yet I thought that I was seeing, all these years
Walking between the mountains and the sea
And meeting men full armed in perfect panoplies...*

Strange, I can see it here, the light of the sun...

George Seferis 'Ayianapa I'

THE PEOPLE

*Honey, you shall be well desir'd in Cyprus ;
I have found great love amongst them...*

Shakespeare 'Othello'

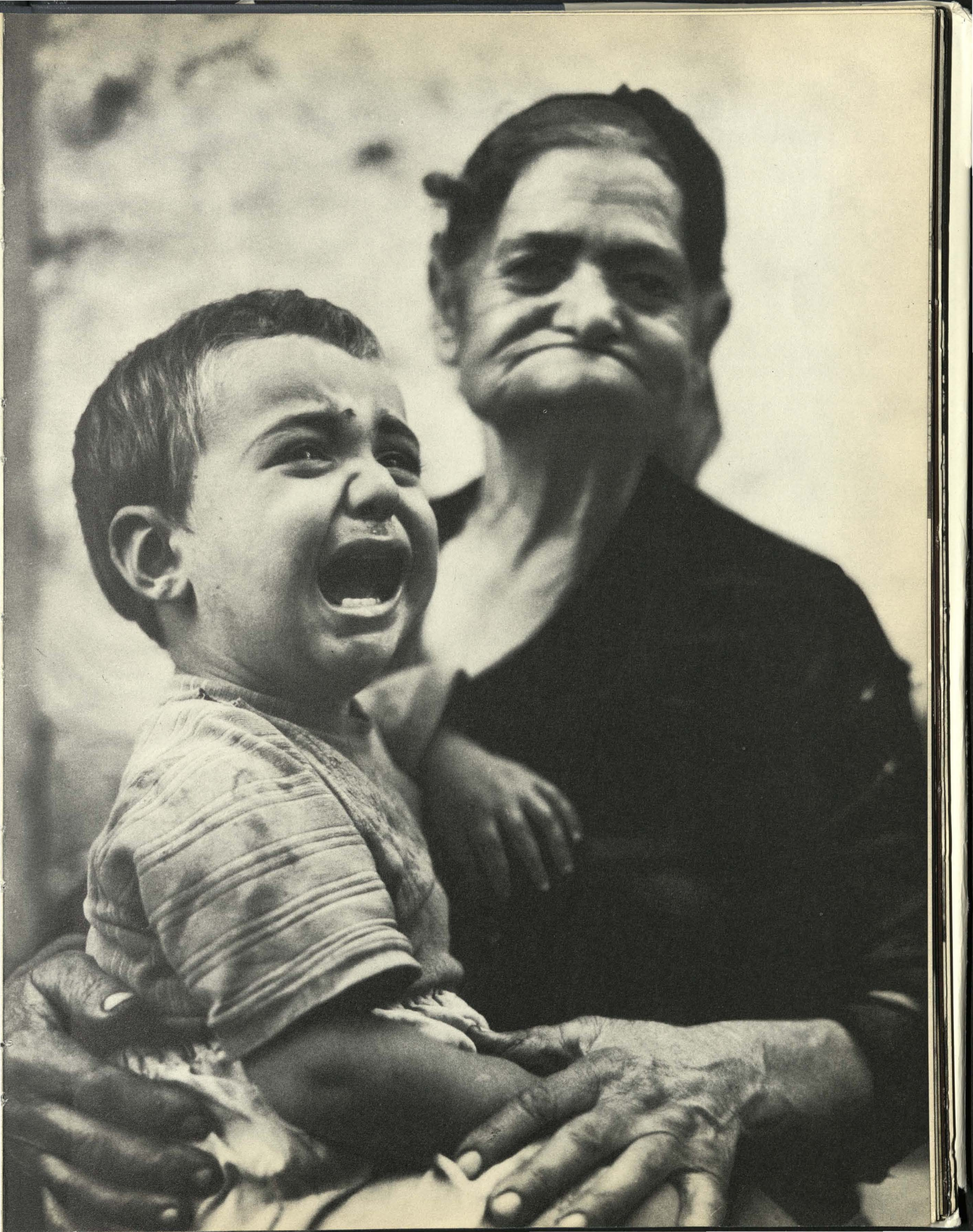


The Greeks are always like children...
Plato















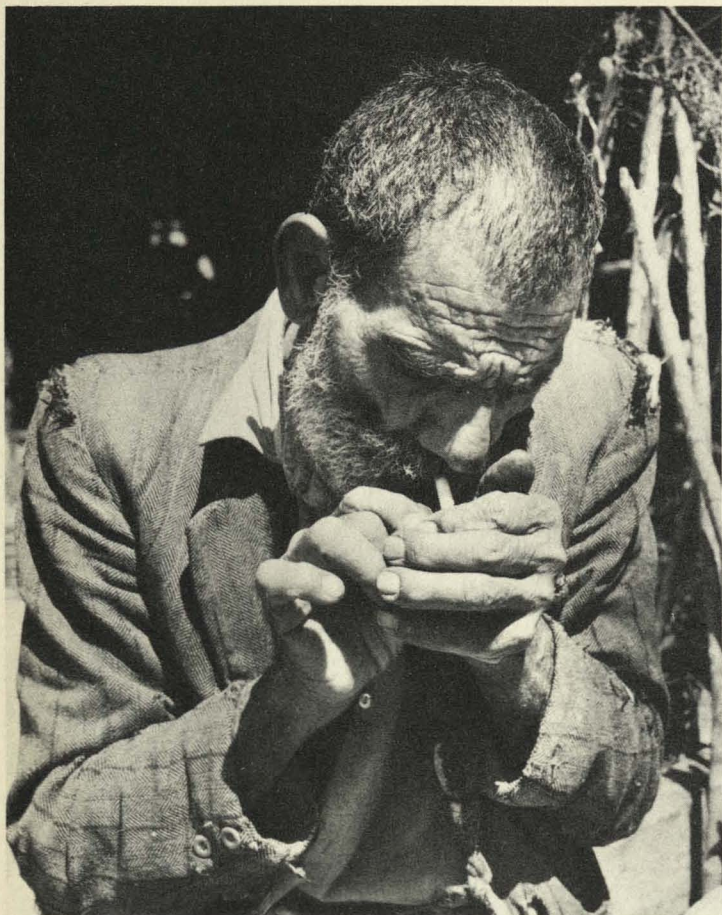
The tongue is boneless, but it can crack bones
Cypriot Proverb



Ha!—spake a fiend in likeness of the God?
Euripides 'Electra'

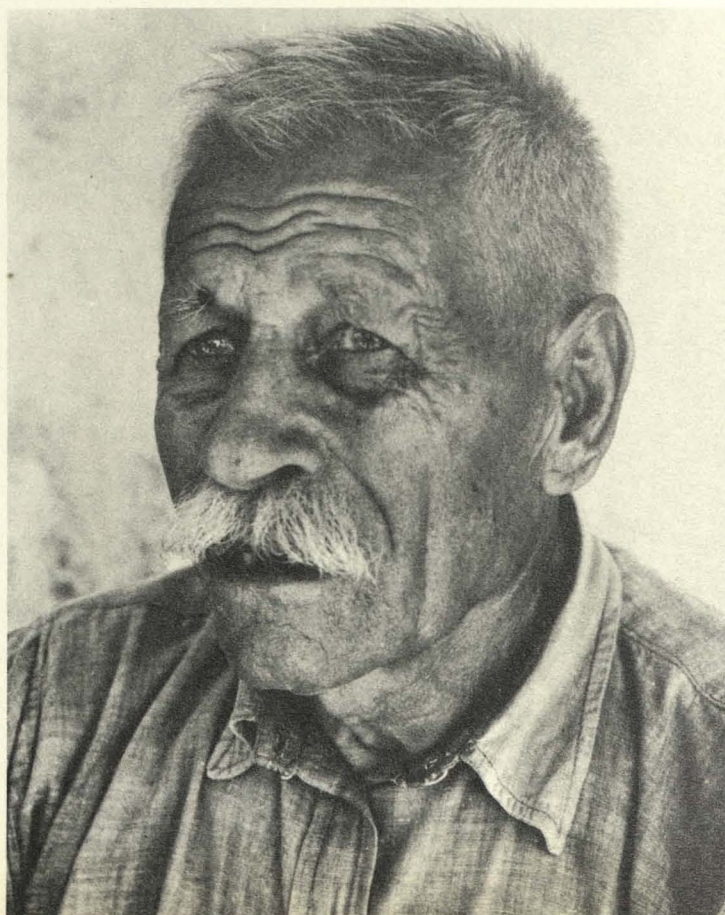


*So I withal, though many a woe is mine,
Am dumb, and I refrain my lips from speech,
For the Gods' misery-surge o'ermastereth me*
Euripides 'The Trojan Women'



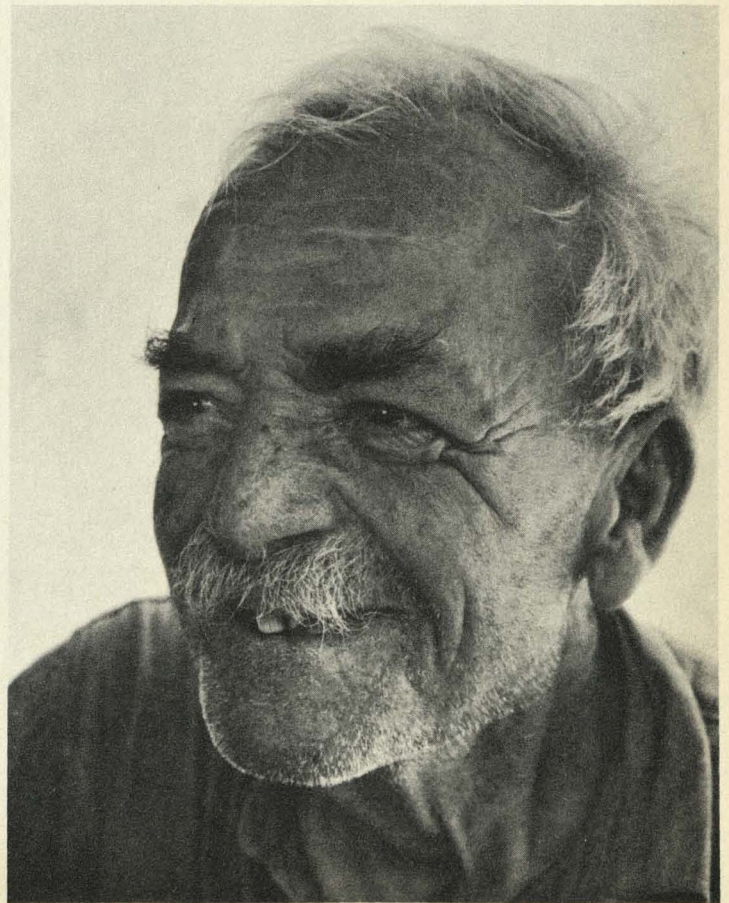
I commend to you all the inhabitants of Cyprus...

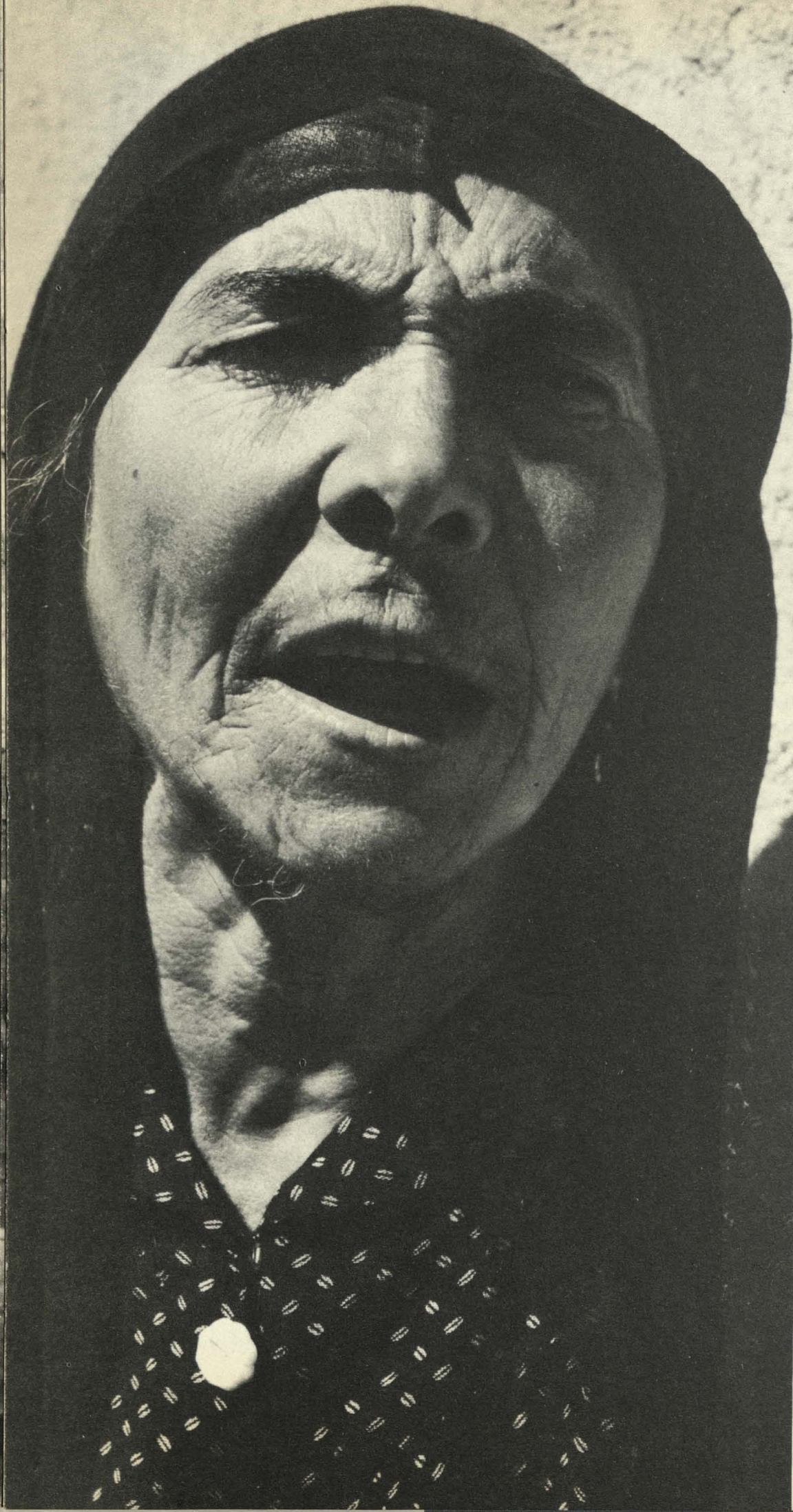
Cicero to Gaius Sextilius Rufus, Questor Roma,
between 50 and 47 B.C.





...For their hearts are generous and their wit is best
Homer 'Epigrams'









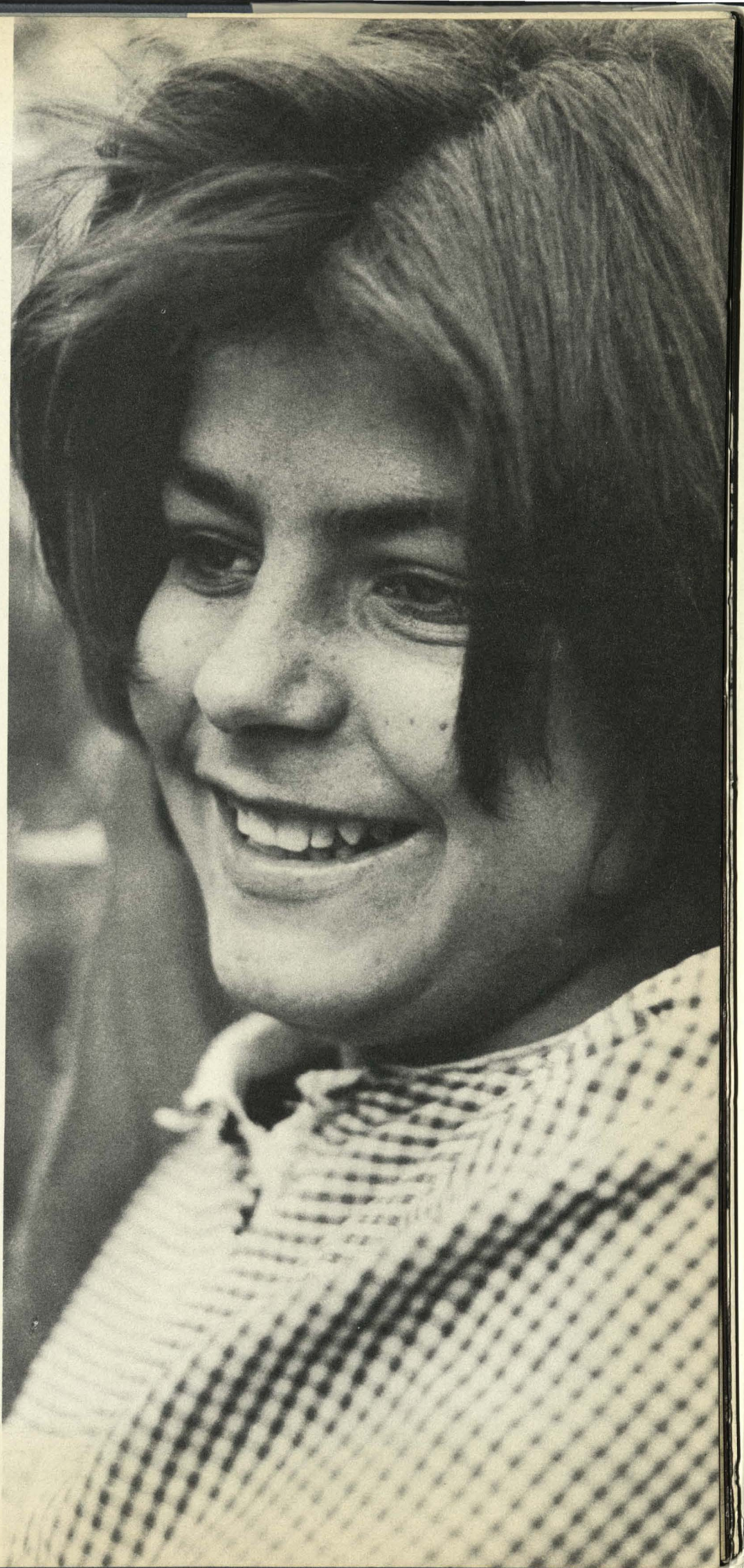
Zeus: 'Hermes, take this apple, go to Phrygia, to Priamos' son the herdsman—he is grazing his flock in the foothills of Ida, on Gargaron—and say to him: 'Paris, as you are handsome yourself, and also well-schooled in all that concerns love, Zeus bids you be judge for the goddesses, to decide which of them is the most beautiful. As the prize for the contest, let the victor take the apple.' To the goddesses: 'You yourselves must now go and appear before your judge. I refuse to be umpire because I love you all alike and, if it were possible, should be glad to see you all victorious. Moreover, it is sure that if I gave the guerdon of beauty to one, I should inevitably get into the bad graces of the majority.'

Lucian 'Dialogues of Gods'



*Sunburnt and lean they call you ;
you're honey-brown to me.
Of flowers the violet's dark,
and dark the bettered flag-flower tall,
but when there's nosegays making
they choose them first of all*

Theocritus 'The Reapers'







*What rude country wench
clad in a country jerkin
inflames your senses,
Who does not even know
how to draw her tattered dress
over her ankles?*

Sappho

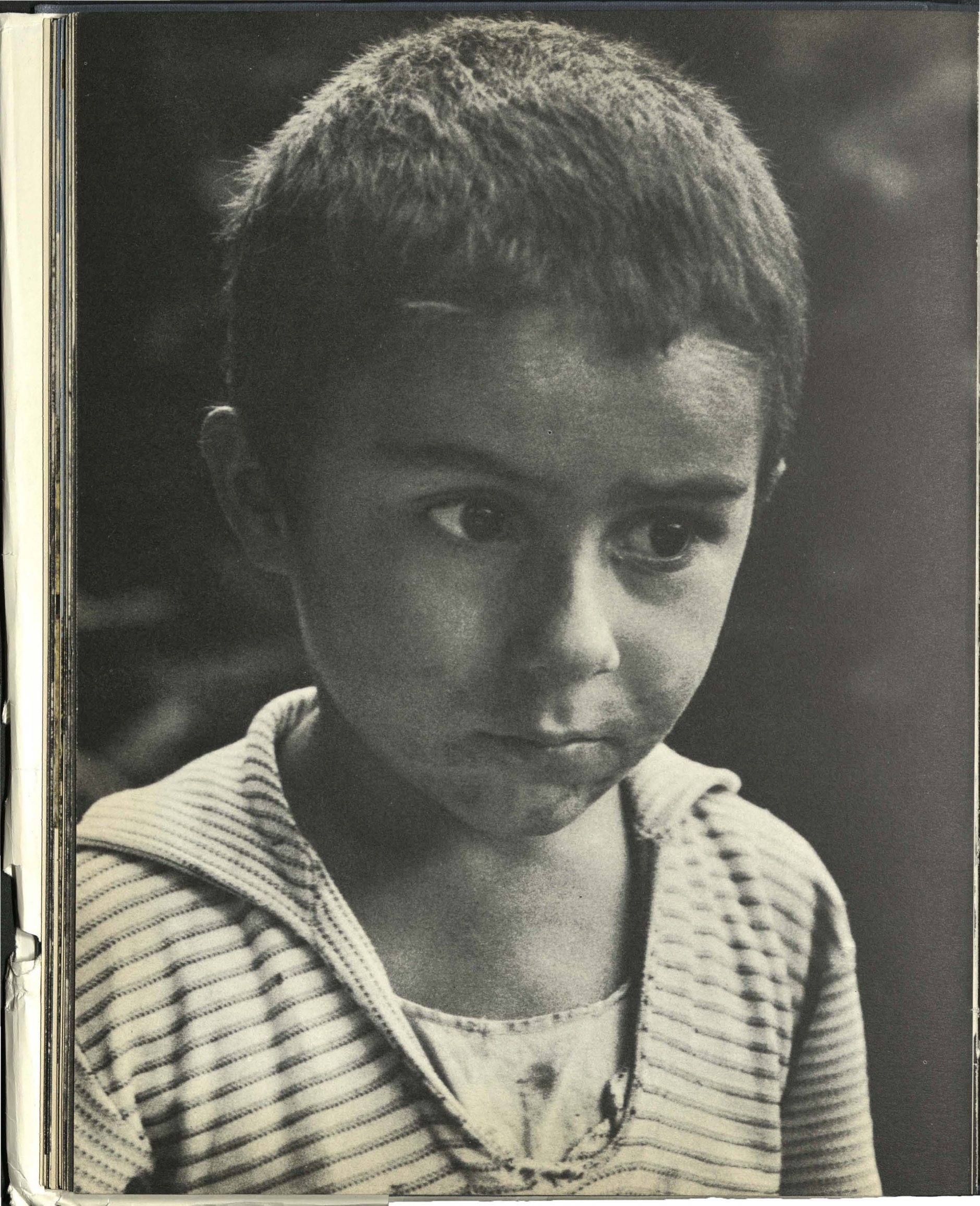


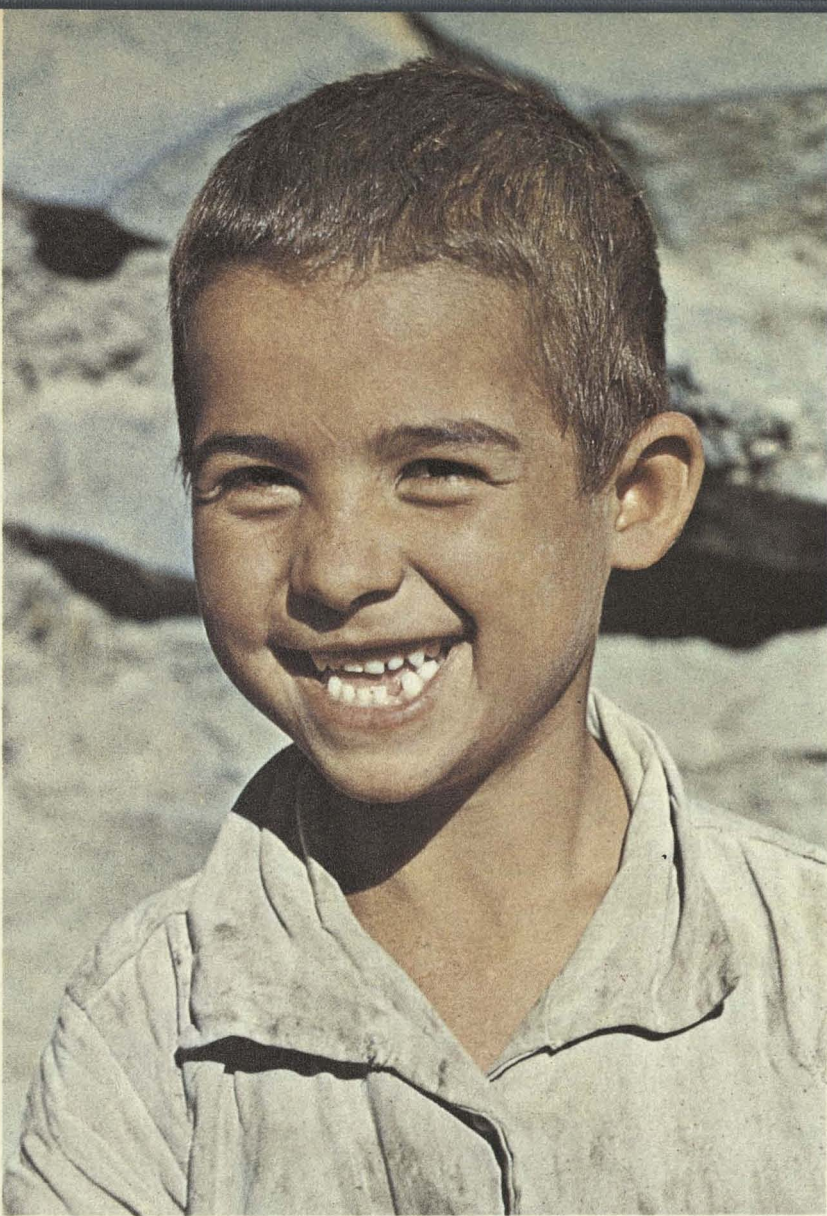


Anthoula

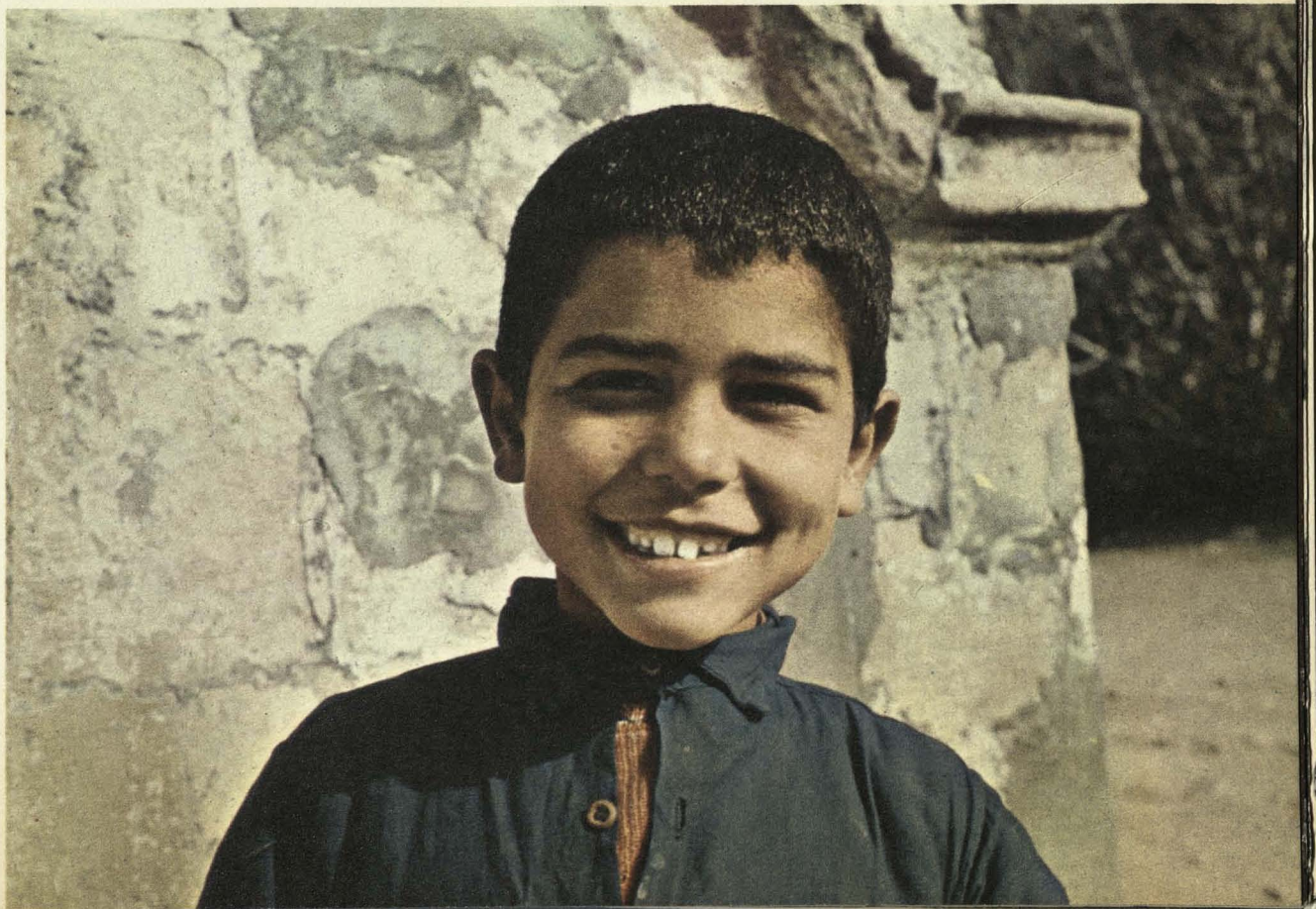
In no other country in the world are there women and virgins so beautiful and attractive. In old and young women the goddess gives ardent love to the end of their lives

Ariosto, Orlando Furioso,
15th - 16th century, A.D.





*And for the tender boys
sing a song sweet as honey*
Alcaeos

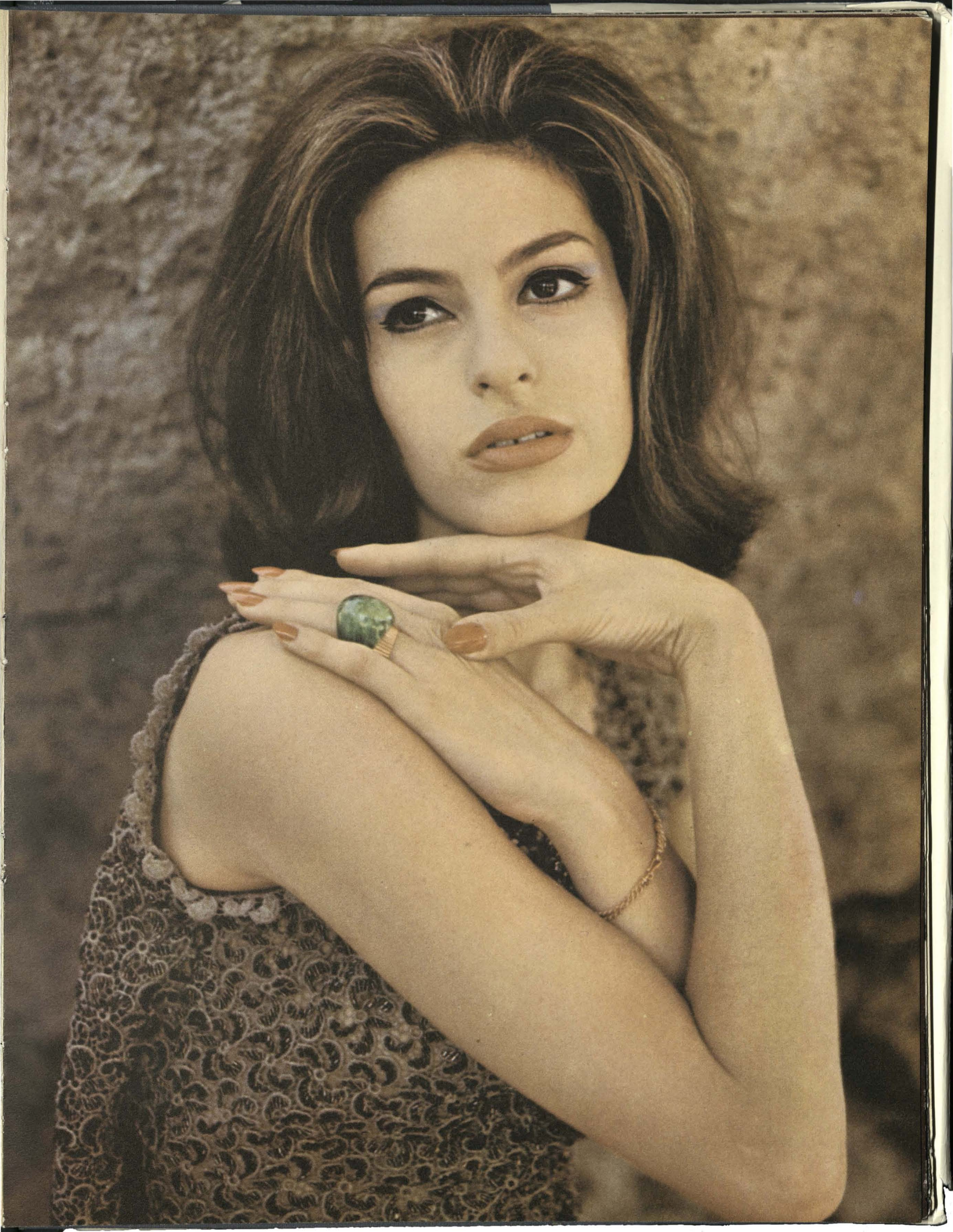




Euthymoula

*As the sweet apple reddens on the top of the bough
on the very topmost twig,
which the apple-pickers had forgotten—No, not forgotten,
but they could not reach it!*

Sappho





*From that day forth Daphnis had the pre-eminence of the shepherds
insomuch as he was scarce come to man's estate...*

Theocritus 'Voukoliastai'

TRADITION

*For rightly, Agathon, this only even God cannot achieve:
undo what has been done*

Aristotle



Aphrodite

*I will sing of stately Aphrodite
gold-crowned and beautiful,
whose dominion is the walled cities
of all sea-set Cyprus.
There the moist breath of the
Western wind
wafted her over the waves
of the loud-moaning sea
in soft foam
And there the gold-filleted Hours
welcomed her joyously*

Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite



Eros

*O Eros, O Eros, how melts love's yearning from thine eyes,
when thy sweet smell witcheth thy might the heart
of them against whom thou hast marched in...*

Euripides 'Hippolitus'



Goddess of Fertility

This statuette symbolises a goddess of fertility, worshipped during prehistoric times, who may have been the predecessor of Aphrodite.

Apollo Alasiotas

Statue of the God of Fertility, dating back to the twelfth century B.C.



PAPHOS MOSAICS

These mosaics were discovered accidentally at Paphos in 1962 by a farmer while he was ploughing his field. They adorned the floor of a Roman villa, now known as "The House of Dionysus"—the main theme of the mosaics being Dionysus and his merry company.



Pyramos

Pyramos and Thisbe, two lovers who preceded Romeo and Juliet by thousands of years. Forbidden by their parents to marry, they met secretly in the countryside. One day when Thisbe was waiting for Pyramos at their meeting-place she was attacked by a wild beast. She fled from it in terror, leaving behind her blood-stained veil. Finding the veil and believing that his beloved had died, Pyramos killed himself. When Thisbe returned, she also took her own life.



Thisbe

(see next page) **Dionysus**

For the son of Semeli and Zeus has given men wine that sends grief away

Alcæos







In the Vineyards

The First Men to Drink Wine (see previous page)

King Icaros of Athens, having been instructed in the cultivation of the vine by Dionysus, offered wine to two shepherds. The shepherds became drunk, and, thinking that they had been poisoned, slaughtered the King.



Making Lace at Lefkara



The Sickle Dance

The Reaper

*But between us and Goodness
the Gods have placed
the sweat of our brows...*

Hesiod 'Works and Days'





Grape-picking

Do not plant anything before you plant a vine
Alcæos

Packing Grapes

My beloved is unto me as a cluster of Cyprus grapes...
The Song of Solomon, Chap : I



FIRST GRADE



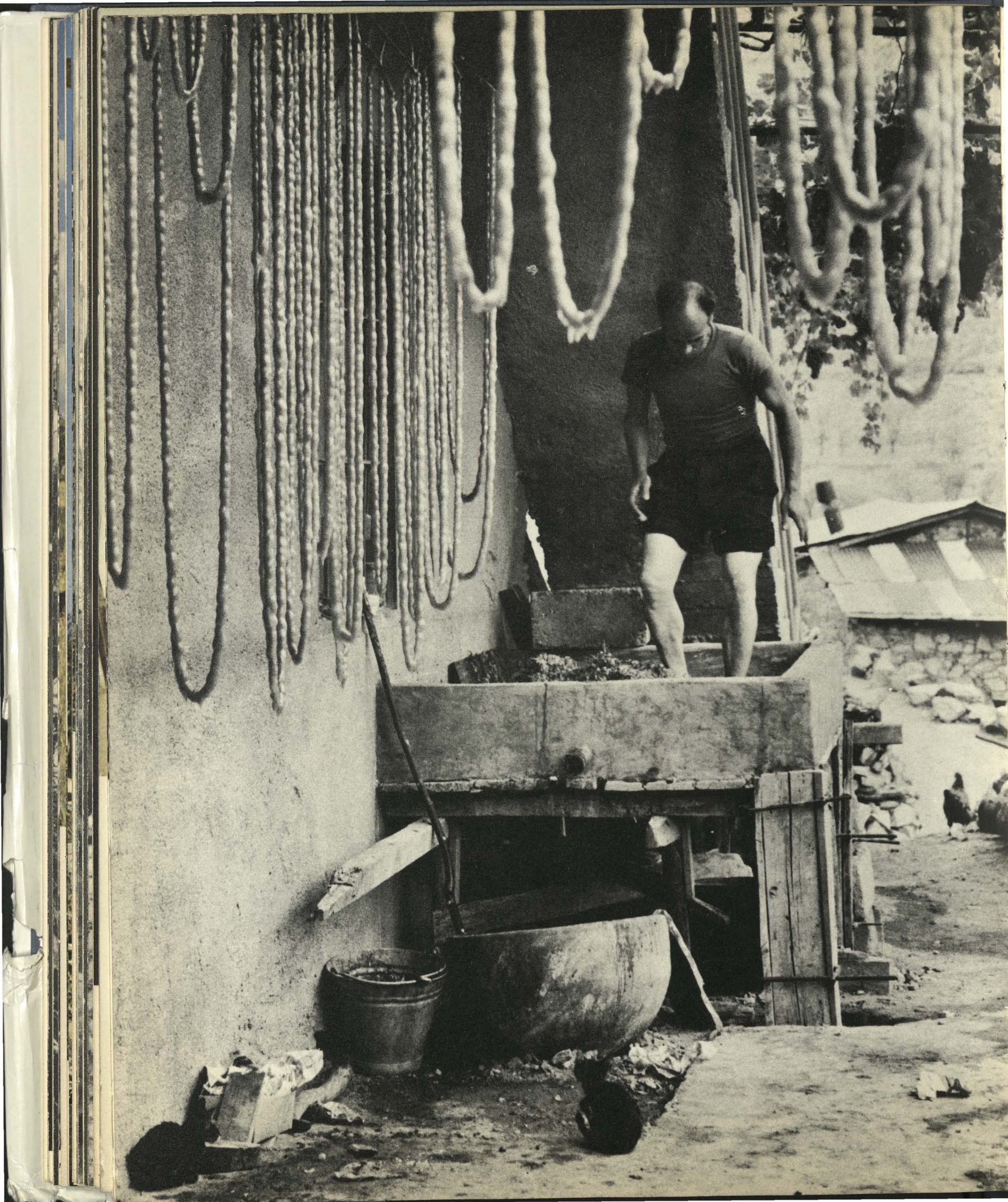
Loading Grapes

In fertility Cyprus is not inferior to any of the islands, for it produces good wine...
Strabo



Zivania

Known as "Cyprus whisky", a potent Cypriot spirit made by the vine-growers themselves by distilling the grape residue.



Sudjuko

Another product of the Cyprus vine — a kind of preserve made from grape juice, flour and nuts.





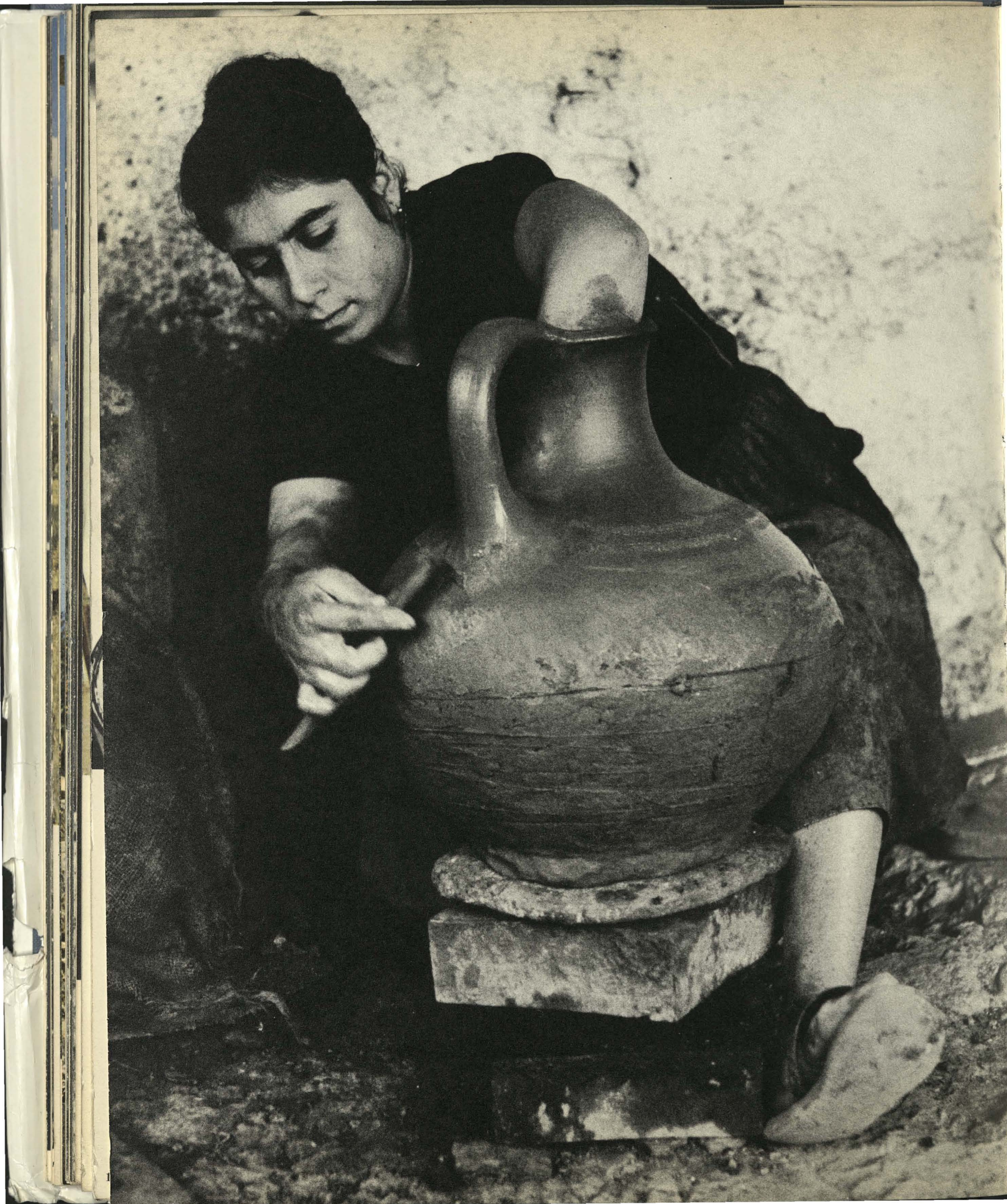
Lokmadhes

A Cyprus doughnut, usually sold at fairs.



Weaving Baskets

The traditional occupation of the women of Mesoyi village.





Pottery, Ayios Georghios, Kyrenia

*Potters, if you will give me reward, I will sing for you.
Come then Athena, with hand upraised over the kiln.
Let the pots and all the dishes turn out well and be well fired;
let them fetch good prices and be sold in plenty in the market,
and plenty in the streets.
Grant that the potters may get great gain
and grant me so to sing to them*

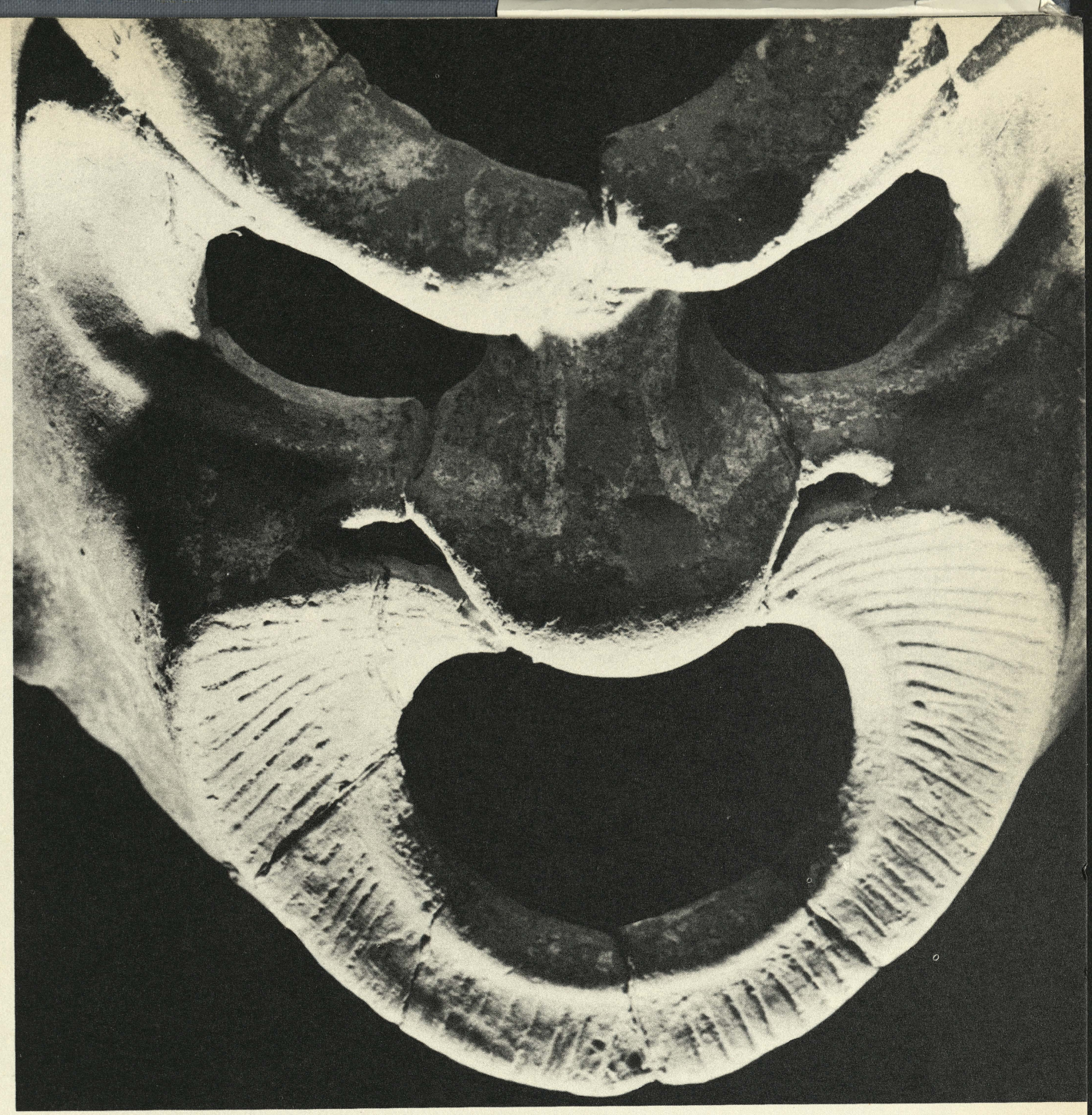
Homer 'Epigrams'





Curium Theatre

One of the three ancient theatres of Cyprus — the other two are at Salamis and Soli — where Greek tragedies are still being staged today.



Ancient Theatrical Mask

During the Hellenistic period Cyprus produced a number of notable dramatists, amongst whom Sopatros of Paphos was the most outstanding.



Through the centuries Greek Cypriots have found solace in their religious faith. The Church has always been a source of hope for the people who, especially on religious days, make pilgrimages to monasteries throughout the island.



The Archbishop Enthroned

...And her Primate he honoured with royal prerogatives, to wit, to wear a purple cloak at religious ceremonies, to carry a sceptre instead of a pastoral staff, to sign in red ink, and to assume the dignity of an autocephalous Archbishop and not to be subordinate to any of the Patriarchs...

Archimandrite Kyprianos,
18th Century



Worshippers at the
Monastery of St. Neophytus



Princess Irene lighting a candle
in the Abbey of Bellapaix



*For us it was no mere Crusade
the war for the faith of Christ
and for the soul of man
seated on the knees
of Our Lady, protectress, leader of the army,
who bore tessellated in her eyes
the woe of Hellenism*

George Seferis
'Neophytus the Hermit Speaks'

5th or 6th century mosaic in the Church
of Panayia Angeloktisti, Kitium, Larnaca

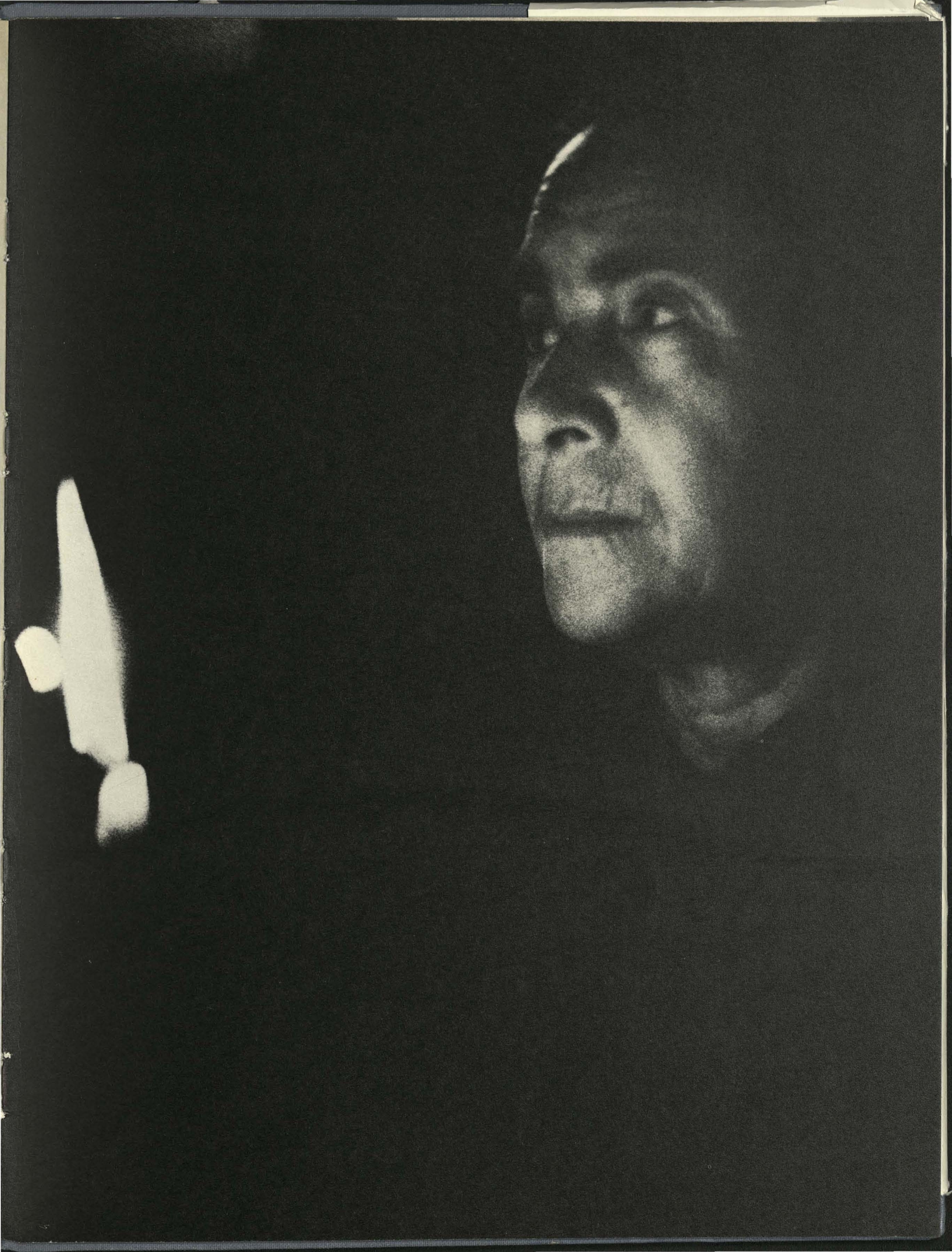


"The Almighty", 14th century fresco at the Monastery of Panayia of Arakas, Laghoudera

The Greeks have always seen in the Passion Week and the miracle of Resurrection an allegory of their own national life.



He who has suspended the earth in water is today being suspended on wood
Maundy Thursday Hymn



*Women gathered
to decorate the Epitaphion.*

*For the pain
inside the roses, and the Holy lament,
and the breath of Spring that came in
through the church door exalted
their spirit
in the miracle of Resurrection*

Angelos Sikelianos



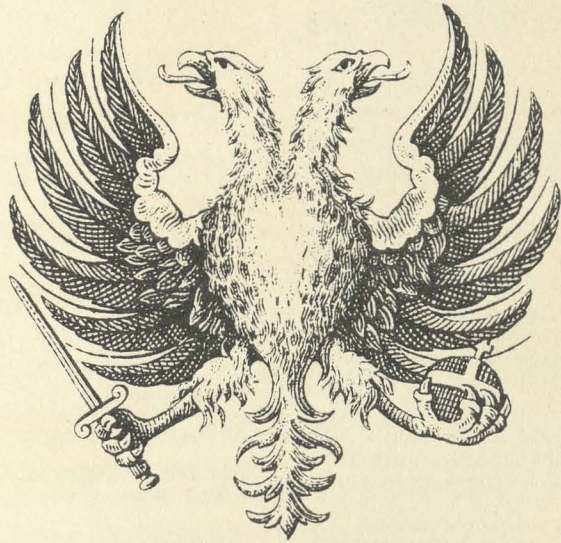




The Solemn Procession of the Epitaphion



The Resurrection



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