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## CYPRUS LEPER FARM IN THE BRITISH PERIOD (1878-1955)

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### Abstract

This article examines Cyprus Leper Farm founded at the end of the 1820s or beginning of the 1830s between 1878 and 1955 during the British Period. Britain took over Cyprus with the agreement of the Ottoman government in 1878. Since beginning of the colonial period many improvements were carried out on health systems. British administration in Cyprus enacted two laws dated 1891 and 1929 regarding leprosy. The laws regulated the management of the Farm, and the Chief Medical Officer appointed by the Government. The British Government in Cyprus aimed to decrease the population of the Farm, and to treat the patients, and so provided it with suitable conditions such as bread, water, washing, a church and a mosque. The British administration succeeded in fighting with leprosy. After the remedial treatment of leprosy, the Cyprus Leper Farm was closed in 1955.

**Keywords:** Cyprus Leper Farm, Leprosy, Leper, British, Nicosia.

The aim of this study is to evaluate the Cyprus Leper Farm and to find out the status of the lepers and practices on colonial Cyprus. In this study the administrative, legislative, juridical, health, social, economic and security issues concerning the Cyprus Leper Farm during the period of the British administration are discussed based on the documents of the National Archives (London)<sup>1</sup> and the documents of the Cyprus National Archives and Research Center (Kyrenia/TRNC).

There are two scholarly works on the Cyprus Leper Farm. One of them was authored by M. Demiryürek (Demiryürek, 2008: 357-362.) who worked on the establishment of the 'Miskinhane of Cyprus' and attempted to determine its foundation and location. The second was by the Medical Doctor N. Beratlı who described the disease of leprosy, the historical progress of the disease in the world, indicated the general condition of Islam and the Ottoman State, and then briefly examined the general condition of the Miskinhane of Cyprus (Beratlı, 2013).

Leprosy, also known as Hansen's disease, is a granulomatous infection principally affecting the skin and peripheral nerves caused by the intracellular organism *Mycobacterium leprae* and it often affects the nerves of the hands, feet and face, and also the skin. Left untreated, leprosy can be progressive, causing permanent damage to the skin, nerves, limbs and eyes (Walker and Lockwood, 2006: 103-21). In spite of today's efficient treatment, leprosy represents a public health problem in some countries of the world. It is also called Hansen's disease, named after the Norwegian physician Gerhard Armauer Hansen (1841-1912), who discovered the bacterium under the microscopic lens in Bergen in 1871. The disease was known in the classical age, from when its Greek name *lepra* was derived (Tan and Graham, 2008: 520).

Leprosy is one of the oldest diseases known to man and has been a scourge of mankind for thousands of years. Through the centuries it has been one of the most dreaded of human diseases due to its disfiguring and incurable aspects. Historians have conceded that leprosy was known to the ancient Chinese, Indians, and Egyptians. Its origin, however, has been lost in the pre-literate past. Leprosy is known to have spread rapidly and extensively over Europe, reaching its maximum rate of incidence around the first half of the 14<sup>th</sup> century (Badger, 1951: 6.). The disease has a long history in the Mediterranean Basin with its first clinical description possibly that made in the 16<sup>th</sup> century B.C. in the Ebers Papyrus (Buttigieg et al., 2008: 34).

First known in Egypt, it did not spread into Europe until after the Roman invasion of Egypt, while Phoenician seamen probably spread it to Greece and the Mediterranean ports, Roman soldiers brought it to Italy and then deeper into Europe (Greene, 1985: 7). At the inception of Islam, the Qur'an mentions in two places the healing of lepers (*al-abras*) by Jesus. The segregation of lepers that did exist in early Islamic communities was exceptional with regard to all other diseases. This segregation however, should not be emphasized too strongly; the lepers had remarkable freedom of movement, even when they resided in leper

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asylums, comparable with the harmless madmen who wandered freely through the streets (Dols, 1983: 894-915).

The rapid spread of the disease led to lepers being isolating from society, with lepers shunned by members of the community after their fate was determined by a physician and priest, from when the infected lived in isolation and abandonment. Because lepers were considered '*incurables*' and the representation of a '*social canker*', they were sent to leper houses, where they were isolated (Voeuk, 2004: 62). For this purpose, separate settlements were established in many countries for lepers. According to the account of R. Edmond, hundreds of leper asylums were established throughout the world and these were asylums were maintained as required into the mid-20<sup>th</sup> c (Edmond, 2006: 143-147). In his analysis of institutions of '*enclosure*' in colonial and imperial settings, Rod Edmond has described the leprosy asylum as a '*brutally literal form*' of detention established in an attempt to protect the metropolis and the colonizer '*from the world they were colonizing*' (Edmond, 2006: 20-21).

British imperial expansion during the nineteenth century brought increasing awareness that leprosy was a problem in many colonies. In 1863, the Colonial Office asked the Royal College of Physicians of London to prepare a report on leprosy, focusing on the question of its transmission: was it hereditary or contagious? If hereditary, then segregation was inappropriate, but if contagious, segregation would be appropriate. The college investigation took the form of a poorly worded questionnaire, sent to a number of individuals around the world (Edmond, 2006: 52-55). Responses were gathered from the West Indies, China, Japan, India, Africa, the Middle East, and European and Mediterranean countries including Cyprus. The report was published in 1867 and then circulated throughout the British colonies (Robertson, 2009: 477; Kakar, 1996: 217-219).

Before the discovery of remedial methods for leprosy in 1915/7 compulsory segregation was the only measure in common use. This in practice meant imprisonment-usually for life-such as has never been used in any other chronic disease; but in the case of leprosy it was sanctioned by public opinion, and usually unjustified, dread of the crippling and disfiguring effects seen in advanced cases in the absence of any known effective treatment. Hence, compulsory segregation was practically the sole method in use for the control of leprosy through long ages (Rogers, 1946: 825.). Despite these progresses regarding the treatment leprosy, the actual presence of the disease continued in Europe until the 1950s (Robertson, 2009: 478).

#### **Establishment of the Leper Farm**

In Western languages, '*Leprosarium*', '*Leper Asylum*' places of isolation for leprosy patients, they were referred to as '*Miskinhâne*' or '*Cüzzamhâne*' in Ottoman Turkish. The words *judhâm* and *misikin* were taken from Arabic into Ottoman Turkish to describe the disease. It was said that laws were enacted and orders issued; '*lepers were exiled from the city*' (Akgündüz, 1990: 295).

Some municipalities segregated lepers out of the cities establishing leper colonies (*misikinler tekyeleri*) in the Ottoman State (Çelebi, 2001: 434; White, 2010: 555). At the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, there were dwellings built for lepers in Uskudar, Konya, Bursa, Urfa, and Cyprus (Demiryürek, 2008: 357-358).

In cities without a *cüzzamhâne*, one of the neighbourhoods beyond the city walls was allocated for leper patients and they were not allowed into the city. Leprosy was regarded as a contagious and incurable disease, with those having the symptoms immediately isolated through removal to the *cüzzamhâne*. The treatments and the costs of maintaining the lepers and the *cüzzamhâne* were provided from donations and through foundations (*waqfs*). Because they were not humiliated as isolated lepers, *cüzzamhânes* were called '*Miskinhâne/Misikinler Çiftliği/Misikinler Tekkesi*' instead (Ünver and Şeyhsuvaroğlu, 1961: 6).

There are two assertions regarding the establishment of the Cyprus Leper Farm (*Misikinler Chiftligi*).<sup>2</sup> According to these assertions, the Cyprus Leper Farm was established in 1828 or 1830. M. Demiryürek, referring to a document in the Ottoman Archive, claims that the Leper Farm was established in 1828 (Demiryürek, 2008: 358-359). In other respects, the Cyprus Leper Farm (*Misikinler Chiftligi*) was established in 1830 as a foundation of the two religions. According to N. Beratlı, on the basis of information provided by the Cyprus Church Council's decision, initially, the expenses were provided by the Archbishop and the Church Council derived from farm lands administered by the Administration of Foundations (*Evqaf*). The Cyprus Leper Farm was donated by the Archbishop (7.500 piasters), the Bishopric of Paphos (3.000 piasters), the Bishopric of Kitium (3.500 piasters), the Bishopric of Kyrenia (3.000 piasters), the Kykkos Monastery (3.000 piasters) and the Machaira Monastery (1.000 piasters). The Farm was granted by the Administration of Foundations, and had 200 acres of land in Eglence village, near Ayios Paraskevi hill, 1,5 miles from Nicosia. It is claimed that the farm land had belonged to Dragoman Hacı Georgakis Kornesios (Beratlı, 2013: 59-64).

<sup>2</sup> The Miskinhane was called as '*misginissa*' in Greek in the island.

This claim was firstly written in a Report on the Cyprus Leper Farm by Dr. Heidenstam, the Chief Medical Officer, and relates:

the history of the measures taken to provide for lepers suffering from leprosy, from the early part of 19<sup>th</sup> century, when to save them for destruction, the dragoman of the Government (sarai) at that time, a person of wealth and influence, compassionately set apart a tract of land, of about 120 donums, which he possessed at a distance of two miles from Nicosia, for the use of lepers, in order that (they) might live there in a separate community and cultivate the land and live by the produce of the land as well as by any other private means they might possess (Heidenstam, 1890: 3).

The same submission was cited in the news of The Times dated 14 June 1897:

In the early part of this century the Pasha who was Governor of Cyprus ordered all of them to be done away with; he did not, however, order a painless drug, but guns. A dragoman named Georgakis, intervened and offered to give a farm for the unhappy people to live on if the sentence of death would be withdrawn. This (resulted in the) existing leper farm or asylum (The Times, 14 June 1897: 6.).

But, as said above, the farm did not yet exist in the early part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. From the date, despite the lack of the farm, it has been supposed that the land for the Leper Farm belonged to the dragoman. However, when the dragoman was executed due to his illegal acquisitions in 1809, his estates were confiscated (Dinç, 2010: 66-73). Consequently, even if the land had formerly belonged to this dragoman, after 1809 this land was included within that administered by the Administration of Foundations. Hill also informs us that the Leper Farm opened in 1831 (Hill, 1950: 155).

As a result of all of the claims, it is clearly understood that the Cypriot lepers were living out of Nicosia even before 1828-30, but that there was no asylum. At the end of the 1820s or at the beginning of the 1830s the Cyprus Leper Farm was established for the lepers to live under favourable conditions.

Travellers and the consulates in Cyprus described the Leper Farm during the Ottoman period. Many travellers were met by a party of lepers begging for alms at the gates of Nicosia, especially Famagusta Gate (Löher, 1878: 20). Serving at the American consulate for about 10 years in Cyprus (1865-76), Luigi Palma di Cesnola noticed that the lepers lived about a mile from Nicosia, and were numbered around 200, of whom forty were Turks. Cesnola also mentioned that the lepers had no houses, but lived in ancient excavated tombs and in a few sheds built by themselves, and they were each supposed to receive a loaf bread a-day from the Turkish Government, but were it not for the Archbishop of Cyprus, who sent them food (Cesnola, 1877: 244) during the late Ottoman period, the contribution made from the rent of the farm land was the most important source of income (Löher, 1878: 20).

The information of the Leper Farm regarding the late Ottoman period can be obtained in more detail from a report dating from the beginning of the English period. The circumstances of the leper farm are clearly recorded in the report. According to this report, the Leper Farm comprised an area of about 200 donums; this land, excluding about 20 donums, which the lepers till for their own benefit, had usually been rented out for 2.000 piasters, or for its value in corn or barley. In the year 1879, however, the land had up to the last month remained fallow, the farmer not thinking it worthwhile to rent it out, because it had been a very dry season. Due to the uncertainty of the weather the value of this ground had also been considerably decreased, and had been this month rented to a certain Hagi Mustafa of Nicosia for only 5*l*. (half of the former price), and this money had been paid into the civil treasury. In addition, it was reported that the dwelling of the lepers contained 25 rooms, a small Greek chapel, and a wash room. These were arranged so as to enclose a square into which most of the doors of the rooms led. The water supply of the farm was very good, the source being from upwards of 100 wells dug many years earlier which was conveyed to its destination through an aqueduct, which for nearly all of its distance was covered, the superfluous water soaking into the ground behind the village, where there were a few fruit trees. The oldest leper was a woman of 80 years of age, with 50 years of residence, who was blind, deaf, bedridden, and greatly disfigured. At the date of this report, there were 46 lepers, 33 men, 13 women; 44 Greeks and 2 Turks. In addition during the past year 14 sufferers were admitted; 8 died, of whom, 5 were men and 3 women; while 2 were allowed to return to their villages, having the disease but in a mild form and being free from any open sores (NA., Report by Her Majesty's High Commissioner for year 1879, 1880: 258-260).

In the Farm, each leper was daily provided with three loaves of bread, and ½ piasters (75 piasters over 30 days). The *mukhtar* (headman) of the village, Hagi Nicola, was charged with looking after the order in this place, and came into town to make the necessary purchases, and reported to the Civil Surgeon any case of increasing sickness. He drew a small salary, his pay in all amounting to 135 piasters a month, excluding bread (NA., Report by Her Majesty's High Commissioner for year 1879, 1880: 259).

Besides the report of 1877, the Chief Medical Officers of Cyprus did some research on leprosy in Cyprus during the Ottoman period in 1882 and 1890. From the results of this research it was ascertained that 34 was the number of inmates in the Leper Farm in the year 1854, and that about 100 more cases existed in the island. In 1862, the number recorded was 94 (NA., Report by Her Majesty's High Commissioner for year 1882, 1883: 33). The number of lepers existing in the Island prior to the year 1878 was, according to authentic records, over 150 (Heidenstam, 1890: 14).

#### **The Legislation for the Leper Farm**

After the occupation, Britain took over law-making powers on the island through the additional act of the 14<sup>th</sup> of August 1878. One of the primary subjects of the new Cyprus administration was health. Especially, after this date, legislation for the fight against infectious diseases was started. The first law enacted concerning leprosy was '*The Infectious Diseases Prevention Ordinance, 1882* (The Cyprus Gazette, 16 Sept. 1882: 220-221). By this law the Government prohibited the landing in Cyprus of any person suffering from leprosy or any leprous affliction. This was the first law regarding the Leper Farm under the British administration.

Laws were enacted and amendments made at different dates for the administration of the farm, the duties of the officer, the removal of the lepers, patients' rights and responsibilities, the general organization of the farm etc.

In Cyprus the first law draft on the Leper Farm was in March, 1891, entitled '*to Regulate the Segregation and Treatment of Lepers in Cyprus*' (The Cyprus Gazette, 20 March 1891: 1739-1740). The draft became a law in May, 1891. The law was cited as '*The Lepers Law, 1891*', and consisted of ten clauses, published in The Cyprus Gazette, Supplement, of the 15<sup>th</sup> of May 1891 (The Cyprus Gazette, 15 May 1891: 1782-1784). Thus, the Leper Farm was legitimized with the law.

The law passed in 1891 to better regulate the segregation and treatment of the lepers appointed a superintendent who resided in the asylum, to enforce discipline and oversee the conduct of the lepers.

The first amendment to the Lepers Law was dated the 2<sup>nd</sup> of February, 1894. In this amendment, the removal of Lepers to the Leper Farm enacted the proper management and sanitation of the Leper Farm, the discipline and good order of the inmates of the Leper Farm, the custody and imprisonment within the Leper Farm of lepers accused of and found guilty of offences, and in detail, the better carrying out of the provisions of the Law and the wellbeing of the Leper Farm and the inmates thereof (The Cyprus Gazette, 2 Feb. 1894: 2366). This amendment clearly shows that there were mistakes made in the implementation of the law and deficiencies in the law. The Lepers Law of 1891 remained in force for a long time, with some amendments (The Cyprus Gazette, 17 July 1896: 3116).

In 1929, because of a change in the treatment of the disease and the new necessities of the Leper Farm, new regulations were required. For this purpose a new law was enacted on the 19<sup>th</sup> of April 1929 (The Cyprus Gazette, 19 April 1929: 244.). Subsequently on the 16<sup>th</sup> of August, 1929, the first amendment was made to the regulation. With the amendment, being the amended clause 20, a priest and a hodja were appointed to the Farm and the jobs of the chaplains were defined (The Cyprus Gazette, 16 Aug. 1929: 537). The other amendment to the Regulation of 1929, which was an order-in-council, was on the 4<sup>th</sup> of April 1930. According to this amendment, no person should bring into the Leper Farm or any part thereof any intoxicating liquor without the previous permission in writing of the Resident Director or, in his absence, from the Sister in Charge of the Leper Farm (The Cyprus Gazette, 4 April 1930: 315).

The other regulation (amendment) regarding the Leper Farm was dated the 15<sup>th</sup> of July 1932 (The Cyprus Gazette, 15 July 1932: 482-483). Amending this regulation under clause 24, the following Regulations were hereby repealed without prejudice to anything that had been done or left undone thereunder:

- '*Leper Asylum Regulations, 1929*',
- '*Leper Asylum (Amendment) Regulations, 1929*',
- '*Regulations (Amendment) Regulations, 1930*'.
- '*Regulations (Amendment) Regulations, 1932*'

In this Regulation, the duty of the officer and detention of lepers were defined anew.

These Regulations were cited as the Leper Asylum Regulations, 1929. All previous Regulations that had been made under the Lepers Law of 1891 were hereby repealed, provided that anything done under any Regulations hereby repealed shall be deemed to have been done under these Regulations.

With the laws enacted regarding the Leper Farm under the British administration, the management of the Farm and health practices were put in order, similar to those of other British Colonies.

#### **Management of the Leper Farm**

In 1878, the United Kingdom temporarily and conditionally received as a protectorate the island of Cyprus from the Ottoman State in exchange for British military support for the Ottoman 'Empire', if Russia

attempted to take possession of Ottoman territory in Asia. The British Empire annexed the island with the outbreak of the First World War in 1914. Thus, Cyprus was begun to be governed in the same way as the other British Crown colonies, unilaterally (Çelik, 2012: 39-63).

Due to the temporary nature of the island's possession, the British authorities, in the early period of rule mainly adopted loose administrative policies that were, in most cases, simply the continuation of the Ottoman policies. One of these policies was the administration of the Leper Farm and in consequence prior to 1881, the administration of the asylum had not been directly under the Medical Department, but at the beginning of the financial year, 1881-82, it was formally transferred to it (N.A., CO., 883/2/16: 16-17). In practice, at the end of 1880, the Leper Farm, which had been administered, like all the other villages in the district, by the Commissioner of Nicosia, was formally transferred to the Medical Department (Heidenstam, 1890: 13).

In 1881/2, the Leper Farm was put under the management of the Medical Department, with the exception of bread supplied by the Medical Department (N.A., CO., 883/2/16: 16). A superintendent officiated in the Farm at the same time. The superintendent's allowance was £ 12 by 1881/2 and 1882/3 (N.A., Papers Relating to the Finances of Cyprus 1881, 1882: 24).

The Infectious Diseases Prevention Ordinance, 1882 which was the first law concerning leprosy, allowed the High Commissioner to prohibit the landing in Cyprus of any person suffering from leprosy or suffering from any leprosy affliction (The Cyprus Gazette, 16 Sept. 1882: 220-221). This decision meant that leprosy and the Cyprus Leper Farm was under the High Commissioner. In addition, the management of the leper farm, the duties of civil servants, the procedure to be applied to the farm in patients, patients' rights, the general layout of the farm, etc. were enacted at later dates.

The Leper Farm had a particular status under the British administration. The High Commissioner - Governor was pre-eminently the chief of the Leper Farm. The High Commissioner had legislative power over the Leper Farm through 'The Lepers Law, 1891'. It shall be lawful for the High Commissioner in Council from time to time to appoint any place as he shall think fit to be a Leper Asylum, for the segregation and treatment of lepers. Also, any person detained as a Leper in the Leper Farm may, by the special permission of the High Commissioner erect or cause to be erected for himself a dwelling house, at his own proper expense within the limits of the Farm in which he was detained, subject to such conditions as to plan, site, drainage and otherwise as the High Commissioner shall deem fit (The Cyprus Gazette, 15 May 1891: 1782).

The Second Law concerning the Leper Farm of 1894 stated that the Leper Farm shall be under the direct control of the Chief Medical Officer. The title of Chief Medical Officer was changed to Director of Health in 1928 (The Cyprus Gazette, 18 May 1928: 369). The Chief Medical Officer visited it at least once a week and more often if required. He examined any complaints made by any of the inmates of the asylum and took such action as the circumstances of the case required. Also, he was responsible for the maintenance of good order and discipline in the Leper Farm (The Cyprus Gazette, 2 Feb. 1894: 2366).

Another officer in the Farm was the Secretary of the Farm. The Secretary visited the same at least twice a week, and noted any complaints that the inmates could make and transmitted the same to the Chief Medical Officer. He registered the name, age and gender of each inmate, the village and district from which they came, their previous occupation, their date of admission into the Leper Farm, the length of time afflicted, and whether they have any relations affected and such other particulars. He kept all books relating to the expenditure at the Leper Farm and regularly, fortnightly or monthly, as the case may be, personally made payment to the lepers the allowance granted by the Government, and he recorded all correspondence relating to the lepers and the said Leper Farm (The Cyprus Gazette, 2 Feb. 1894: 2366).

The Superintendent of the Leper Farm resided in the apartments provided for him at the Farm, and was not absent himself for more than four consecutive hours without permission from the Chief Medical Officer. The Superintendents were visiting the quarters of the lepers and every part of the asylum at least once a day and saw that the directions of the Chief Medical Officer were thoroughly carried out (The Cyprus Gazette, 2 Feb. 1894: 2366).

The Superintendent, under the Chief Medical Officer, was responsible for the cleanliness and general discipline of the asylum, and had control over the attendants employed therein. Besides, he reported to the Chief Medical Officer, or to the Secretary for transmission to the Chief Medical Officer, any infraction of the rules of the asylum by any of the inmates or persons employed therein, and any other occurrence that may bear upon the maintenance of good order, in the asylum or otherwise that may be proper to be noted. He was required at once report all the particulars to the Chief Medical Officer concerning the absence of any inmate without leave (The Cyprus Gazette, 2 Feb. 1894: 2366).

He could not permit any inmate to be absent from the asylum without his having obtained written permission from the Chief Medical Officer. He could not allow anyone to visit the Leper Farm without the permission in writing of the Chief Medical Officer. Similarly, he could not allow any visitor to remain longer than two hours at the farm and, on no occasion, or under any pretext, was such visitor to be allowed to spend the night there (The Cyprus Gazette, 2 Feb. 1894: 2366).

The council considered the case of George Zitis, the Leper Farm Superintendent, who had been examined by a medical board and found unfit for further service on account of an ulcer which might have originated, as he stated, from an attack of erysipelas contracted in the performance of his duties. It was agreed that he be retired and allowed to draw an annuity in accordance with the Pension Regulations and that the matter was referred back to the Chief Medical Officer for a certificate as to the amount to which he was entitled, on account of his having been incapacitated (N.A., CO., 69/26: 28-29).

The other officer on the Farm was the *Sister in Charge* who was appointed by the Governor. The *Sister in Charge* who resided on the Farm was responsible for the general management and internal economy of the hospital and had charge and control of the nurses and servants employed therein. Also, she was responsible for the cleanliness of the wards and other premises under her care, for the cleanliness and due care of the patients and for carrying out the orders of the Medical Officer in all matters affecting the treatment of the lepers and the sanitation of the Leper Farm. Also, she was to keep a book in which she entered all instructions from the Medical Officer and all reports and incidents in connection with the treatment of the lepers or the sanitation of the Leper Farm which had been brought to the notice of either of them. This book was to be initialled by the Medical Officer on each of his visits and inspected and initialled by the Director of Health on each of his visits and the Director of Health was to record therein any instructions he may give with regard to any of the entries. In the absence of the Superintendent, the *Sister in Charge* had all the powers and responsibilities of a Superintendent in addition to her own duties (The Cyprus Gazette, 15 July 1932: 482-83).

The Guards for the Leper Farm who resided at the Leper Farm were appointed by the Governor of Cyprus. Two guards were always on duty and not more than one could be absent from the Leper Farm at any time. A guard could not under any circumstances allow any leper to leave the precincts of the Leper Farm without the written permission of the Director of Health (The Cyprus Gazette, 15 July 1932: 482-483).

It is significant that out of regularly maintained staff of 19 warders and attendants of both sexes, engaged in the farm since 1891, no case of the disease occurring amongst them had come to the knowledge of the Medical Department (N.A., Medical Report for 1916, 1917: 7).

The treatments and drugs for the lepers were free in the Farm, and any violation required a fine. There was a case against Dr. Bairmian, against whom charges had been brought for charging a person for medical attendance or operations and at the same time allowing them to obtain medicines free of charge from the Government Dispensary, and also for having, while acting as District Medical Officer, prescribed for a man for biliousness and charged a fee of 2 £, while as a matter of fact the man in question was a leper. The Chief Medical Officer was present as also was Dr. Bairamian. After the case had been fully examined, Dr. Bairamian intimated that if the Council took a serious view of the matter he would ask for permission to resign (N.A., CO. 69/14: 28-29).

#### **The Removal of Lepers to the Leper Farm and Leaving From the Farm**

One of the important implementations on the Leper Farm was the examination and checking of the lepers who had entered and been discharged from the Farm. Since lepra was known as an infectious disease, lepers were prevented from being in the same area as healthy people. So, in consequence the Leper Farm had been established in order to block the spread of this disease (The Cyprus Gazette, 15 May 1891, 1782-1783; The Cyprus Gazette, 2 Feb. 1894: 2366).

As stated above, the reason for the establishment of the Leper Farm was to block the transmission of the contagious disease. For this purpose, the entering and leaving of a leper from the Farm was strictly under control. Likewise, the entering and leaving of healthy persons from the Farm was strictly controlled. Legally, any visitor was not allowed to remain for longer than two hours at the Farm, nor under any circumstances be permitted to spend the night there (The Cyprus Gazette, 2 Feb. 1894: 2366; The Cyprus Gazette, 19 April 1929: 244). Visitors could see their friends in the room set apart for that purpose, unless the person visited was bed-ridden (The Cyprus Gazette, 2 Feb. 1894: 2366).

The procedure for the removal of the lepers to the Farm was set out in detail with these laws. Accordingly, the method for the removal of the lepers was as follows:

1. First of all, it shall be the duty of every person having knowledge of the existence of a leper or a person reasonably suspected of being a leper in any place outside the limits of the Leper Farm, to give information thereof to the *mukhtar* of the village or quarter in which such leper or suspected leper was

found. Every person wilfully neglecting to give such information was guilty of an offence, and was liable for each such offence to a fine not exceeding 5 £.

2. The mukhtar was to report such leper or suspected leper to the Commissioner of the District forthwith. Every mukhtar wilfully neglecting to report was guilty of an offence, and was liable for each such offence to a fine not exceeding 5 £.

3. Upon the receipt of such a report, the Commissioner of the District was to forward such report to the Chief Secretary to Government for the information of the High Commissioner forthwith.

4. The Commissioner of the District was to provide for the examination of such leper or suspected leper by the District Medical Officer forthwith, and it was to be the duty of such District Medical Officer to make such an examination, and report the result of the same in writing to the Commissioner; if it is the opinion of the District Medical Officer that such person is suffering from leprosy, he was draw up and sign a certificate to that effect, and forward the same without delay to the Chief Medical Officer.

5. Upon the receipt of such a report, the Chief Medical Officer may make arrangements with the Commissioner for the removal of such leper to the Leper Farm for examination by the Chief Medical Officer, and, in carrying out such arrangements, the Commissioner was to take all necessary steps for the removal of such leper and for the handing over of him or her to the Superintendent of the Leper Farm, and was to report such removal and handing over to the Chief Medical Officer forthwith.

6. Upon the receipt of such a report, the Chief Medical Officer was to examine such leper, and if he concurs in the opinion of the District Medical Officer, as expressed in the certificate, he was to countersign such certificate and forward the same to the Chief Secretary to Government and was to ask (for) the issue of an order by the High Commissioner for such detention in the Leper Farm.

The procedure of the removal of the lepers to the Leper Farm was as can be seen above. Such a person suffering from leprosy and in receipt of the sickness certificate was then torn from his family, who as a rule are his deadliest enemies; his goods are divided amongst his relatives, and he is banished from their presence forever. His clothes and cotton quilt are given to him, and a guard of his fellow citizens conducts him to this place, and here he is left to live or to perish (Stevenson, 1881: 148).

As well as the removal of the lepers to the Farm, the entering and discharge of the lepers from the Farm were kept strictly under the control of the Government. As well as no person detained as a leper in the Leper Farm, no person could leave the Farm without permission. The Superintendent resided in the Farm, under the Chief Medical Officer, and was not permitted to be absent from the Farm without his first having obtained in writing, permission from the Chief Medical Officer (The Cyprus Gazette, 15 May 1891: 2367; The Cyprus Gazette, 2 Feb. 1894: 2366). A leper, when allowed out on parole could not take any furniture or wearing apparel from the Leper Farm unless such wearing apparel or furniture had been previously disinfected (The Cyprus Gazette, 15 July 1932: 483). However, from time to time, lepers succeeded in secretly leaving the farm and in returning to their villages. These escapees were followed, brought back, and punished with the forfeiture of their money allowance for a certain period, but this punishment does not appear to have had a very strong deterrent effect, while the leper had once again been in close communication with his relations and friends (Stevenson, 1881: 148).

Besides the detention, if a married Muslim leper was removed to the Farm, the wife might claim divorce. Because, under Islamic rules, when the husband was infected with the incurable disease of leprosy, basar or venereal disease, the wife had the right to divorce through appealing to the *qadi* (judge). For instance, in 1913, a wife whose husband had been removed to the Leper Farm consulted the *qadi* as to whether she was already divorced or not under Islamic law (KMA.FE., Box:10, File, 71, Folder, 14, Doc: 1).

In another example, in 1916, a woman in Paphos, on account of her husband Djemal Mehmed, who had become an inmate of the Farm, submitted a petition asking whether she was already divorced or not under Islamic rules (KMA.FE, Box:2, File, 12, Folder, 2, Doc: 1-2.).

#### **Population of the Leper Farm**

It was strictly forbidden to enter the Farm without special permission from the authority. Therefore, all persons living in the Farm were lepers except for several officers and children who were healthy, and so the population of the Farm consisted of them. Additionally, during the British period, a little leper was living on the island separately.

There is a variety of information concerning the population of the Leper Farm on Cyprus. Most of this was obtained from reports, censuses, the Cyprus Gazette and from travellers, etc.

According to reports on the Leper Farm, leprosy was not very common in Cyprus. The proportion of the disease was around 1/2000 (The Times, 14 June 1897: 6). However, just before the British occupation, in 1877, 14 lepers were admitted to the Farm; 8 died, 5 men and 3 women; 2 were allowed to return to their villages, having the disease only in a mild form and being free from any open sores (NA., Report by Her

Majesty's High Commissioner for year 1879, 1880: 258). In addition, at the beginning of the English period, six lepers were banished to the Farm from one village (Morphou) alone (Stevenson, 1881: 41).

Cesnola noted that the lepers lived about a mile from Nicosia, and that they numbered around 200, of whom forty were Turks. He also mentioned that leprosy in Cyprus only existed among the lowest classes. He also noticed that the number of lepers increased in those years when, on account of drought, there had been a greater scarcity of food than usual (Cesnola, 1877: 244-245). Also, at the beginning of the British administration, the largest proportion of lepers outside of the Farm appeared in the Famagusta district (nearly 3 per 10.000) (N.A., CO., 883/4 /22: 16).

From the beginning of the British period the first known leper on the Farm was a woman who was blind, deaf bedridden and greatly disfigured, and she died in 1878. She was admitted as the first leper on the Farm, and had lived for 80 years without any drugs suffering from leprosy. According to the medical report on the leper village in 1878, prepared by G.S. Irving, District Civil Surgeon, there were 46 lepers, of whom 33 were men, 13 were women; 44 Greeks and 2 Turks (N.A., Report by Her Majesty's High Commissioner for year 1879, 1880: 258-260).

According to the medical report of 1881, 2 lepers who were receiving ambulatory treatment were found in Larnaca and Limassol. The government farm housed 39 males and 15 females, of whom, 5 men and 2 women died that year (N.A., CO., 883/2/16: 20). Of the number of cases treated by the Civil Medical Department on Cyprus between 1880 and 1881, 2 died from the 7 treated on the Farm in 1880 (Hook, 2009: 246).

In 1891, of 76 males and 31 females returning as lepers, 50 males and 22 females were residing in the Farm. There were 107 lepers on Cyprus, of whom 77 were from the district of Nicosia, eight from Larnaca, twelve from Famagusta, three from Paphos and only one was from Kyrenia. Değirmenlik had 75 lepers. The ages of the Cypriot lepers were mostly between 25 and 44 (N.A., CO., 883/4/22: 16, 59).

Table 1: The Population of the Leper Farm between 1901 and 1929 (KMA., Medical Report for 1928, 1929: 17; KMA., Medical Report for 1929, 1930: 19.)

Year	Inmates on 1 <sup>st</sup> January	Admitted During the Year	Deaths	Discharged	Remaining on 31 <sup>st</sup> December		
					Moslems	Christians	Total
1901	110	13	12	-	24	87	111
1902	110	12	13	-	23	87	110
1903	110	19	15	-	28	86	114
1904	114	6	9	-	28	83	111
1905	111	13	9	-	28	87	115
1906	115	3	19	-	24	75	99
1907	99	12	11	-	27	73	100
1908	100	7	5	-	28	74	102
1909	102	11	11	-	25	77	102
1910	102	12	15	-	25	74	99
1911	99	12	9	-	21	78	99
1912	99	9	11	-	18	79	97
1913	97	12	14	-	16	79	95
1914	95	12	10	-	17	80	97
1915	97	5	10	-	16	76	92
1916	92	4	6	-	19	71	90
1917	90	4	12	-	17	65	82
1918	82	4	7	-	16	63	79
1919	79	4	10	-	13	60	73
1920	73	9	12	-	12	58	70
1921	70	9	5	-	12	61	73
1922	73	5	9	-	12	57	69
1923	69	13	7	-	12	63	75
1924	75	19	7	2	13	72	85
1925	85	8	11	2	11	69	80
1926	80	11	8	-	13	70	83
1927	83	5	6	1	12	69	81
1928	81	24	10	2	14	79	93
1929	93	17	3	4	14	89	103

In the years between 1901 and 1929 a total of 288 lepers were admitted to the Leper Farm. 286 lepers died in the same period. These figure shows the number of the lepers in the Farm was kept at a certain level. Especially, after 1910 the number of the lepers was under 100 inmates.



According to other sources, the population of the Leper Farm was as bellow:

Table 2: The Population of the Leper Farm

Year	Female	Male	Total
1862 (NA., Report by Her Majesty's High Commissioner for year 1882, 1883: 33)			94
1878 (NA., Report by Her Majesty's High Commissioner for year 1879, 1880: 258)	13	46	59
1880 (Hook, 2009: 246)			58
1881 (Hook, 2009: 246)			55
1881 (N.A., CO., 883/2/16: 16-8)	15	39	54
1881 (The Times, 12 Jan. 1885: 13)			50
1882 (NA., Report by Her Majesty's High Commissioner for year 1882, 1883: 33)	17	32	49
1888 (The Times, 12 July 1889: 3)			53
1891 (N.A., CO., 883/4 /22: 16)	76	31	107
1896 (The Times, 14 June 1897: 6)			102
1901 (Harman, 1907: 57)	50	85	135
1907 (Harman, 1907: 57)	39	57	96
1909 (N.A., CO., 69/25: 2)			97
1911 (N.A., FO., 881/10254X: 72)			99
1921 (Storrs and O'Brien, 1930: 43)	24	50	74
1926 (KMA., Medical Report for 1926, 1927: 14)			83
1927 (KMA., Medical Report for 1927, 1928: 15)			81
1928 (KMA., Medical Report for 1928, 1929: 17)			93
1930 1921 (Storrs and O'Brien, 1930: 43)	24	50	74
1931 (KMA., Medical Report for 1931, 1932: 23)			89
1933 (KMA., Annual Report of Social and Economic Progress of the People of Cyprus, 1933, 1934: 8)			81
1934 (KMA., Annual Report of Social and Economic Progress of the People of Cyprus, 1934, 1935: 7)			84
1935 (KMA., Annual Report of Social and Economic Progress of the People of Cyprus, 1935, 1936: 8)			102
1936 (KMA., Medical Report for 1936, 1937: 23)			105
1937 (KMA., Annual Report of Social and Economic Progress of the People of Cyprus, 1937, 1938: 9)			105
1938 (KMA., Medical Report for 1938, 1939: 12)			113
1940 (KMA., Medical Report for 1940, 1941: 6)			121
1945 (KMA., Medical Report for 1945, 1946: 9)	30	61	91
1947 (KMA., Medical Report for 1947, 1948: 10)	28	57	85
1948 (KMA., Medical Report for 1948, 1949: 12)	27	55	82
1949 (KMA., Medical Report for 1949, 1950: 7)	35	61	96
1950 (KMA., Medical Report for 1950, 1951: 8)	39	66	105

According to these figures the number of lepers fluctuated. Even in the mid-century of 20<sup>th</sup> century, the number of the lepers was much more than 100.

It was indicated in detail which cities and age groups the lepers were from in the census of 1911. According to this census, there were 101 lepers, 65 men and 36 women. The largest age range was the group aged between 25 and 44 and this group consisted of 52 people (Mavrogordato, 1916: 70). 94 of the 101 lepers came from Degirmenlik. Although it is interesting, the reason for this number is not known.

Table 3: Lepers in the Census of 1911 (Mavrogordato, 1916: 70)

District	0 - 5		5-14		15-19		20-24		25-44		45-64		65+		Total		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
Nicosia																	
Degirmenlik					2	1	7	9	30	22	19	9	2		60	34	94
Dagh																	
Lefka																	
Morphou									1						1		1
Total					2	1	7	2	31	22	19	9	2		61	34	95
Larnaca																	
Limassol																	
Limassol							1	1						1	1	2	
Evdhimou									1				1		2		2
Kilani																	
Total							1	2					1		3	1	4

Famagusta																	
Famagusta											1					1	1
Messaorea																	
Karpas										1							
Total										1	1				1	1	2
Paphos																	
Paphos																	
K.t.rysokhou																	
Kelokethara																	
Total																	
Kyrenia																	
Total					2	1	7	3	33	22	20	10	3		65	36	101

In the same year, it was ascertained that twenty four of the fifty lepers had parents or close relative who had also suffered from leprosy. Further, considering the age of the lepers, there were 2 under 5 years old, 1 between 5-15 years, 5 between 15-25 years, 37 between 25-60 years, and 5 over 60 years. The oldest of them was a woman who was 80 and had suffered from leprosy for the last sixty years and had lived on the Leper Farm for the past forty years (N.A., CO., 883/2/16: 17).

In the same year, according to the Census of 1911, there were 274.108 people living in Cyprus (Çelik, 2012: 339).

Table 4: Relations in the Leper Farm (N.A., CO., 883/2/16: 17)

Case	Relation
3 cases	Father and Mother
2 cases	Father and Brother
5 cases	Mother only
5 cases	Father only
2 cases	Father and aunt
1 case	Grandfather, father and mother
2 cases	Sister only
2 cases	Uncle only
2 cases	Cousins only

Table 5: The number of cases occurring in six districts of Cyprus in ten year periods between 1890 and 1930 (KMA., Medical Report for 1930, 1931: 29).

District	Before 1891	1891-1900	1901-1910	1911-1920	1921-1930	Total
Nicosia	11	27	26	15	37	116
Famagusta	12	24	13	14	20	84
Larnaca	4	15	6	4	4	32
Limassol	11	41	29	23	26	130
Paphos	3	17	16	11	16	63
Kyrenia	12	14	16	8	16	66
Total	53	138	106	75	110	491

### The Living Space of the Lepers

The Cyprus Leper Farm was established by foundations and had 200 acres of land in Eglence village, near Ayios Paraskevi hill, 1,5 miles from Nicosia. The Cypriot lepers lived within what was termed a *chiftliq-farm* or a *miskinhane-leper house*, at a distance of two miles from Nicosia, and they were supported by the Government, but the *chiftliq* was not tidy in the beginning of British rule (Heidenstam, 1890: 3-4). The leper Farm, at the time of the occupation of Cyprus, consisted of a few mud hovels in the centre of a treeless wasteland, situated in a depression (Bovill, 1915: 9). A number of huts were added to those already existing, and the Farm was enclosed with a fence. The enclosure of the ground belonging to the leper farm on both sides adjoined the high road. Further accommodation was, from time to time, was provided through the erection by the Government of stone houses (Heidenstam, 1890: 3-4, 13).

The Government in Cyprus made a great effort to improve the quality of life of leprosy patients in the farm. The '*Leper Village*' was a small colony consisting of those afflicted with the disease. Those afflicted beings were compelled to live in this kind of farm provided by the Government. Also, some lepers lived separately on the island. After the British occupation, the new Government collected as many of the lepers as could be found (Heidenstam, 1890: 3-4, 13).

The water supply of the Farm was very good, the source being from upwards of 100 wells dug many years ago, it was conveyed to its destination through an aqueduct, which for nearly all of its distance was covered, and the superfluous water soaked into the ground behind the village, where there were a few fruit trees. But, no water closets existed, an open ditch a short distance off being used as a latrine and a deposit for

rubbish; the headman had been instructed to cover this spot frequently with dry earth (NA., Report by Her Majesty's High Commissioner for year 1879, 1880: 260).

By 1880, the habitation of the lepers contained 26 rooms, a small Greek chapel, and wash room. These were so arranged to enclose a square into which most of the doors of the rooms opened (NA., Report by Her Majesty's High Commissioner for year 1879, 1880: 258-259). The living space for the lepers who inhabited the Farm - both their accommodation and treatment - was considerably improved during 1881. Owing to their more careful segregation since the British occupation, the Farm had become overcrowded. The official report on the Leper Farm indicated a considerable improvement in 1881 in both the accommodation and the treatment of lepers. The roofs of the buildings were repaired, new windows were installed and the floors paved with native marble. A washhouse was also provided, to allow proper periodical white-washing and cleansing (N.A., CO., 883/2/16: 16).

In 1891, the demarcation of the Leper Farm within an institution was demonstrated by the Government and this was added to piecemeal by successive High Commissioners. When Sir Henry Bulwer, the High Commissioner, took it on in 1891, the first thing he demanded was a proper plan. Once this had been made, its bird's eye view enabled total knowledge of the farm and the proper arrangement of its parts. A line on the plan and boundary cairns on the ground divided it off from the secular world outside. The garden, which had been suffering from '*a certain want of neatness*', was divided by a fence into an area for families, women and children on one side, and for single men on the other. And rather than letting people wander where they wanted, special walking paths were to be marked going through the trees (Given, 2002: 14).

About 100 acres of the 120 acres adjacent to the farm were planted with carob and other trees which added greatly to the salubrious environment. Four acres were reserved for the orchard and garden and six acres for growing cereals, all of which were worked by the lepers themselves (N.A., CO., 883/2/16: 16).

The lifestyle of the lepers in the Farm was monotonous. Having suffered severely from the disease, most of the lepers were not active. On the other hand, every leper was given such work in or for the benefit of the Leper Farm as the Superintendent might assign to him. Any leper who refused or neglected to perform the duty or the work assigned to him, or was guilty of misconduct or of any breach of discipline or of good order, was deemed to be guilty of a breach (The Cyprus Gazette, 15 July 1932: 482-483).

Lepers could be tasked. For instance, in 1893, the executive council proposed to establish silk breeding at the Leper Farm. The proposal was submitted and principal fiscal officers' proposals considered. The Council agreed that his scheme may be approved at a cost exceeding £ 100 (NA., CO., 69/7: 34).

By 1914, it possessed good stone buildings, with both a mosque and a church, and was pleasantly situated in the centre of a well-wooded area of pines, cypress, wattles, oaks, juniper, *Pistichia vere*, carobs and many other smaller varieties of trees. It was in this area that the Department made many of the experiments which enabled it to cope with the difficulties of other similar soils in the vicinity, e.g., at Athalassa (Bovill, 1915: 9).

On the Cyprus Leper Farm there were two distinct classes of leprosy: the paler, or rather yellow sufferer, and bloated and purple one. The skin of the first class of sufferer had a parched withered look. It was drawn over the bones of the face, so as to look like a piece of brown parchment. The nose sharpened until it stood out like a bone while some of the facial features were drawn so much to one side, that it gave the appearance of a senile smile, a ghastly contrast to the reality of the suffering. The majority of the sufferers were those with a bloated appearance. In this case the skin had changed to a deep purple colour, with an unnaturally smooth and shiny surface. The face and head in one or two cases were swollen to such a size that no features at all were discernible: the eyes had shrunk and closed up, the cheeks were puffed over the distended nose, and the mouth was represented by a small hole. It seems the hands were generally first affected, especially around the wrist. A small white spot was first visible, then pain and stiffness were felt in the various joints of the hands and feet, and in a short time the fingers become club-shaped, the hand assuming the appearance of a claw. The voices sounded harsh and husky; and this, it was told, was caused in nearly every case, by ulceration of the throat. The fingers and toes of many had dropped off, only the stumps remaining (Stevenson, 1881: 143-44).

The lepers conducted themselves in a quiet and orderly manner and obeyed at all times the directions of the Medical Officer, the Superintendent and Sister in Charge (The Cyprus Gazette, 15 July 1932: 482-483). Also, lepers were kind to each other, those who were the least afflicted helping and nursing the sick, or guiding the steps of the blind. On the whole, both men and women appeared to be tolerably contented. To lessen their misery, the men had in many cases taken the women as their wives. These served as their attendants and companions, doing the cooking, and nursing them when ill, and acted generally as helpmates (Stevenson, 1881: 143-44).

The British Government allowed the 55 lepers 2,5 piasters a day. Each leper was allowed three small loaves, 300 drams, and twenty paras (one penny) a day. People who visited them always distributed a small sum amongst them before leaving. There were several ovens for baking bread, and there was a large well (N.A., Papers Relating to the Finances of Cyprus 1881, 1882: 24). For the supply of bread for the lepers, the administration put the supply of loaves out to tender for the Leper Farm approximate once every six or eight months. The tenders were conducted by the Medical Department (The Cyprus Gazette, 17 Oct. 1905: 5750; The Cyprus Gazette, 14 Sept. 1900: 4309; The Cyprus Gazette, 10 May 1901: 4481; The Cyprus Gazette, 8 May 1903: 5063). For example, baker Hussein, son of Haji Yusuf Agha, won the tender and supplied bread for lepers in 1885 (Cyprus Shari'a Court Records, 54, 74/1). By 1930, the total cost to the Government of the Farm was £ 265 19s. 1cp (KMA., Medical Report for 1930, 1931: 24.). In 1931, every inmate was allowed 1.2 pence per day for food. Also in the same year, the healthy children of lepers' homes were allowed 0.6 pence per day for food (KMA., Medical Report for 1931, 1932: 8).

In 1936, the arrangement whereby the Government allowed one pence per day to each inmate for food was anything but satisfactory. The patients used to buy and consume whatever they liked without knowing or caring if their diets were sufficient for the purposes of the healthy and the satisfactory progress of their disease. Knowing that a balanced diet was an essential part of the successful treatment of this disease, a memorandum was submitted to the Government during the year and it was hoped that soon a dining-room and kitchens would be constructed and staff made available for this very necessary change. A balanced diet would then be insisted upon and with specific treatment it was certain that a greater number of patients would come to quiescence and discharge. In spite of opposition of the inmates this change was started in 1937, and the plans were prepared, but the construction had to be deferred to 1940 for financial reasons (KMA., Medical Report for 1938, 1939: 18).

The system of giving rations to patients by the Government through contractors began from 1<sup>st</sup> July, 1947, and in lieu thereof, 14 piasters per day was paid by the Government to the co-operative shop of the Leper Farm, for every patient who was actually residing within the settlement (KMA., Medical Report for 1947, 1948: 10).

There were some additional restrictions for lepers. Some of these restrictions were: that no person could bring into the Leper Farm or any part thereof any intoxicating liquor without the previous permission in writing of the Resident Director or, in his absence, the Sister in Charge of the Leper Farm (The Cyprus Gazette, 4 April 1930: 315); no inmate of the Leper Farm was permitted, without the special authority of the Chief Medical Officer, to keep or use within the limits of the Farm any firearm or dagger-knife (The Cyprus Gazette, 17 July 1896: 3116). Besides, as stated above, the unmarried male lepers were strictly forbidden to enter at any time the rooms set apart for female lepers, and the female lepers were strictly forbidden to enter at any time the rooms set aside for unmarried male lepers (The Cyprus Gazette, 2 Feb. 1894: 2367).

#### **Marriage, Family and Children in the Leper Farm**

After the Leper Farm was demarcated as an institution by the Government in 1891, the internal regulations of the farm were also established - with one of the issues being sexuality. There were married lepers as well as the unmarried. So the rooms in which married couples and unmarried female and the male lepers lived were secluded from each other. The garden, which had been suffering from '*a certain want of neatness*', was divided by a fence into an area for families, women and children on one side, and single men on the other (Given, 2002: 14).

The unmarried male lepers were strictly forbidden to enter at any time the rooms set aside for female lepers, and the female lepers were strictly forbidden to enter at any time the rooms set apart for unmarried male lepers. And no marriage could take place in the Farm without the special authority of the High Commissioner (The Cyprus Gazette, 2 Feb. 1894: 2366). But, it could be the case that a couple were married before being removed to the Farm (NA., Report by Her Majesty's High Commissioner for year 1879, 1880: 259).

In 1879, at the beginning of British rule, there were five married couples, all of whom had married in the Leper Farm, four married under Ottoman rule - one during 1879. One of these couples had a child who was six months old and who was a strong, healthy boy without any signs of leprosy; the parents proposed that when their boy was two years old he would be sent away to be brought up by their relations (NA., Report by Her Majesty's High Commissioner for year 1879, 1880: 259). In the following years, marriage was occasionally allowed. For example, in 1947, 9 male and 9 female patients were allowed to marry (KMA. Medical Report for 1947, 1948: 10).

There was one case of peculiar interest, namely, that of a woman who had no history of leprosy in her own family, but who married a leper who then transmitted the disease to her, and the offspring of the marriage (two in number) were also lepers. There can be no doubt that in many of the other cases, there was

also a family history of leprosy, but from the great fear of compromising their relatives, accurate facts could not be ascertained (N.A., CO., 883/2/16: 17).

Childbirth was only an occasionally matter on the Farm. Birth occurred in some years in the Farm. For example, one birth was recorded in 1913 (NA., Medical Report for 1913, 1914: 10), 1916 (NA., Medical Report for 1916, 1917: 7)<sup>3</sup> and 1930 (KMA., Medical Report for 1930, 1931: 24), each. Two births occurred in 1918 (NA., Medical Report for 1918, 1919: 7).

When a child was born, the child was promptly discharged from the Farm and donated by the Government. For example, on the 28<sup>th</sup> of March 1913, The Executive Council approved of the donation, for discharging of two children from the Farm, at five pounds, apiece (N.A., CO. 69/26, 28 March 1913 (9191)). New-borns were removed immediately after birth from the patients and sent to the home in the Farm for the healthy children of lepers (KMA., Medical Report for 1930, 1931: 24). The Home for children, born of leper parents in the Farm, was maintained in a suitable situation in the town of Nicosia. By 1916, there were eleven children in the Home. The ages of the children ranged from 17 to 6 years overall in the Home. Children, who had been discharged from the Home during recent years, were educated and taught a trade. Each of these was allowed a Government grant of 5 pounds on their discharge, and they were engaged in some means of livelihood (NA., Medical Report for 1916, 1917: 7).

According to the medical reports, there were 10-14 children in the Home during the British period and none of the children had any symptoms of the disease. In 1916, it was recorded that of all the children, the eldest of which was 21, no signs of the disease, from which their parents suffered, had yet appeared (NA., Medical Report for 1916, 1917: 7).

#### **Religious Circumstance on the Leper Farm**

The religious circumstances of the farm were not homogeneous. The Farm was a multi-faith region. Especially, Muslim and Christian lepers lived on the Farm. According to reports, in 1897, of the 102 inmates, 80 belonged to the Greek Orthodox Church. Muslims and Christians practiced their religious duties. But there was neither a church for the Christians nor a mosque for the Muslims. However, a room was allocated as a church, and a Greek priest, Papas Konomo, from the neighbouring village of Paluirgetico, would come about twice a year to read prayers at the chapel. On ordinary Sundays and fasting days one of the lepers named Christofis took the place of the priest; this man also entertained his companions by reading any Greek book or paper he may have in his possession; lepers gave small donations to maintain the lighting of their chapel (NA., Report by Her Majesty's High Commissioner for year 1879, 1880: 259). On the other hand, Muslims were also living on the Farm, but initially there was neither a mosque nor an imam on the Farm.

As noted above the Greek Church services had been celebrated in a room in one of the old mud huts. The lepers of the Cyprus Leper Farm who were members of the Orthodox Greek Church, numbering about 80, had collected from their small daily pittance a few pounds with the view to building a church, which was greatly needed by them, and this scheme was one of their greatest ambitions (The Manchester Guardian, 11 April 1896: 5; The Times, 14 June 1897: 6). The lepers paid their donations into the account of the '*Leper Church Fund*' at Parr's Banking Company and the Alliance Bank, 77, Lombard Street, London. The sum of money required for building their little church was not large, something in the region of £ 300. There was in the fund about £ 30 in 1896 (The Times, 9 April 1896: 6). Also, the Government allocated £ 240 to the church of the Leper Farm which was under construction in 1897 (NA., CO., 883/5/3: 133). Although it is not known when the Leper Church was opened, it has been confirmed that the church was in existence in 1903 (The Cyprus Gazette, 24 April 1903: 5026). After four years, it is known that a priest was appointed to the Church (The Times, 14 June 1897: 6). The Leper Farm Church was repaired in 1928 (N.A., FCO., 141/2417).

There was no mosque for Muslims in the Leper Farm and therefore a tender for the construction of a mosque with a minaret was announced on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of November 1901. The tender was termed, '*Tender for Leper Farm Mosque*'. In the announcement it was stated that the tenders should reach the Chief Secretary's Office not later than 11 a.m. on the 13<sup>th</sup> of December (The Cyprus Gazette, 22 Nov. 1901: 4662). It is known that the mosque's construction began at the beginning of 1902. It is known from an Ottoman archive document that Mehmet Emin Effendi bin Hâfız Mehmet was appointed to be the imam of the Leper Farm Mosque on the 15<sup>th</sup> of November 1901 (KMA., Registers of Waqf, 1295 (Hijri): 91/1).

It was referred to above that there were both a '*priest*' and a '*hodja*' on the Farm in the legislation enacted for the leper Farm during the English period (The Cyprus Gazette, 15 July 1932: 482-483). It was stated that the priest and hodja should perform all the religious offices - except marriage - required of them in the Asylum. The priest was to hold services regularly on Sundays and on Saints' Days in the Leper Farm Chapel for Christians and the hodja was to hold services regularly on Fridays and Holy Days in the Leper

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<sup>3</sup> The child lived a few hours only.

Farm Mosque for Muslims. Any chaplains that were to perform the marriage ceremony without the permission of the High Commissioner would be debarred from holding any further appointment at the Farm. Both the priest and hodja were strictly forbidden from making any attempt to proselytize any leper who may belong to a different religion (The Cyprus Gazette, 2 Feb. 1894: 2367; The Cyprus Gazette, 16 Aug. 1929: 537).

With the amendment of 1932, the responsibility for the appointment of the priest and hodja was transferred from the High Commissioner to the special authority of the Director of Health (The Cyprus Gazette, 15 July 1932: 482-483).

#### **The Juridical Circumstance of the Leper Farm**

Another subject concerning the Leper Farm was how to take legal action when an inmate committed a crime. The Leper Farm was an extraordinary and quite particular village and the juridical circumstances of this particular establishment, the Farm, were not ignored. Some regulations were made concerning how to conduct a criminal action for crimes committed by the inmates which may have been due to their confusion, and concerning what penalties were thought fitting by the British administration for criminals held in the Leper Farm.

Within this scope, the Chief Medical Officer was responsible for the maintenance of good order and discipline in the Leper Farm. The Superintendent, under the Chief Medical Officer, was responsible for the general discipline of the asylum, and had control over the attendants employed therein. He reported to the Chief Medical Officer, or to the Secretary for transmission to the Chief Medical Officer, any infraction of the rules of the asylum by any inmates or persons employed therein, and any other occurrence that may bear upon the maintenance of good order in the asylum or otherwise that it may be proper to be noted. Also, he at once reported, with all particulars, to the Chief Medical Officer the absence of any inmate without leave (The Cyprus Gazette, 2 Feb. 1894: 2367).

According to '*The Lepers Law, 1891*', the Chief Medical Officer have and exercised all the Powers of a Magisterial Court with respect to all offences committed by persons detained as lepers in the Farm, and also had power to hear and determine all complaints of offences punishable under the law. Also, from time to time, the High Commissioner appointed a Medical Officer having charge of the Farm, and to have and to exercise all the powers of a Magisterial Court therein (The Cyprus Gazette, 15 May 1891: 1783).

Any inmate who refused or neglected to perform the duty or the work assigned to him, or was guilty of misconduct or of any breach of discipline or good order, was deemed to be guilty of a breach of the Regulations (The Cyprus Gazette, 2 Feb. 1894: 2367, The Cyprus Gazette, 15 July 1932: 482-483).

Several rooms were set aside by the Chief Medical Officer in the Farm to serve the purpose of a prison, in which lepers ordered to undergo a sentence of imprisonment were to undergo their sentence, and the Superintendent had all powers for the detention and custody of lepers sentenced to imprisonment, as were by Law vested in the Prison Warders. Hence, under the powers vested in him by the '*Prison Discipline Ordinance, 1879*', His Excellency the High Commissioner approved of the room situated on the left side of the east entrance to the old buildings of the Leper Farm being set apart as a Prison for the detention of Lepers duly convicted of an offence and sentenced to undergo imprisonment (The Cyprus Gazette, 16 Feb. 1894: 2386). From 1904 to 1914, a small section of four rooms in the Control Prison was set aside for criminal lepers. At the same time, on the 18<sup>th</sup> of April, 1903, with an order of the High Commissioner, two rooms situated on the left side of the Block of buildings facing the Church of the Leper Farm were set aside as a prison for the detention of lepers duly convicted of an offence and sentenced to undergo imprisonment (Sami, 1973: 145).

#### **Treatment of the Lepers and the Leper Farm Hospital**

Leprosy was not a common disease in Cyprus. However, from the Ottoman period the lepers were isolated in the Leper Farm. Despite the fact that there is no knowledge of the treatment of the lepers during the Ottoman period, we can obtain information concerning certain treatments and the outcome of the treatments during British Rule from the annual medical reports.

Before discovery of the remedial treatment for leprosy many lepers in the Farm lost the sight of one eye, and many the sight in both eyes. Many were gradually losing their fingers or their toes, had one hand devoid of fingers; and the hand itself would soon fall off at the wrist (The Manchester Guardian, 11 April 1896: 5).

Undoubtedly, sanitation and medical care on Cyprus improved within the first few years of the British occupation. The occupation also provided new opportunities for service for the British as well as the Cypriots and other medical professionals from throughout the Empire, in many cases as their first professional assignment. The British Medical Journal reported in 1897 that on Cyprus there was a chief medical officer paid at the rate of £500 per annum, and two district medical officers paid £250 per annum; all

enjoying private practice. These were the only medical appointments on the island which were open to British candidates (Medical Appointments, 1898: 558-60).

Such accommodation as the Government of Cyprus could afford was provided; bedsteads and blankets were furnished to the inmates, and considerable improvements were effected in the patient's treatment. A wash-house was constructed, and a system of cleanliness established and carried on at the farm, but as this newly-established asylum very soon became overcrowded the admission of fresh cases was discouraged (Heidenstam, 1890: 13-4).

In Cyprus, it was assumed that there were two forms of the disease, the anaesthetic and the tubercular. The latter was by far the more common, a few cases of the former only appearing by the 1880s (NA., Report by Her Majesty's High Commissioner for year 1882, 1883: 33). In 1882, all treatment tried seemed to be but of a partial benefit to the sufferers. Proper sanitary and hygienic conditions with wholesome nourishment appeared to check the progress of the disease (NA., Report by Her Majesty's High Commissioner for year 1882, 1883: 33).

Lepers were segregated to asylums and isolated from their society around the world until the discovery of the remedial treatment of leprosy. Chaulmoogra oil entered Western medicine only in the nineteenth century, but it had been used in the East against leprosy and various skin conditions for many hundreds of years. From the early 1900s through the late 1940s, leprosy doctors injected patients with oil from the chaulmoogra nut. This painful treatment appeared to work for some patients. However, the long-term benefits were questionable (Parascandola, 2003: 47-8).

During the 1920s in the British Empire, imperial anti-leprosy campaigns started (Anti-leprosy Campaign, 1924: 246-47). Thus, information is available on which of the lepers were treated by some implementations from the year 1922. During that year, some of the inmates were injected with intravenous injections of chaulmoogra oil with good result, but no actual cure could as yet be reported (KMA., Medical Report for 1922, 1923: 7). In contrast with 1922, some of the inmates were treated with intravenous injections of chaulmoogra oil and a preparation of Antimony with success as in four cases the bacillus cannot was detected in 1923. In nodular cases the disappearance of the nodules and growth of the eyebrows was noted (KMA., Medical Report for 1923, 1924: 7). A similar success was seen in 1925. In the year, inmates injected with intravenous injections of Chaulmoogra oil, moogrol and a preparation of antimony proved successful. In nodular cases the disappearance of the nodules and growth of the eyebrows was noted (KMA., Medical Report for 1925, 1926: 17).

In 1926, some of the 83 inmates were treated with intravenous injections of chaulmoogra oil, moogrol and preparations of antimony with some success. In nodular cases the disappearance of the nodules and growth of the eye-brows was noted. It was satisfactory to note that, out of five cases released on parole, only in one case had the disease recurred (KMA., Medical Report for 1926, 1927: 14). Many lepers came to the farm of their own accord, hearing of the treatment and increase of pay. The same implementations for treatment were maintained during the following years (KMA., Medical Report for 1927, 1928: 15; KMA., Medical Report for 1928, 1929: 17).

Upon the successful treatment, the Government decided to construct a hospital within the Leper Farm. The Hospital at the Farm was completed at the end of 1928, and was opened at the beginning of 1929. The Leper Farm Hospital was situated within the limits of the Farm and had accommodation for 12 patients. One of the main aims of the Chief Medical Officer was to make the Leper Farm and its hospital as popular as such an institution could be by getting good result from the treatment, by making the living conditions as much like those that the patients were accustomed to in their own homes as possible, and by avoiding any suggestion of imprisonment as far as reasonable. The institution was well equipped and the treatment was well organised. Credit was due to the Matron for bringing the hospital to such a high state of efficiency (KMA., Medical Report for 1931, 1932: 23-24).

The treatment of lepers at Leper Hospital during the year 1930 was as below (KMA., Medical Report for 1930, 1931: 24):

First half- year:

Treatment with intramuscular or subcutaneous injections Alepol solution 3 per cent.

Second half-year:

A. 50 cases had the following treatment:

- Intradermal injections of Ester-Hydnocarpus oil.

- Intramuscular injections of hydnocarpus oil.

- Intravenous injections of Potassium-antimony-Tartrate, for cases with reactions or low blood-resistance.

- Trichloroacetic acid, externally.

- B. 30 cases (W.R. Positive) had the following treatment:
- Intramuscular injections of hydnocarpus oil with Avenyl.
  - Intravenous injections of Neosalvarsan.
  - Trichloroacetic acid, externally.
  - Potassium Iodide.

While 18 lepers were remaining in 1930, in the following year, 58 lepers were admitted to the Leper Farm Hospital, of which 12 died and 36 were discharged. 28 lepers remained in the hospital at the end of the year (KMA., Medical Report for 1931, 1932: 24). Admissions to the Leper Farm Hospital which had 12 beds, was 94 patients in 1935 as against 84 in 1934. At the end of the year, 230 patients were under treatment as against 183 at the end of 1934 (KMA., Annual Report of Social and Economic Progress of the People of Cyprus, 1935, 1936: 8). The total number of admissions was 66 during 1936. A clinic was attached to the hospital where the lepers were given their injections and dressing. 2,882 injections with 26,446 dressings were carried out in this clinic during the year under review (KMA., Medical Report for 1936, 1937: 20).

Table 6: Activity in Leper Farm Hospital

Year	Admitted	On Parole	Died	Total
1929 (KMA., Medical Report for 1924, 1925: 18)	17	4	3	103
1936 (KMA., Medical Report for 1936, 1937: 20)	14	6	5	105
1938 (KMA., Medical Report for 1938, 1939: 19)	18	6	3	113
1940 (KMA., Medical Report for 1940: 6)	13	8	6	121
1945 (KMA., Medical Report for 1945, 1946: 9)	8	2	2	91
1947 (KMA., Medical Report for 1947, 1948: 10)	10	7	3	85
1948 (KMA., Medical Report for 1948, 1949: 12)	18			

Until beginning of the 1950s, all cases of leprosy diagnosed were admitted for treatment to the Leper Farm. There were 165 persons either under treatment or who were under treatment in Cyprus, of whom 110 were confined in the Farm and 55 were on parole in their homes (KMA., Medical Report for 1952, 1953: 11).

The division of cases according to type of disease in the 1950s is shown below:

Table 7: Types of the Disease (KMA., Medical Report for 1952, 1953: 11).

Type	On Parole	in Farm	Total
Lepromatous type	26 (16 M, 8 F)	57 (33 M, 24 F)	81
Tuberculoid type	28 (15 M, 13 F)	28 (14 M, 14 F)	56
Indeterminate	3 (2 M, 1 F)	25 (20 M, 5 F)	28
Total	55 (33 M, 22 F)	110 (67 M, 43 F)	165

This classification of the Leper Farm had also been accepted in 5<sup>th</sup> International Congress of Leprosy held at Havana in 1948 (Michaelides, 1951: 532).

Incidences of leprosy remained at a fairly constant level of 140-150 cases in the island for a great many years. Cases when discovered were confined in the leper settlement under treatment, but there was little doubt that many cases were concealed or were reported too late for treatment owing to fear of segregation, thus increasing the period of time that they were in contact with others and the consequent risk of contagion. The new drugs proved so effective, particularly in rendering the patients non-contagious, that it was decided to treat lepers as out-patients at the centres nearest to their homes. The leper settlement would continue to function as an asylum for those so badly mutilated by the disease that institutional treatment was required or for those who preferred to have their treatment under the direct supervision of the leprologist (KMA., Colonial Reports, 1952, 1953: 40).

Following the implementation of the remedial treatment of leprosy in Cyprus, most of the lepers were cured and the number of lepers remaining on the island was very small. Therefore, in 1954, the Government decided to construct a leper hospital in Larnaca, in St. Haralambos' home, and close the Leper Farm. The lepers were transferred to Larnaca. The number of cases of active leprosy was extremely small and with the greater readiness of patients to report for treatment and the effectiveness of the new treatment, there was considerable hope concerning the ability to eliminate the disease. Treatment of the disease on an out-patient basis continued during 1955 and admission to hospital was purely voluntary. Patients from the old settlement, who were all non-contagious, were moved to a new establishment in Larnaca which was opened as a home for the disabled (KMA. Colonial Reports, 1955: 45). Thus, the Cyprus Leper Farm was abolished in 1955. Since all lepers had been transferred to Larnaca, the Leper Farm was desolate for three years. Thus, the Farm was overhauled and was converted to a higher education teacher school at the beginning of 1958. The Leper Farm land today belongs to University of Cyprus (Beratlı, 2013: 89-90).

### Conclusion



In conclusion, in order to begin to differentiate the variety of leprosy asylums built throughout the world, this article has devoted its attention to the characteristics of the Cyprus Leper Farm from 1878 to 1955.

Leprosy is one of the oldest diseases is seen in the island of Cyprus from ancient times. As with other cities within the Ottoman state, lepers lived outside the city of Nicosia in Cyprus too. A chiftliq was established and lepers were located in an isolated location near Nicosia at the end of 1820s or at the beginning of 1830s as a foundation. There were over 100 lepers on the island, but merely half of them were living in the chiftliq managed by a muhktar.

When the temporary British administration began in Cyprus, reports were prepared in detail concerning leprosy. According to these reports, laws for leprosy on the island laws were enacted when needed. Two laws were enacted concerning leprosy in 1891 and in 1929. Sometimes amendments were enacted on the laws. The aim of all laws and amendments were to reduce, treat the disease and supply suitable conditions for the leper.

The management of the Leper Farm was determined by the laws. According to the laws, the Chief Medical Officer appointed by the Governor, Secretary, Superintendent, Sister in Charge and Guards served. The removal of lepers to the Farm and leaving from the Farm were determined by the laws and were strictly controlled by the Governor as well as the entering and leaving of non-lepers from the Farm.

While the population of the Leper Farm was between 50 and 80, it increased to over 100 at the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century, and followed a fluctuating course afterwards. But the population never rose to such high levels as the other British colonies in south-eastern Asia.

Marriage was allowed in the Farm, but new-borns from the patients were sent to the home for the healthy children of lepers. Also, the British administration provided the patients with suitable conditions such as bread, water, washing, a church and a mosque.

One of the most important successes of the British administration in Cyprus was to fight with leprosy. The Governor struggled to prevent spread of the disease and for its decrease. For this, he constructed a hospital in the Farm and new treatment methods for leprosy were tried and the treated patients were accustomed to their own homes. The British Government overcame leprosy in Cyprus.

After the discovery of the remedy for the treatment of leprosy, the number of lepers on the island fell and the Cyprus Leper Farm was abolished in 1955. Lastly, the disease was seen in 4 cases on the island in 1972.

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