

Views from Phlamoudhi, Cyprus

June 18-September 18, 2009

a public exhibition in the
Cyprus Museum
Nicosia, Cyprus

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In 1970, the Columbia University Expedition to Phlamoudhi began a survey and excavations in and around the north coast village of Phlamoudhi, Cyprus. This field project, led by the late Professor Edith Porada, continued through 1973. Among their discoveries were a settlement at *Melissa* and a sanctuary at *Vounari*, both of which were occupied in the Late Bronze Age (c. 1650-1200 BCE) and used during the Archaic through Hellenistic periods (c. 750-100 BCE). Surface finds also attest to activity during Roman, Medieval, and later times. Since the division of the island in 1974, these and other northern sites have been inaccessible for detailed study.

Most records and objects from the Phlamoudhi excavations were brought back to Columbia by Edith Porada for study. The *Vounari* sanctuary was partly published in 1983. Since 2000, the Phlamoudhi Archaeological Project's work, led by Joanna S. Smith, toward the publication of the *Melissa* settlement has been intensive and is now near completion. From January 18-March 19, 2005, a public exhibition in Columbia's Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Art Gallery, *Settlement and Sanctuary on Cyprus from the Bronze Age to the Middle Ages: Views from the Columbia University Excavations at Phlamoudhi*, displayed the exciting finds from Phlamoudhi for the first time. **Click here to view a slide show of the original exhibition.** An updated version of this exhibition, now with the title, *Views from Phlamoudhi, Cyprus*, is traveling to the Cyprus Museum. The exhibit will feature the archaeology of Phlamoudhi and an exhibition of photographs of the village and its residents taken by Ian J. Cohn in 1972.

Throughout their histories, *Melissa* and *Vounari* were parts of a lively north coast tradition as well as the international Mediterranean world. The Late Bronze Age ceramic workshop at *Melissa* made red-slipped vessels, including Red-on-Black examples that were used at *Vounari*. Ceramic imports from the Mycenaean world, Levant, and southern Cyprus also contributed to ceramic experimentation at *Melissa*.

A monumental building at *Melissa* housed large quantities of olives, olive oil, and other food and drink in decorated and human-scale storage vessels called pithoi. Those food resources may have served the entire community, including people at the hilltop of *Vounari*. Gold, ivory, and carnelian jewelry as well as a cylinder seal and a scepter-head attest to the wealthy nature and international connections of some *Melissa* residents.

Sanctuaries in the Bronze and Iron Ages were important cultural centers and boundaries; that at *Vounari* and those at *Melissa* in the Iron Age help us to define the cult activities as well

as the territory of those who lived in Phlamoudhi in the past. International as well as on-island contacts continued into the Roman and later periods, including the 1970s when the Columbia Expedition to Phlamoudhi began.

Settlement and Sanctuary recreated parts of the fascinating art, archaeology, and history of the Phlamoudhi region, bringing to life once again the traditions and innovations of this coastal area north of the Kyrenia mountains of Cyprus. Bringing this exhibition to the Cyprus Museum celebrates the return of the excavated material to Cyprus.