



EVKAF

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"Your compassion will bring compassion."

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**ONE SQUARE,
A THOUSAND MEMORIES...**

RAMADAN STREET 2026



Evkaf Hosted Diplomatic Representatives at an Iftar Gathering

The Cyprus Evkaf Administration held its traditional iftar programme as part of Ramadan, with the aim of strengthening intercultural dialogue and cooperation. At the event, which has been held without interruption for three years, ambassadors serving in Southern Cyprus, religious leaders and guests from various countries gathered around the same table. The programme started with the call to prayer and a prayer led by Hakan Moral, Head

of Religious Affairs of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. Whilst participants had the opportunity to get to know one another and exchange ideas in a warm and friendly atmosphere, the gathering proved to be a meaningful occasion in terms of bringing different cultures together. In his speech at the event, Prof. Dr. Mustafa Tümer, General Director of the Cyprus Evkaf Administration, highlighted the values of sharing and tolerance associated

with the month of Ramadan, emphasising that such gatherings contribute to dialogue and cooperation in international relations. At the conclusion of the programme, guests were presented with traditional Cypriot gifts, which were very well received.



Vakıflar Finished Second in Europe

Our Vakıflar Wheelchair Basketball Team successfully represented our country at the European Cup tournament held in France on 13-14 March, reaching the final.

The Vakıflar Wheelchair Basketball Team, which stood out throughout the tournament for its competitive play, team spirit and determination, achieved a significant success on the

European stage by reaching the final.

Following a fiercely contested final, our representatives concluded the tournament as European runners-up. Although only one team can raise the trophy, reaching the final and competing at this level on the European stage is a major achievement in itself. The determination, belief and

team spirit displayed by our athletes on the court filled us all with pride.

We wholeheartedly congratulate the Vakıflar Wheelchair Basketball Team and their coaching staff for successfully representing the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus in Europe, and we wish them continued success.

Congratulations to the team!



A Meaningful Visit to Our Laboring Women

The Cyprus Evkaf Administration visited the women working at the Dilekler Ticaret Citrus Factory as part of International Women's Day on 8 March.

During the visit, flowers were presented to the female employees who contribute to production at the factory, and International Women's Day was celebrated. The meeting, which took place in a warm and friendly atmosphere, highlighted the women's contribution to production and the value they bring to society.

Evkaf celebrated International Women's Day on 8 March for all working women who contribute to production, the economy and social life, noting that strengthening women's presence in the workplace is of great importance for the future of society.

A Silent Witness to History: **HAYDARPAŞA** MOSQUE

In the heart of Nicosia's Old Town, on Kirlizade Street, the Haydarpaşa Mosque (Ağalar Mosque) has stood tall for centuries, its stones bearing the stories of the ages. This elegant structure, which brings together the traces of time, cultures and faiths, dazzles with its Gothic architecture.

Today's Haydarpaşa Mosque was formerly St Catherine's Church, one of the most significant Gothic structures in medieval Nicosia. Built in the mid-14th century during the Lusignan Kingdom, this building showcases the finest stonework of the era.

Whilst some researchers suggest the building was the Benedictine nuns' Notre-Dame de Sur Monastery, Greek sources and historical documents confirm that it was dedicated to Saint Catherine. Its mention in documents dating from 1362 alongside a 'hospital for the poor' indicates that the building was not merely a place of worship, but also a sanctuary of healing and compassion. It was once also used as a place for offerings and pilgrimage.

A New Identity in the Ottoman Period

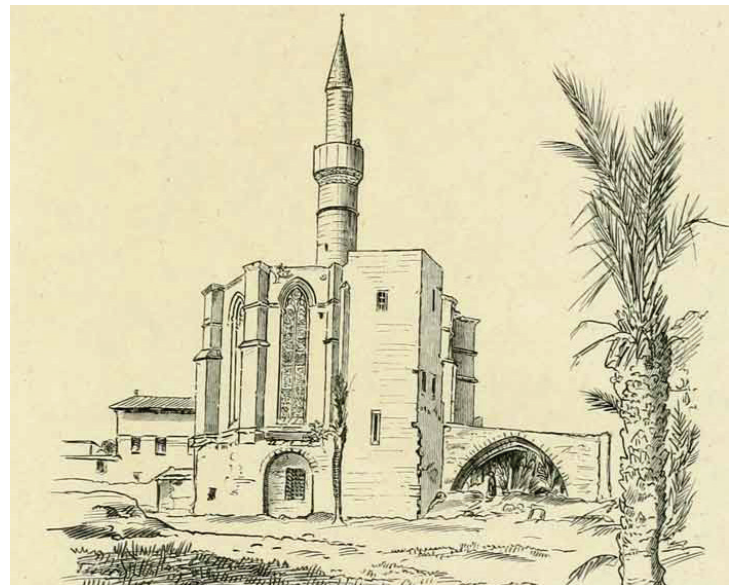
Following the Ottoman conquest of Cyprus, the church was converted into a mosque by Haydar Ağa, the agha of volunteers of the time. Documents from 1573 record that Haydar Ağa restored the building, opened it for worship, and had a fountain built beside it.

Over time, this sacred site, which came to be known among the people as Haydar Paşa Mosque, became the heart of the neighbourhood culture that developed around it. A waqf was established to provide for the mosque; this waqf supported the maintenance of the building and the social life of the surrounding area for centuries.

A Heritage Alive with Art

Used for a time as a Registry Office during the Republican era, and subsequently as a warehouse for many years, the building is now, following its restoration, utilised as the Haydarpaşa Art Gallery, a temporary exhibition hall and a tourist attraction open to the public.

Haydarpaşa Mosque is now both a silent witness to the past and a vibrant host to contemporary art.





A Shadow Play: KARAGOZ

Alongside the meddah tradition and the Ortaoyunu theatre, the Karagöz shadow play has been a primary source of entertainment and intellectual stimulation for the Turkish people of Cyprus for centuries. Karagöz, in particular, has been deeply loved in Cyprus; for centuries, it has been an indispensable passion of the Cypriot people; in both towns and villages, it has made people laugh, entertained them, and given them food for thought; it has added colour to social life.

Various theories exist regarding the origins of the shadow play. It is plausible that it originated in a Far Eastern country such as Java, Indonesia or China, and reached the Middle East via India.

Whilst
some

sources claim that Karagöz emerged in Bursa during the reign of Orhan Gazi in the 14th century, a more widely held view today suggests that the Turks adopted the shadow play technique from Egypt in the 16th century and gave this form of performance its definitive shape under the name Karagöz in the 17th century.

Like the meddah tradition, Karagöz is a form of theatre based on the creativity of a single individual. The Karagöz character, known as the 'hayali' or 'hayalbaz', has an assistant called the 'yardak'. Following the Ottoman conquest of Cyprus in 1571, people arriving on the island from various regions of Anatolia brought their own cultural and social customs with them.

In this context, over time, Karagöz performances brought to the island began to exhibit characteristics unique to Cyprus. Indeed, it has been observed that figures entirely unique to Cyprus were created and performances staged; these performances also featured songs, folk songs and 'perde gazels' (poems recited between scenes) specific to Cyprus. It is also known that plays with entirely local content were created and performed. The Cypriot dialect was generally used in these plays.

Karagöz was usually performed for men

in the coffeehouses of towns and villages. Karagöz was performed on a white muslin screen stretched in a suitable corner of the coffeehouse. Candles, oil lamps or gas lamps were used for lighting.

Popular plays would sometimes be performed for thirty to thirty-five nights. The best Karagöz performers would stage at least twenty plays. The arrival of the Karagöz performers brought a liveliness to the monotonous life in the villages, captivating everyone, young and old alike. The witty jokes they told would remain in the people's memory for years, being repeated whenever the occasion arose.

HACIVAT



KARAGOZ



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