“Cinyra, Cyprus and the notes of music, of wine and perfumes.

- Harmony and music

In the nineteenth century, G. W. Septimus Piesse, a French chemist expert in the art of perfumes, classified the fragrances according to notes of the musical scale: dividing them in high, medium and low. Notes of scents, wisely measured by the master perfumer, can produce an infinite number of fascinating olfactory melodies.

But his assertion remind us of a more ancient theory, that of Pythagoras (Samos 575-495 BC Methapontus), who first found the way to fix the values of musical notes through a brilliant insight that allowed him to develop the link between mathematics and nature, which still today is one of the most important discoveries in the history of human thought.

Pythagoras discovered that the essence of music was similar to the movement of celestial bodies, which move in perfect and eternal harmony in the universe. This insight enabled him to enter the invisible world of music, formed by the proper assonance of notes that make up the melody.

The same harmony ensures our very existence in the cosmic balance of life and death, right and wrong, happiness and grief. For Pythagoras, harmony was the essence of music and in harmony he saw nature expressing itself within the innumerable voices of being, as much as man used to create music from infinite chords using simple music instruments such as the flute or the more complex ones, such as the harp.

In a few words, Pythagoras found that the essence of harmony is something impalpable and perfect that men unconsciously know and constantly search for the contentment of their 5 senses. It is the very essence of beauty and pleasure that appears in different expressions and is never the result of a single entity. On the contrary, it is composed from the perfect symbiosis of elements similar but different, which we can call notes, be they musical, olfactory, visual or sensory. Harmony is the miracle that transforms the perception in pleasure.

Harmony was the daughter of Ares and Aphrodite, the god of war and the goddess of love, the fruit and the perfect meeting point of eternal conflict between opposites. Its name, Harmony precisely means union (from the Greek verb harmonzo), a union of various elements that their aggregation created a perfect balance. So perfect that it can be transcribed and laid down in numbers, through the science of perfection and certainty, which is “mathematics”.

This essential symbolism did not escape to Heraclitus of Ephesus (535-475 BC), almost
contemporary with Pythagoras, who described Harmony as “she is the one which comes back as an arch or a lyre from one extreme to the other"...... harmony of the invisible visible the best”.

- Notes of perfumes

Therefore, it is the world of scents, invisible as the music, which fascinates humanity since ancient times.

From the Sumerians we inherited the most ancient perfume recipes, reported on hundreds of cuneiform tablets of the IV millennium BC. In turn, Egypt was the country that left us the most impressive evidence on the use of scents for every occasion of life and death, and as a system of social identification (Belgiorno, M.R. 2006. “Chypre”. Radici preistoriche di un profumo famoso”: in Belgiorno, M.R. Aromata Cipria”, Ed. Era Nuova, Perugia, 87-167. ).

According to the Egyptian evidence we can deduce that different essences and aromas were intended for different uses, as confirmed by the most ancient Mediterranean literature. It is likely that some essences had a symbolic value, regardless of their real cost. Some were used only by kings and priests, some only during religious ceremonies or funerals. The frequency of references and citations of fragrant essences in administrative palace recordings in the Middle East and the Aegean, in dedications and Egyptian hieroglyphs, in the Bible and the Homeric poems, indicate that these substances were used daily even in modest environments and that there was a scale of values for each essence and fragrance produced.

What it is not sufficiently taken into consideration is the enormous importance of trade of perfumes, as scents, raw materials and semi processed olive oil. Traffics of perfumes reached far-away countries as the mythical land of Punkt, India and the Baltic countries in search of most precious essences: frankincense, patchuli or grey amber.

Most probably the exchanges between Cyprus and Egypt started in the beginning of the II millennium BC. But traffic with Cyprus became widespread with the advent of the Mycenaean hegemony which organised systematic trade with the entire Eastern Mediterranean.

The archaeological data from ships sunk along the coasts of the Mediterranean, towards the end of the Late Bronze age, have provided evidence of trade of two main aromatic Cypriot substances used until today as a “base” in composition of perfumes. These are the resin of Pistacia Terebindo (about one ton found in the vessel sunk near Ulu Burun, also mentioned in Linear B tablets (Ki-ta-no = terebinth: Melena, J. 1976 La Produccion de plantas aromaticas en Cnoso, Estudios Classicos 20, 177-190) ) and Coriander sativum exported as seeds and essence in olive oil (Jasink, M. 2007, “Perfumed oil in the Mycenaean world”, in I profumi di Afrodite e il segreto dell'olio,73-81, ed. Gangemi, Roma).

The recent discovery of the Perfume Factory of Pyrgos, which to date remains the earliest evidence, dating back to the second millennium BC, enabled to identify some of the process of extracting aromatic fragrances, not only by studying the functionality of vases and instruments, but also through archaeometric analysis, which identified some of the aromatic substances that were processed at Pyrgos, until the devastating earthquake which cancelled the industrial complex for ever (Lentini, A. 2007: Sostanze odorose e terapeutiche dal sito preistorico di Pyrgos-Mavorraki, in I profumi di Afrodite e il segreto dell'olio, 89-109, ed. Gangemi, Roma).
The large amount of pottery and stone tools found in situ in the East wing of the olive press room of Pyrgos has been the subject of 2 exhibitions in Cyprus (Nicosia 2004, Pyrgos 2005) and 4 in Italy (Trevi (Pg) 2006, Rome 2007, Florence 2008, Viterbo 2009 for a total of 12 months), as well as the subject of 20 publications including 3 monographs. The discovery has been reported by newspapers and websites worldwide and in many languages, for a total of some thousands citations.

The discovery of the Perfume Factory of Pyrgos is nowadays the basis of a specific research project, based on archaeometric and historic experience of the ITABC-CNR team, which conducts research on this subject since 1980, following the discovery of the perfume factory of Cleopatra. Special laboratories have been set up at the ITABC-CNR (Donato, G. and Lentini, A. 2006: Fragrances in the ancient civilisations of the Mediterranean Basin: Archaeometric studies” in Belgiorno, M.R. Aromata Cipria, Ed. Era Nuova, Perugia, 173-218 Roma) in the “Area della Ricerca di Roma” at Monterotondo (RM) to conduct such researches.

From the typology of vessels found in the perfume factory of Pyrgos it was possible to identify three methods used to extract the aromatic substances, described many centuries after by Theophrastus, Dioscuride (Wellmann, M., translator 1958. Pedanii Dioscoridis. De Materia Medica I. Berlin: Weidmann Verlag) and Pliny the Elder: the boiling of barks, the distillation and the maceration in warm water and olive oil.

The first procedure was reserved for the extraction of resin and oil contents from the bark, which, at the end of the operation, were squeezed in a cloth between two sticks. The second one, the distillation, was used to extract essential oils and the third one, the maceration in water, olive oil or almond to extract aroma from roots, musk, leaves and parts of plants. The quality of olive oil played an important role in the maceration process which, according to Pliny the Elder, should be as pure as the “onfacium” extracted from the green olives of September.

The still apparatus of Pyrgos is the most important historical evidence. Today, after several comparisons and bibliographic controls we can affirm that the two apparatus for distillation found at Pyrgos are the most ancient ones ever found. In fact, the famous distiller of Taxila, photographed by Chemistry Paolo Rovesti in 1975 at the Museum of Taxila in Pakistan (P. Rovesti Alla scoperta del primo alambico del mondo: la distillazione ha cinque mila anni, Rivista italiana E.P.P.O.S., LXII, nº 7, nov.- déc. 1980, p. 342-5 ) is not older than that of Pyrgos (F. R. Allchin, Evidence of Early Distillation at Shaikhan Dheri, in M. Taddei (Ed.), South Asian Archaeology 1977, Napoli 1979, pp. 755-797; F. R. Allchin, India: The Ancient Home of Distillation. Man, New Series, Vol. 14, No. 1 (Mar., 1979), pp. 55-63; Evidences of Ancient Distillation, Sublimation and Extraction in Mesopotamia, Centaurus, International Magazine of the History of Science and Medecine, Copenhagen, T IV, 1955, p. 22-3); on the contrary, it is similar to the many clay devices found much later in the Middle East and the Mediterranean (Joseph Needham Vol. V(4)Science and Civilisation, 85-6,97,104-7,131-2).

The techniques for the distillation of aromatic substances and alcohol have been accurately described after the IX-X century AD. We relate to the Book on Perfume Chemistry and Distillation of Yabuk al-Kindi (803-870), the « Summa Perfectionis » of Gerber (Jabir ibn
Hayyan) and the “Canone della Medicina” of Avicenna (Ibn-Sina, 980-1037).

Even today, the procedure for the extraction of essential oils and scented waters consists of fine particles of terpenes of herbs put in a boiling pot, which pass as steam through the head of an Alembic into the spout, dripping in the collecting container. At the end of the process, the essential oils float on the scented water and can be easily collected using the separator funnel.

The large apparatus of Pyrgos was found under the collapse of walls, reduced to a heap of debris partially burned by the violent fire which succeeded the earthquake. The use of clay alembics in Cyprus was documented as late as the last century (example in the Museum of Geroskipou); additionally, the experiments made with a replica confirmed that the Pyrgos distiller could produce essential oils and scented waters, as every other later glass or metallic alembics (Fig. 1).

An unusual and interesting case is the connection between the Cypriot traditional clay alembic and Leonardo da Vinci who, on a trip paid by Caterina Cornaro, came to Cyprus between the end of 1400 and the beginning of 1500, to redesign the fortress of Famagusta. During his visit to the island he traced the sketch and graphic notes of the Alembic registered in the Codex Atlantic 1114, preserved in the Biblioteca Ambrosiana of Milan. The study of the distiller brought Leonardo to invent a new terracotta alembic with the circulation of cool water around the head. The model is exhibited in the Museum of Leonardo at Vinci.

A particular attention is devoted to the funnels found in the factory of scents, which are a real novelty in the Mediterranean repertoire. The objects are composed of a spherical bowl with handle and a long spout vertically positioned under the base (Fig. 2). A similar funnel (F 202, Fig.64) was found in the excavation of Alambra (Coleman, J.E., Barlow, J.A., Mogelonsky, M.K. and Scharr, K.W., 1996. Alambra. A Middle Bronze Age Settlement in Cyprus, Archaeological Investigations by Cornell University 1974-1985 (Sima Jonsered)) in room 8 of
building IV, associated to material similar to the Pyrgos perfume factory, including a possible alembic head (M 149, p.286 and pp.88-89).

Given the lack of contemporary comparisons, it is plausible that this kind of funnel is a Cypriot invention of the Early-Middle Bronze Age. A close examination of the form and its possible use suggest that funnels were related to the manufacture of perfumes, utilised not only to transfer the essence, but mostly to separate the essential oils during the distillation. The funnel is indispensable in the process of distillation, since after it you can remove the water through the spout preserving the essential oils inside the body of the funnel. The flow of waste water is today controlled by a kind of valve, while in the past it was sufficient to put in the middle a cloth or some cotton in order to prevent the precious essential oil to be wasted. Similar funnels have been found on Ein Ghedi oasi (Israel, Dead Sea), (Dothan Dunayevski and Mazar: En-Gedi, The. First and Second Seasons of Excavation 1961–1962. ‘Atiqot 5), famous for the production of a rare perfume the persimmon. It was considered three times more precious than gold, and it was probably obtained from the resin of Commiphora opobalsamum, a type of myrrh that had a special fragrance. Glass funnels are common in the equipment of alchemical laboratories since the Roman period.

The flora of Cyprus includes 1907 species, subspecies and flowering plants, of which 141 are endemic. The list, presented in two volumes (“The Flora of Cyprus”, accomplished by R.D. Meikle of the Herbarium, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, U.K.), includes both native and cultivated plants. Among these some are still exported from Cyprus: Foeniculum vulgare, Lavandula hybrida, Mentha viridis, Origanum dubium, Origanum majorana, Rosmarinus officinalis, Salvia fruticosa, Sideritis perfoliata and Thymus capitatus. Salvia fruticosa, Salvia officinalis, and two of the Centaurea akamantis and Origanum cordifolium are strictly protected
by Bern Convention.

- Cinyra or Kinyra

According to the Greek mythology, Kinyra, the king of Paphos, was grandson of Aphrodite, son of Apollo, priest of Aphrodite and father of Adonis, the lover of Aphrodite, born from the tragic and incestuous love with his daughter Myrrha. But Kynira gave the name of a special dynasty of priest kings or priests guild, who were supreme guardians of the Temple of Aphrodite at Paphos and of her cult (Kinyradai, Pi. Pyth. 2.15–17; schol. Pi. Pyth. 2.27; Ptol. Megalop. FGrH 161 F 1; Tac. Hist. 2.3.2–3; Apollod. Bibl. 3.14.3; Arnob. 4.24; 5.19; Clem. Alex. Protr. 2.13.4; Firmicus Maternus, De errore 10; Hsch. s.v. Kinyradai; M.Hadjikosti, Cult Places of the Goddess Aphrodite in Cyprus, www.londonmet.ac.uk/londonmet/library/g65113_24.DOC). But beyond the drama and the human tragedies that in various ways are intertwined with history, a picture emerges, of a man whose main characteristic is to be synonymous of beauty, harmony and pleasure. A character that may have a much older origin than the Esiodus tales, masterfully interpreted by Ovid in Metamorphoses. His origin brings us back to the Bronze Age Cyprus, when Cyprus starts to become the crossing bridge of the Mediterranean civilisations.

But when did Kinyra live? According to Homer, he was the king of Cyprus at the time of the Trojan war (Il 11.19-23), events which happened towards the end of the so-called Mycenaean period. And in fact the word ki-nu-ra appears on the Linear B tablets addressed to a manufacturer of ships (PY Vn tablet 865 and here we find the passage of Apollodorus (Bibliotheca, E3.9) and to a priest or temple officiant (PY Q tavoletta 1301). He is a ki-nu-ra who plays a lyre or something like that (the KNR) in the temple (PY Q 1289, 1290, 1300, Baurain 1980, 305.6.), a figure not connected to a king but to a Priest musician.

In turn, in the transliteration of Mycenaean syllabic into Greek alphabetical, the word disappears, being a term related to a musical instrument or to a musician, leaving us to assume that it was a proper name of a person that really existed.

The word KNR identifies a much older musical instrument. Additionally, it is the Semitic word for lyre (Baurain 1981; Cayla 2001), well known in the Canaanite culture since the end of the III millennium BC, mentioned in the Hittites texts from Ebla (VV. Ivanov: An Ancient Name of the Lyre, UCLA 1-E.S: vol. 1). The epigraphy evidence corresponds to the archaeological iconography: players of string instruments have an extensive iconographic repertoire in the Middle East and in Egypt since the third millennium BC and onwards.

The mythical figure of Kinyra is also linked to one of the most famous Cypriot perfumes, the Amarikinon, obtained from origanum majorana. The myth related by Isidore of Seville, bishop and medical scholar of the sixth century, in his volume Lex Medicum, (Halle code ed.1745), narrates: “Amaracus autem, est herba odorifera, ab Amaraco Cynarae, Regis Cypri, unguentario dicta. Qui casu lapsus, dum ferret unguenta, fracta alabastro, maiorem ex contusione odorem creavit. Unde optima unguenta amaricina dicuntur, in herbam Sampsucum, quae ab eius nomine Amaracum apellata est. mutatum fuisse fabulantur”.

The recent discovery of residues of Marjoram, Camomile and wine in some vases from the Middle Bronze Age necropolis of Erimi (see here Lentini), opens a new field of investigation on the subject of the ancient Cypriot scents.
The link between music and wine is reported by the Bible: “...Emerald seal set in gold is the melody of songs in the sweetness of wine “(the Bible, Siracide, 32). Speaking of wine and its importance in the human history we approach a very broad topic, covering cultural, religious and economic factors that have left indelible footprints in the human history. Wine is something sacred, the only product approved to be a God, the blood of Christ. Its importance and absolute superiority on any other agricultural product is firmly established. It was first recognised by the Egyptians who understood the incredible power of wine to change colour, taste and smell, not only according to the use of different types of grapes, but also depending on a different exposure, soil composition, climate, altitude, time of harvest or harvesting during a different moon phase. The power of wine to change its organoleptic characteristics, that are first appreciated by the nose and then by the mouth, drove the Egyptians of the third millennium BC to distinguish the different types of wine, according to soil, grape, vintage, year and owner, through real etiquettes that were tied to the neck of vases, in order to indicate with precision the content.

There are not precise terms to define the characteristics of a wine, but these are made according to the olfactory and taste sensations described by the experts, which are reported as notes. The recognition of the wine body's aromas is an art of connoisseurs who prior to wine drinking they taste and smell the liquid, in order to live all the emotions and sensations of pleasure that wine can transmit.

The categories of aromas we can find in wine are basically three: primary or varietal perfumes, secondary fragrances or ageing factors and tertiary perfumes given by fermentation. The primary are the ones still present in the fresh fruits and in its skins in the form of terpenes (real particles of fragrant essential oils). In some wines their presence is so strong that they give the wine the denomination of aromatic wine: It is the case of Muscat grapes, Malvasia, Italian Brachetto, Gewurztraminer and Commandaria. These primary fruity perfume notes recall Strawberry, Rose, Moss, Orange flowers, and many others. Primary perfumes are characteristics of partially aromatic wines such as Chardonnay, which has notes of pineapple and bananas, Merlot with the typical notes of grass and Sauvignon Blanc with its velvet note of tomato leaves. Secondary perfumes which result from a fermentation process are all those that develop due to the crushing of grapes during the completion of the fermentation processes. At this stage, the formation of chemical compounds derived from aldehyde, alcohols, acids and other factors, give the wine a fresh set of hints and determined tones that range from floral to fruity aromas and from herbs to balsamic. It is the case of young red wines that express their best with these secondary notes.

With ageing, either in steel or barrel, and the second ageing in bottles, we witness the emergence of ageing scents, also known as tertiary perfumes, due to additional processes that develop in the liquid, such as the formation of esters. The primary perfumes and especially the secondary, though still partly present, tend to change in more complex and diverse notes: the flower changes into bouquet of flowers, while the fruits turn to stronger jam fruit notes adding new hidden aromas of pepper, spices, coffee, chocolate, tobacco and many others. The wine tells its history, it tells a story of the harmony of its notes in
which the power of nature and human experience meet and join in an agreement that may
propose infinite, different melodies.

The history of Cypriot wine can be told in many ways: we have chosen that of the pottery
typology, because, going back in the centuries we find that in Cyprus some of the most ancient
ceramic shapes are linked to the making, preservation and consumption of wine. We will start
from the hypothesis that wine was more ancient than the invention of pottery and that the first
container used to store and transport wine has been the wineskin.

Wineskins, mentioned and represented in the entire mythological and iconographic ancient
Mediterranean repertoire, are containers of safe and easy handling, used in Europe, the
Mediterranean and Cyprus until few years ago for the transportation of wine. Hung on the
kitchen wall for temporary store, it supplied a quick disposal of wine for domestic use.
Moreover, its shape and dimension depended on many factors often linked to the size of the
animals. The largest containers were made using the entire skin of the animal, trying to maintain
the dimensions as much as possible, knotting the skin at legs and tail. The opening of the neck
served to pour the wine and it was closed by the same rope used for hanging it on the wall. It is
interesting to notice that the Greek word for wineskin in “askos”, a word attributed in the
archaeological dictionary to vases of modest dimensions and animal shaped or adorned by
animal heads, probably in memory of the original wineskin used to serve wine.

The transition from wineskin to a clay container may have faced many difficulties, because the
wine is a living liquid, in continuous transformation, especially when it is freshly made. It is well
known that if the fermentation is still in process, the container cannot be closed. In turn,
when the fermentation is over, the wine has to be preserved from contact with the air otherwise it will
change into vinegar.

So gradually the standard simple jars used for every domestic purpose during the Neolithic
period took up a specific shape, adapted to store wine. Firstly, he neck of the vase became
narrower and with a hole mouth to facilitate the corking and the possibility to cover the liquid
with olive oil or resin in order to prevent its oxygenation. Secondly, the vase took up an
elongated shape, with a pointed base, which served to collect the wine sediments at the bottom.
If we compare the shape of Hajji Firuz's (Armenia) vase (considered the most ancient wine jar,
ca. 5500 BC), with the later Egyptian and the Godin Tepe wine jars, we can observe the
evolution of shape that eventually developed into the Roman amphora with the characteristic
pointed base.

Until the exhibition organised at Nicosia in 2005 “Cyprus in the Prehistory of wine”, little
attention has been paid to the shape of the Chalcolithic jars found at Erimi by Porfirios Dikaios
in 1932-35, during the excavations at Bamboula. The Erimi egg shaped jars have a long narrow
neck and a nipple base very similar to the late Greek- Roman jars, but their chronology goes
back the 3000 BC. This chronology excludes that they could be a direct evolution of the later
Egyptian jars, because the most ancient Egyptian jars have handles, absent both on Erimi and
Hajji Firuz jars, and on the Godin Tepe (3200 BC) types as well. But until today the traditional
cypriote “pithari” for wine had no handles.

Furthermore in April 2005, an analytical program to examine the possible deposit remains at the
bottom of jars was organised in Cyprus, in order to prove that the Erimi jars have been
intentionally made to store wine. Luckily, most of the pottery fragments excavated by Dikaios
were still unwashed, conserved in their original boxes from 1935 at the storage room of the
Limassol Archaeological Museum. Samples from 18 fragmentary bases have been scratched and
analysed directly in the laboratories of Limassol and Nicosia Museums. The results demonstrated that 12 jars bottoms contained a large amount of tartaric acid (a characteristic acid of wine), while 6 contained only traces of the same acid (see hereby Lentini). It was evident that the Chalcolithic pointed jars from Erimi have been used to process wine, positioning them at the beginning of the evolution of the wine amphora typology.

Wine fermented and aged in amphorae is still produced in Sicily, according to the Biodynamic system, using terracotta amphora of 250 to 400 liters, without the use of selected yeasts. An example is the wine Cerasuolo di Vittoria DOC of “Pithos, Cerasuolo farm COS of Vittoria (Ragusa). The same system is still used today in Georgia, where terracotta jars called kvevri are buried under the floor, covered only by a slab of stone as in the old Cypriot tradition. Georgian tradition has more in common with Cyprus, as the wine is still drunk in horns named “kantsi” (embroidered deer, bull or goat horn passed around the table), and the grapes must is used to produce coucouko necklaces, as in Cyprus (Fig.3).

In the archaeological typology the pottery associated with wine relates to the traditional paraphernalia for the famous Greek symposium, where men used to gather and spend time together drinking wine. In prehistoric times, the common vessel to drink wine was the horn of goat or cattle. The horn cut at the base, empty and cleaned inside was perhaps the most ancient vase used to drink wine. The perishability of horns however, contributed to leave scarce traces of their use in the archaeological contexts. Moreover, from etymology studies we know that the word ceramic (pottery), which identifies the objects made of fired clay, probably originate from the Greek word “Keras”, which means horn, as recently reaffirmed by S. Seal and M.I. Baraton (“Toward Applications of Ceramic Nano structures”, MRS Bulletin January 2004).:...”The word ceramics comes from the Greek keras, horn. In prehistoric times horns were used as containers; later ceramic containers made of clay were used to store food, water, wine, oil. Ceramic describes the working of the clay. The hardening of the clay under the hot desert sun may have given our ancestors the idea that clay would harden even more if subjected to firing. It was the right understanding, and since then ceramics have been part of human civilization”.

Moreover, in Cyprus at the beginning of Early Bronze Age, a special horn shaped vase appeared in the pottery repertoire, often present as funerary good in many tombs of the island (Fig. ).
The restitution of the drinking horns in ceramics, copying the real dimension and shape of the horn is an exclusive Cypriote product, characteristic of the very beginning of II millennium BC (Lentini results hereby). Contemporary, in the Middle East civilizations we find the Rhyta, which were drinking horns (sometimes with an animal horned head) too, made in terracotta or metal.

Cone-shaped ceramic vessels (cornets) characteristic of the Chalcolithic period (4700-3700 BC) have been found in Israel and Jordan (Namdar, Dvory, Neumann, Ronny, Goren, Yuval and Weiner, Steve [2009], "The contents of unusual cone-shaped vessels (cornets) from the Chalcolithic of the southern Levant", Journal of Archaeological Science 36 (2009), pp.629-636). In the Late Bronze Age the drinking horn (clay) was transformed into a conical vase, similar to the so called Mycenaean Rhyton, which is a characteristic Mycenaean vase, whose shape was probably influenced by the Egyptian type, furnished by a side handle. Later, from the symposium scenes represented on the Attic vases and on the walls of the Etruscan tombs, we know that the use of the cattle horns to drink wine widely continued. But we have evidence that the horns to drink wine did not pass out of fashion in the following periods and that the Romans spread its use to the Northern European countries together with their conquests.

Thanks to them we find today the tradition of drinking wine using the bullhorns in all European countries, including Georgia and Russia. However it is possible that the European tradition is linked with the Celtic culture which is believed to have been influenced by the Etruscans before the Romans.

Turning back to Cyprus, it is curious to note that real horns have been used without solution of continuity until recent times and that the village tradition conserves the memory of their use during special occasions or festivities and during the wine festivals organised every year to welcome the new wine. In addition, in many Cypriote villages, eventually famous for their production of wine, there are house-museums, where it is possible to see wineskins, pumpkins used as funnels and ladles, and giant old jars which belonged to the grandfather wine equipment and horns hung on the wall. In these villages it is also possible to see some ancient “linos” to make wine. These were medium size or large rooms equipped with a stone built basin to tread grapes. The basins were strategically positioned under a large opening on the roof from which the grapes were thrown down. The basin was provided by a hole on the side bottom which allowed to collect the liquid after fermentation and eventually to transfer that in large jars positioned nearby. They are very similar to the Italian and insular “Palmenti”, carved in the rock, consisting in a large squared basin with a hole on the bottom side to collect only the liquid after fermentation.

This equipment is not far from the one used in prehistoric times represented on some scenic vases as the famous Pyrgos vase found in a tomb of the 19 century BC. The plastic decoration of the vase is composed by many figurines of men, women and animals all attending at wine making (fig.43). The representation develops around the principal female figure engaged in foot treading grapes in an oval vat furnished of a large spout from which the liquid is intended to be collected in a large bowl. This is one of the most ancient representation of wine making, the unique realised around the shoulders of a vase to date.

The vat for treading grapes made of stones, cement or bricks, is still one of the most used home
wine equipment in Europe, but in Cyprus few examples survive in their original context. The best preserved is located at Erimi in the A. Georghios cave not far from the village. The cave recently reopened and cleaned was fully equipped for making and storing wine, and the built implements are almost intact including the large hole on the ceiling from which the grapes were throw down in the "linos" (Fig. ). The entrance of Aghios Georghios cave was hidden by large stones, probably since the XVI century, curiously in connection with the departure of the last Templars from Cyprus (1517) (Imperio, L., Il tramonto dei Templari. Ed. Penne e Papiri Latina 2003). Unfortunately, today the village, from which comes one of the most ancient Mediterranean wines, and the most ancient examples of wine jars, no longer has any vineyards cultivated in its land.