

CHAPTER 13

A Guide To Major Cypriot Sites

CHAPTER 13a

**Archeological museum, Kourio,
Amathounta, Pafos – Mosaics**

P a n o s C h r i s t o d o u l o u

Archeological museum, Kourio, Amathounta, Pafos – Mosaics

Periods	Date Range
Neolithic and Chalcolithic	8200-2500
Bronze Age	2500-1050
Early Cypriot	2400-2000
Middle Cypriot	2000-1700
Late Cypriot	1700-1050
Iron Age	
Cypro Geometric	1050-750
Cypro Archaic	750-480
Cypro Classical	480-310
Hellenistic	310-30
Roman	30-330

The Cyprus Museum

The first archaeological Museum of Nicosia was housed in a building on Victoria St. in old Lefkosia, in the occupied part of the town. It was founded in 1888 as a privately run institution to protect the finds that started to come to light during the first legal excavations undertaken during the British rule of the island. As the visitor to the Cyprus Museum moves from room to room, he can trace the development of Cypriot civilization from the Neolithic times to the Early Christian period. The fact that its exhibits all come exclusively from Cyprus makes the museum of special interest to the scholar but also to the visitor. The first law concerning archaeology was voted in 1905 and was the first essential step towards the establishment of archaeology in Cyprus. A committee, chaired by the British governor, undertook the direction of the museum. Since 1935 the museum has been under the jurisdiction of the Government Department of Antiquities, which was created that year by a new law. The construction of the original building, which served as the nucleus of the present one, started in 1908 and was completed in 1924. The Archaeological Museum of Nicosia consists of fourteen rooms surrounding a square central area and is comprised of offices, a library, storerooms and areas for preserving and studying items in the collection. The objects in the rooms follow a chronological and a thematical succession.

Room I – Neolithic and chalcolithic Period

The first room is dedicated to the Chalcolithic period when stone vessels coexist with handmade clay vessels as well as with figurines made out of picrolite. In the first exhibition case, in the middle of the room, clay objects are on display, which constitute the first evidence of worship.

Rooms II and III - Pottery from Early Bronze Age until Roman Period

This rooms are conveniently divided by two pairs of pilasters into three sections. The first is devoted to the Early Bronze Age, the second to the Middle and Late Bronze Ages and the third to the Iron Age. The objects, mainly pottery, illustrating these periods are exhibited in the metal and glass cases fixed against the whole length of the left-hand wall and along part of the right –hand wall. Large vases or objects of exceptional interest are exhibited on pedestals placed respective sections. The exhibited objects demonstrate the rich local ceramic tradition of Cyprus but at the same time special reference is made to the imported Mycenaean, Phoenician and Attic pottery as well as to faience objects, which played a vital role in the establishment of the local pottery style. The imported Mycenaean craters and the locally produced Archaic vessels of the “free-field” style are given a prominent position.

Room IV – Archaic sanctuary at Agia Irini

This Room, unlike the previous gallery, where the exhibits derive mainly from tombs, is devoted to

selected finds from ancient sanctuaries. It takes its name from the village near which was found the series of terracotta votives forming its chief exhibit.

The room it hundreds of clay figurines and statues are displayed that were found around a circular altar in the Archaic sanctuary at Agia Irini.

Room V – Statuary of Classical Period

The evolution of the strong Egyptian and Assyrian influences of the statuary from the Classical period is on display in this room. As rule male votaries are offered in temples of male gods while female ones in temples of female deities. In the early prt of the Iron Age to Hellenic times no figure representing the god appears in the temple, but from that time onwards statues of worshipped deities do occur: in the fifth century Athena temple at Vouni Palace; the archaic Curium temple of Herakles – Melqart; the Hellenistic Aphrodite-Isis temple at Soli.

Room VI – Later phase of statuary

In this Room we find mainly marble and bronze statues. In the centre the bronze statue of Septimius Severus constitutes the main exhibited work of art. Also in this room are the principal small finds found with the Ayia Irini terracottas in Room IV, a selection of bronze objects and relics of the mining industry of ancient Cyprus.

Room VII – Bronze objects collection /Collection of seals and coins

This long gallery is divided into two sections, separated by the entrance to the annexe, containing the tomb reconstructions. The first one is dedicated to the rich collection of bronze objects which reflect the wide use of this material, for which Cyprus was famous in antiquity, so much so in everyday activities (agricultural tools) as in warfare activities (weapons), commercial exchange goods (tripods) and ritual practices (Horned God from Egkomi). In the central section of the room specimens from the museum's rich collection of seals and coins are on display, which represent all the mints of the Cypriot kingdoms as well as the mint during the Ptolemaic rule on the island. On the wall behind the coins two boards are hung containing parts of floor mosaics from two roman buildings. The last section of the room contains gold jewellery, silver vessels, glass objects and lamps dating from the Early Bronze Age to early Christian times.

Room VIII – Ancient Tombs

This Room is reached through the doorway on the left of the Tamassus tomb and then down the steps. It contains six reconstructed tombs belonging to six successive periods form Late Stone Age to Hellenic times.

Room IX – Grave monuments

This room contains grave monuments such as carved grave stele, painted clay sarcophagi and limestone sarcophagi decorated with carvings.

Room X – Evolution of Writing in Cyprus

In this room we find a retrospection of the evolution of writing in Cyprus. Starting from the earliest evidence of writing is the Cypro-minoan script followed by specimens of the Cypro-syllabic script, and finally the predomination of the alphabetic script. The Museum possesses a number of inscriptions in the Cypriot syllabary, which as already explained was used by the Cypriots from the sixth century (and perhaps earlier) to the third century B.C. for writing Greek. The syllabic inscriptions in the Museum comes from the site Rhantidi (Paphos District) where during Dr. Zahn's excavations in 1910 a great number of dedicatory inscriptions was found. These refer to Apollo and Aphrodite.

Room XI – Royal Tombs of Salamis

Is on the first floor and hosts magnificent finds from the royal tombs of Salamis, such as the bed decorated with pieces of ivory and coloured glass, the two thrones and a bronze cauldron supported on an iron tripod and decorated around the edges with four busts of sirens and eight griffins.

Room XII – Ancient Metallurgy

This room is dedicated to ancient metallurgy. Through the disposition of the finds, which bear an educational character, we can follow the process of the mining and smelting of copper as well as metalworking.

Room XIII – Roman Gymnasium of Salamis

Sculptures that decorated the gymnasium in Salamis during the Roman period are on display in this room. The sculptures are accompanied by photographs of the excavations of the gymnasium, which took place before 1974. The statues are all Roman copies of Hellenistic and Classical prototypes and belong to the second century A.D. during which the Gymnasium flourished under the Emperors Trajan and Hadrian.

Room XIV – Clay figurines

The important production of clay figurines dating from the Early Bronze Age until the Roman period is represented in chronological order in this room.

Guide to Amathus

The ancient town of Amathus is situated on the south coast of Cyprus, about 7 km east of the town of Lemesos. The city enjoys remarkable situation, protected by valleys extending from the Troodos mountain range, and adjacent to an adequately watered countryside inland, rich in agricultural and mineral resources.

Minor changes in sea level combined with erosion have affected the ground to a certain extent since antiquity. The landscape, worked by generations of farmers, was similar to the landscape of antiquity. Today the capital of ancient kingdom of Amathus is only a decorative feature preserved in the residential and tourist suburbs of a big city.

1. The North wall
2. The Palace
3. The harbor
4. The Agora
5. The aqueduct
6. The sanctuary of Aphrodite
7. The church of Ayios Tykhonas
8. The basilica at the foot of the Acropolis
9. The Christian basilica on the acropolis
10. The West terrace of the acropolis

Prehistory and History of Amathus

Prehistory

Traces of the earliest human presence, dating to the Neolithic period, have been detected during archaeological excavations on the hills neighbouring Amathous. However, we do not know with certainty the exact moment of the foundation of the town of Amathous, which is not included in the list of towns founded by the Greek settlers in the 11th century B.C. It seems that the acropolis of Amathous, which possesses a natural defense, was inhabited since 1050 B.C. by the autochthonous population of Cyprus, the Eteocyprians. The term Eteocypriot is used to describe the native language, and by extension the native population living on the island before the arrival of Greeks or Phoenicians.

Historical Period

During the Archaic period the town acquired special wealth as one of the Kingdoms of Cyprus, and had remarkable commercial relations with neighbouring countries. Already in the 8th century B.C. a strong group of Phoenicians settled in Amathous, probably sharing power with the Eteocyprians and the Greeks. A necropolis, structural lions in tombs, and incense burners in the form of sphinxes attest to their presence as does pottery, especially a type of a cup fixed to a saucer and also a large stemmed cup perhaps designed to hold an ostrich egg.

Royal power during the Archaic period shifted among Phoenician, local Cypriot, and Greek rulers, but despite these moves there existed a central power with strong religious component exhibiting both Semitic and Egyptianizing elements.

It appears that in 709/7 the Cypriot kings willfully submitted to the rule of Sargon II. The only archaeological evidence in Cyprus related to the Assyrian rule, the plate of Sargon II, has no mention of Cypriot kingdoms or their accession in the empire's administrative regions. Amathus does not appear in the Assyrian records (prism of Esarhaddon 683 BC).

Surprisingly considering the important role Amathus must have played in the 5th century, until very recently we did not know the name of any Amathusian king of that century. But the discovery of eleven coins of a well-known type in a tomb east of Amathus not only provided us with the name of a mid – 5th century king, but it confirmed the attribution to Amathus of a particular series of coins stretching from the middle of the 5th century till about the middle of the 4th.

In 500 B.C. the Greek cities of Ionia were dissatisfied with Persian intervention in their affairs, interventions resulting in the support of tyrannical regimes that served the interests of the Great King. They thus decided to revolt. The revolt soon spread to the greater part of Asia Minor, and in 499 Sardes was set on fire, urging other cities and areas to join the uprising, amongst them some cities-kingdoms in Cyprus. It seems however that the King of Amathus remained loyal to the Persians and as a result of his loyalty to the Persian king he was besieged by the Cypriots revolutionaries led by Onesilos. A general destruction of the acropolis at the beginning of the early fifth century can be

attributed to this episode (Herodotus 5, 104-105).

The final destruction of the palace is difficult to explain. It seems to have occurred during the time of the sole rule of Demetrius Poliorketes (301-294 BC).

The only buildings of note known from the Ptolemaic period (294-58BC) were a second-century BC stoa toward which one Onesicrates contributed funds, and a bathing establishment located at the edge of the inner harbor of the port. The city recovered some of its vitality under the Antonine emperors to judge from the plentifulness of glass and jewelry in tombs. After the second half of the third century, documents ceased to be inscribed on stone, and crafts, except pottery, disappear. Tomb furnishings are meagre.

Remains of the City of Amathus

Agora and baths

The agora is located in the lower town at the east of the hill of the acropolis. The area south of the agora is occupied by a public bath (balaneion), which is comprised of a closed circular area and annexes. The bath along with part of the west portico of the agora date to the Hellenistic period and constitute the earliest indications of human activity in the area.

According to the excavator, the paving in the west half of the agora square is well preserved, and architectural elements recovered permit the reconstruction of an elevated central basin and fountain covered by a baldachino, the roof of which, perhaps pyramidal, was supported by four spirally fluted columns of dark, stone, originally standing on white marble bases (one is preserved) and topped by Corinthian capitals also of white marble (all four preserved).

The Palace

The acropolis always served as a means of defense. We now know that the escarpment was fortified with walls. The acropolis also helped protect the lower city, which extended directly north into the Verka meadow, where an aqueduct ended, and to the east onto a lower hill in a silted-up bayhead. It was there that elements of a natural mooring were found, perhaps transformed into a port due to the regional importance of Amathous, prior to the construction of the major port of the Hellenistic period. The docks are still visible ahead of the current coastline. Behind the Byzantine wall part of the palace of Amathous is preserved. It was built in the 8th century B.C. and was destroyed after the reign of the last king of the town, Androkles, around 300 B.C. The preserved ruins, where many remarkable objects such as pithoi and athoric stele have been unearthed during excavations, are part of the palace's storerooms. We can approach the area by climbing up the hill along a test trench from the central gate i of the central wall or by coming down from the modern dirt road which passes above. Coming down from the dirt road on the north side, one first encounters a group of seventh-century AD buildings.

The Northern Wall

Since the Archaic period the city was walled on all sides. The Classical wall, which already included robust towers, was reinforced in the Hellenistic period by an impressive tower on a corner. The walls were reinforced when the port was constructed and today we can see the southwest part of the walls with the west tower near the sea, and a large part of the north wall with three towers, which linked the steps of the acropolis with the higher point of the lower city. A gate exists in the north wall, permitting the entrance to those who entered the town from the hinterland. After the destruction of the wall in the 4th century A.D., a second wall was built in the 6th century (probably by Justinian in order to face a potential military threat from Persia) in the middle of the hill of the acropolis, in front of the abandoned palace.

The harbor

The external port of the city was situated in front of the agora and its ruins are preserved today under the sea. The port was built at the end of the 4th century B.C. by Demetrios Poliorcetes, as part of the defense of the town during the period of the quarrel with the Ptolemies for the domination of Cyprus. The port's lifespan was short since it was covered by sand. In front of the agora an internal basin of the port existed where the sailors had the opportunity to pull the ships out of the water in order to better protect them from the wind. Seismic elevation in land levels, combined with the accumulation of sand deposited by wind and water, moved the effective line of the beach into the middle of the harbor by the first century AD.

The Christian Basilica on the acropolis summit

The basilica commands panoramic views from the summit and dates from the 6th/7th century. It was built on the site of an ancient Temple and sanctuary of Aphrodite. The basilica and its dependant buildings occupied one quarter of the courtyard to the north and east. Porticoes bordered the courtyard on the rest of the northwest side and on the southwest portico.

Guide to Kourion

Topography

The archaeological site of Kourion, one of the richest area of the entire island in archaeological terms is situated on the south shores of Cyprus, in the bay of Episkopi, about 19 Km west of Limassol and 16 Km east of Amathus.

Systematic excavations were undertaken in 1933 by the Pennsylvania University Museum, and continued, with a break during the war years, until 1954. During the excavations the building of the Achilles Mosaic, the Theatre, the Baths and the Complex of Eustolios, the Stadium and the Sanctuary of Apollon Hylates came to light (during 1980-1983 the excavation of this site was undertaken by the American Mission of the Walters Art Gallery and the Universities of Missouri and Maryland). In 1974-1979 the American Mission of the Dumbarton Oaks Centre for Byzantine Studies carried out excavations in the Early Christian Basilica of Kourion. At the same time (from 1964 until today) the Department of Antiquities of Cyprus excavated the Agora, the House of Gladiators, the Small Basilica next to the Stadium and the newly discovered Coastal Basilica. The Department is also responsible for the creation of the archaeological park of Kourion.

Source: Department of Antiquities (<http://www.mcw.gov.cy/mcw/da/da.nsf/All/CB2E60AEDED0A248C225719B0038B505?OpenDocument>)

Prehistory and History of Kourion

Prehistorical Times (4500-8 B.C.)

The area of Kourion has been inhabited since Neolithic Times (4500-3900 B.C.), while in the grand area important settlements dating to the Late Neolithic Age have been found (Sotira, Kantou) and also to the Chalcolithic Age (Erimi, Bamboula, Sotira). [χάρτης]. At the location called Phaneromeni, under the cliffs of Kourion, close to the river Kouris, a big part of the cemetery dating to the Middle Bronze Age (2000-1600) has been excavated.

The settlement of Kourion dates to the 16th century B.C. and according to the archaeological evidence the 14th century BC may be considered the prosperity period of the prehistoric urban center. There while the characteristic architectural style of the houses

at Bamboula, with the quadrate trilateral ground plan as well as the ceramic art and the minor objects imitate the Cretan and the Mycenaean model. According to the foundation myth current in Antiquity by Herodotus () and Strabo () Kourion was associated with Argos of Peloponnese, and its inhabitants believed that their city was founded by Argean immigrants and claimed to be their descendants. Indeed, this very first settlement dating to the Late Bronze Age (1200 BC) is attested by the archeological evidences, and there are indications that Greek colonists from Peloponnesus settled Kourion (on the slopes of Bamboula hill). According to different tradition, the name of the city is attributed to its founder, Kourea, son of the legendary Cypriote king Kinyras.

Historical Period

It appears that in 709/7 the Cypriot kings willfully submitted to the rule of Sargon II. The only archaeological evidence in Cyprus related to the Assyrian rule, the plate of Sargon II, has no mention of Cypriot kingdoms or their accession in the empire's administrative regions. Kourion is listed as Kuri in the Assyrian records and its King is Damasu (prism of Esarhaddon 683 BC).

In 500 B.C. the Greek cities of Ionia were dissatisfied with Persian intervention in their affairs, interventions resulting in the support of tyrannical regimes that served the interests of the Great King. They thus decided to revolt. The revolt soon spread to the greater part of Asia Minor, and in 499 Sardes was set on fire, urging other cities and areas to join the uprising, amongst them some cities-kingdoms in Cyprus. During the Revolt Kourion it seems that fought at first next to the other Cypriots kings. But at the crucial battle (498 B.C.) outside Salamis, the king Stasanor (Herodotus, 5.113), halfway through the battle decided to fight with the Persians, taking with him part of Onesilos' army.

After this episode we know very little about the classical history of Kourion. The Cypriot kingdoms found themselves subdued to the new ruler of Asia, Alexander III Macedon (331BC) and according to Arrian (Anab. 2.22.2) Pasicrates' ship (the king of Kourion in that time), was sunk during the siege of Tyr. Cypriot kingdoms dissolve between 333 and 310 B.C. and is almost certain that when Demetrios Poliorketes conquered the island in 306 B.C. Kourion was not any more an independent kingdom.

Although there are no written sources concerning Kourion under Ptolemaic () and Roman administration, is certain that it was still a place of importance to judge from its visible remains and movable finds. The roman inscriptions found in the site, record the cosmopolitan nature of the population, with officials and traders drawn from other parts of the empire. These included Jewish elements, in the form of the cult of Hypsistos ('Almighty'), which combined Graeco-Roman and Judaic elements.

Christianity was well established at Kourion by the begging of the 3rd century A.D. but persecutions against the first Christians cost the inhabitants of the city many painful tortures. In the early 4th century there was testimony about the existence of the Episcopal See with Filonides (303-305 A.D.) being the first known bishop. Filonides, suffered martyrdom during the time of the Emperor Diocletian (A.D. 284-305), and Zeno, Filonides' successor represented the Church of Cyprus at the Council of Ephesus (431 A.D.) ant he was instrumental in securing a favorable decision on the claim of the Church of Cyprus to independence. Zenon is also among the Cypriot Bishops declared Saints of the late Christian era with Saint Tychon, Saint Epifanios, and Saint Spyridon. Kourion, was ruined by earthquakes in the 4th century AD., and dramatic evidence for this episode has been revealed in the ruins of houses on the acropolis. The city was rebuilt, at the beginning of the 5th century, perhaps after a period of abandonment.

Kourion like the most coastal cities in the island seems to have suffered from the threat of Arab raiders, fact which made the coastal areas less attractive for settlement.

So, its inhabitants moved and established themselves at a new site 2.5Km, to the east, at Episkopi.

The name of this modern village derived from the name of the bishopric of Kourion, transferred there from the abandoned part of the town.

During the Middle Age the village of Episkopi was known as La Piscopie. In the 13th century it belonged to Jean D' Ibelin, Count of Jaffa and from the 14th and 15th centuries until the Turkish conquest, it formed part of the domains of the Coronaro family. The fortified manor of Episkopi, successfully resisted the Mamelukes in 1426.

Remains of the City of Kourion

The archaeological remains found at the site of Kourion belong to the Roman period, apart from the Basilica and the House of Eustolios which are dated to the Early Christian period. The extra-mural Basilica, the Roman Stadium and the Sanctuary of Apollo date from the Archaic period to the end of Roman times.

The Roman Forum (Agora)

The remains of the Forum (which is situated in southwest sector of the site) excavated, suggest that it was monumental colonnaded public building in the middle of the town serving as a market – place and meeting place. The excavators have made out three architectural phases, which date from 325-200 A.D., 200-100 A.D. to 100-50 A.D. Despite the lack of archaeological evidence, it is plausible to conclude that the Forum was entirely destroyed by the same severe earthquake which caused the desertion of the entire city of Kourion (Christou 45).

The Theater

The Roman Theater is situated at the southern end of the Kourion bluff and according to the excavators it seems that the original theater (constructed probably around the late 2nd century A.D.) was a small Hellenistic theater with the circular orchestra and elevated scenae frons (the forehead of the stage). In the curved auditorium the spectators' seats rose, row upon row, and provided accommodation for about 3500 people.

In the 2nd century the theatre was enlarged to its present dimensions, and it was an imposing building resembling the developed theatrical types of Roman Imperial times. Towards the end of the 2nd century, or early in the 3rd century A.D. (under Caracallas' reign 214-217 A.D.), the theater was rearranged for staging the popular spectacle of hunters pursuing animals.

In the 4th century the theatre was abandoned and latter destroyed by stone-robbers.

The Roman Nymphaeum

Devoted to the nymphs, the daughters of Poseidon, the Nymphaeum measuring 45m. in length and 15m in width, is one of the largest and most significant monuments of its kind, not only in Cyprus but in other Roman provinces as well. The monument consisted of a rectangular room with a central apse facing an entrance with two columns leading into a second rectangular room or open courtyard. It was destroyed and abandoned during the Arab raids of the mid-7th century A.D.

The House of Gladiators

This Roman house, which dates to the second half of the 3rd century A.D., has a central courtyard with corridors on all four sides and rooms opening onto them. The house was entered from its northeast corner by a built staircase leading to the small eastern open courtyard without porticoes, the floor of which seems to have been decorated with coloured mosaics of geometric patterns. Among the mosaics, which decorate the east and south wings of the courtyard, the most important are those in the east wing depicting a Gladiator combat scene which is rare in Cyprus. Originally there must have been three but the south one has been lost with the collapsed part of the house, while almost all the central panel has been destroyed by a later wall.

The House of Achilles

The House of Achilles, it is situated at the northwestern edge of the hill adjacent to the street leading to the Sanctuary of Apollo Hylates. Only part of the building, is preserved today. The precise date and function of the building have not been ascertained by the excavators, but it seems that this was a civic reception centre for distinguished visitors and it date from 4th century A.D. Several rooms are decorated with mosaic floors. The most interesting floor depicts the popular story of the revealing of Achilles' true identity by Odysseus in the court of the king Lycomedes at Skyros. Unlike the majority of known examples, this one shows Achilles still fully dressed in feminine attire, although he has discarded one of his lady's shoes, which is known, lace undone, next to his foot. He is holding a long spear in his right hand and a large shield in his left.

The Stadium

Between the City and the Sanctuary of Apollo Hylates there is the Stadium that we see today, which was constructed in the period of Antonine Emperor (138-180 A.D.). The outlines of its U-shaped plan are preserved as are the three entrance gates, one on either side and one in the middle of the rounded end. Its internal measurements are 217m. in length and 17m. in width. Of the original seats only a few were preserved on the north and south sides. A section of the seating has been reconstructed to show the arrangement of the seats, which were raised above the track and of which there were

seven rows. The Hellenic Pentathlon (running, high jump, long jump, wrestling, javelin,) should have been the basic sports practised in this Stadium. Chariot and horse races related to the cult of Apollo should also have been practised there since the Archaic period according to the testimonies obtained in ceramic and plastic that is to say the clusters of pottery offerings to the Sanctuary but not to the precise Stadium the turn of which was too small for horse races. The athletic games in the Stadium were financed by the city of Kourion and were organized either in memory of specific events, such as the great victories of the Roman Army and the birthday of the Emperors.

The Early Christian Basilica

South of the Agora are the remains of the large complex of buildings belonging to the three-aisled basilica, the cathedral of Kourion. Originally built in the beginning of the 5th century A.D., and replacing earlier constructions this imposing building was the Cathedral Church of the first Bishops of Kourion. In the west, the basilica communicated with a narthex and a succession of buildings including the diakonikon, where the faithful deposited their offerings, and the house of the bishop of Kourion. To the north, the basilica extended to the atrium and the baptistery, which had the form of a small three-aisled basilica with a narthex. The basilica was decorated with mural mosaics and marble sculpture in the champlévé technique.

Guide to Palaipaphos (Kouklia)

Topography

The ancient town of Palaipafos is located within the limits of the modern village of Kouklia, 16 kilometres east of the modern town of Pafos. The site is situated at an average altitude of 85m. in the coastal plain of Pafos, north of the central highway of Limassol-Pafos, close to the mouth of the Diarrhizos, the only river on the southwest coast of Cyprus.

The site was partially investigated from the beginning of the 19th century but systematic archaeological research took place between 1950-55 by the Kouklia Expedition of the University of St Andrews and the Liverpool Museum, directed by J.H. Iliffe and T.B. Mitford. From 1966 archaeological research at Palaipafos was resumed under the auspices of the German Archaeological Institute joined by the University of Konstanz (until 1972) and Zürich (since 1973) directed by Franz Georg Maier and M.-L. von Wartburg. The Department of Antiquities of Cyprus has excavated a certain number of tombs in the area surrounding Kouklia.

Source: Department of Antiquities (<http://www.mcw.gov.cy/mcw/da/da.nsf/All/CB2E60AEDED0A248C225719B0038B505?OpenDocument>)

Prehistory and History

Prehistory

The earliest vestiges of human activity at Palaipaphos date back to the later Chalcolithic period (c. 2800BC). No levels of undisputed structures of this period have been recovered so far, although the two rock-cut pits below the hall of the Late Bronze Age sanctuary resemble Chalcolithic house pits excavated at Kalavassos. The archaeological evidence yields precious information about various aspects of life in the Late Bronze Age (1650-1050 BC) city at Palaipaphos.

The dominant position of Late Bronze Age Palaipaphos in southwestern Cyprus was no doubt enhanced by its Sanctuary – a cult center rivaling the great temples of Enkomi and Kition. According to the foundation myth of the city, Agapenor, the king of Tegea in Arcadia, Greece, was the founder of the city and the sanctuary. Another legend, however, mentions Kinyras, the local legendary king, as the founder and first High Priest of the sanctuary. What is certain is that the site of Palaipafos and its surrounding area are linked to an ancient cult associated with the “Great Goddess”, the goddess of fertility, who was worshiped in Cyprus since the Neolithic period.

Historical Period

It appears that in 709/7 the Cypriot kings willfully submitted to the rule of Sargon II. The only archaeological evidence in Cyprus related to the Assyrian rule, the plate of Sargon II, has no mention of Cypriot kingdoms or their accession in the empire's administrative regions. We can thus assume that they remained autonomous as cities and paid a yearly tribute to Assyrian kings, and that Paphos was among the kings submitted to the Assyrian King. Paphos is included in the Assyrian records as Pappa, and its king as Ituandar, that is, Eteandros (prism of Esarhaddon 683 BC).

The political history of Paphos in classical times is not very well known, except for the names of its kings. In 500 B.C. the Greek cities of Ionia were dissatisfied with Persian intervention in their affairs, interventions resulting in the support of tyrannical regimes that served the interests of the Great King. They thus decided to revolt. The revolt soon spread to the greater part of Asia Minor, and in 499 Sardes was set on fire, urging other cities and areas to join the uprising, amongst them some cities-kingdoms in Cyprus. During the Revolt Paphos it seems that fought at first next to the other Cypriots kings but unfortunately Herodotus tell us nothing about its participation.

In 480 BC the King of Paphos, Penthilos, contributed twelve ships to the fleet of Xerxes. When the last King of Palaipafos, Nikokles, moved his capital at the end of the 4th century B.C. to the newly-founded Nea Pafos, some 16 km to the west, the town retained some of its importance thanks to the continuation of the cult at the temple of Aphrodite.

Remains of the City of Paphos

The continuity of occupation on the site from the Chalcolithic period to the early Byzantine era is well established; a considerable medieval settlement is attested at least since the 12 c. AD. Seen as a whole, the history of the settlement spans a time of nearly 5000 years, from c. 2800 BC to the present day. Three of the sites excavated yielded results of special historical significance. In the Sanctuary of Aphrodite the continuity of cult has been definitely established for more than 1500 years, from the Late Bronze Age (c. 1200 BC) to the Late Roman period (end of the 4th c. AD).

The Sanctuary of Aphrodite

According to the excavators the surviving remains on the sanctuary site from two groups of buildings: the Late Bronze Age Sanctuary I to the south, erected as the first monumental shrine of Aphrodite, and the Roman Sanctuary II north of it, built in the late first or early second century.

It consists of an open court (temenos), surrounded by a monumental wall comprised of enormous limestone blocks. Its western side and part of its south side are preserved along with a hall, which housed a conical baetyl in its centre symbolising the power of the Great Goddess.

That the Paphian goddess was called the "Wanasa" until the end of the classical period may be another

survival of Achaean religious traditions. In Late Classical period, Aphrodite is depicted by types common in the representation of Aphrodite in Greece.

According to the excavator, important information about the life of the sanctuary is derived from the votive monuments deposited there over centuries. Relics of large marble and bronze statues are scarce, although many of their inscribed bases survive. But several thousand fragments of Archaic, Classical, Hellenistic and Roman terracottas not only demonstrate a strong Greek influence on the original fertility cult, but also Phoenician traces reflecting the impact of Astarte on the worship of Aphrodite.

The City wall and the Palace of Hadji Abdulla

Amongst private houses and workshops rose a number of important public buildings, such as a large Late Classical peristyle house and a remarkable palatial building with Achaemenid features at Hadji Abdullah which most likely represents a Royal residence. It dates to the 6th or early 5th century BC.

This remarkable monument of Archaic Cypriot architecture, dominating the eastern living quarters of Palaipaphos, seems to have been inhabited throughout the Classical period until finally collapsed towards the end of the fourth century BC.

The excavation of the Northeast Gate, a stronghold of the defences of Palaipaphos, revealed the development of the city's fortifications from the early Archaic to the early Hellenistic period. At the same site, extensive remains of elaborate siege and countersiege operations were discovered, conducted by a Persian army in 498 BC.

The House of Leda

The mosaic pavement of the triclinium (summer dining room) was found completely preserved. The myth well known and well illustrated in Antiquity, tells Zeus' metamorphosis into a swan in order to approach Leda during one of her baths in the river Eurotas. After their union Leda laid two eggs out of which came the Dioscuroi and Helen Troy. The fine work of late second century testifies to both the private wealth of the inhabitants and the high standards of the Paphian mosaic ateliers. The mosaic has been attributed to the late 2nd/early 3rd century A.D. The floor has been left in situ but the central panel has been lifted and replaced by a modern replica. The original central panel is now exhibited in the Archeological Museum in Nicosia.

The Northeast Gate of the defensive wall

The Northeast Gate of Palaipafos occupied a commanding position above the living quarters of the ancient city on the Marchellos hill and consisted one of the strongholds of the ancient fortifications. The first wall and gate buildings were erected in the early Archaic period (second half of the 8th

century B.C.). The gate is connected with the dramatic siege of the city by the Persians during the Ionian revolt in 498 B.C. According to an inscription the last King of Palaipafos, Nikokles, rebuilt the defensive walls in the middle of the 4th century B.C. but soon after 300 B.C. they fell into disuse.

The reconstruction of the development of the Paphian defences over a period of more than 400 years is of considerable interest, as excavated Greek fortifications spanning a comparable time are still fairly rare. For a long time they were left in disrepair, to be reconstructed for a last time on a large scale in the second half of the fourth century.

Nea Paphos - Mosaics

Topography

Nea Paphos is situated on a small promontory on the southwest coast of the island, and occupies a site on which there was an earlier settlement that had grown around a small, sheltered bay – the future harbour of Nea Paphos. According to written sources, the town was founded at the end of the 4th century by Nicocles, the last king of Palaipafos. In the beginning of the 3rd century B.C. when Cyprus became part of the Ptolemaic kingdom, which had its capital in Alexandria, Nea Pafos became the center of Ptolemaic administration on the island. Until the end of the 2nd century B.C., Nea Pafos acquired such an important role as a political and economical centre of the region that the Ptolemies made it the capital of the whole island. When in 58 B.C. Cyprus was annexed by Rome, Nea Pafos continued to be the capital of Cyprus. Only after the disastrous earthquakes of the 4th century A.D. was the capital transferred to Salamis, which was then renamed Constantia.

Mosaics



A chance discovery has brought to light what still remains the most spectacular group of mosaics in Cyprus. The excavations brought to light large wealthy residences of the Roman period. In Roman times mosaic was the most prestigious type of decoration, especially when it involved figures. In Early Christian times, with marble becoming more readily available the technique became widely used for decorating floors. Figured wall incrustations, however, remained always one of the most luxurious ways of decorating a building.

The House of Dionysos

This rich building belongs to the Greco-Roman type where the rooms are arranged around a central court, which functioned as the core of the house. No other house in Cyprus preserves its mosaic decoration as complete as the House of Dionysos. The building was discovered by chance in 1962 when the area was being leveled, and it was excavated by the Department of Antiquities. It seems that the house was built at the end of the 2nd century A.D. and was destroyed and abandoned after the earthquakes of the 4th century A.D. The plan of the house is of a characteristic Greco-Roman type consisting of an atrium (an open central court), acting as the focal point around which the rooms

were arranged. House of Dionysus occupies 2000sq. metres of which 556 are covered with mosaic floors decorated with mythological, vintage and hunting scenes. At the House's entrance there is a pebble mosaic representing the mythical sea-monster Scylla that belonged to a Hellenistic building found below the later Roman one.

The Four Seasons

The mosaic must belong to the entrance of the house, or a room very near it, because it incorporates in its geometric frame a good-omen inscription: XAIPEI/KAI CY ("Rejoice/you too"). The inscription is divided into two small parts, each enclosed in a tabula ansata, placed on opposite sides of the room. Those in the corners depict the Four Seasons which (at least as the mosaic stands now), starting from the top left moving clock-wise, are: Summer, crowned with ears of corn and holding a sickle; Spring, crowned with flowers and holding a shepherd's crook; Autumn holding a pruning – knife and crowned with leaves; and finally Winter, represented as a grey, bearded man, with next to him an upturned vessel out of which issues water.

The House of Orpheus

It belongs to the type of the wealthy Greco-Roman Houses with a central court similar to the House of Dionysus. The building has been dated to the late 2nd /early 3rd century A.D. The style of mosaics is very similar to that of the House of Dionysus, but appears to be fractionally earlier. The buildings' main room, the reception hall, is decorated with a mosaic floor depicting Orpheus among the beasts. The next rooms' mosaic floor bears two panels, one representing Hercules and the Lion of Nemea, and the other an Amazon with her horse.

Only three rooms with mosaic floors have been discovered so far. The figured mosaics are quite similar in style and technique to those of the House of Dionysos.

Hercules and the lion of Nemea

This mosaic is a straightforward depiction of Hercules' first labour in which he killed the invulnerable Lion of Nemea, in order to take its skin to king Eurystheus. The Lion according to some writers, was born to Echidna and Orthros, and according to others, fell, from the moon. Hercules first tried his arrows but to no effect. He then ceased it with his club but the Lion hid in a cave. After blocking one of the two exits of the cave, Hercules entered, threw his club away and throttled the beast with his bare hands.

Orpheus and the Beasts

The mosaic decorates a room measuring 4.25x5.10m. Apart from a rather simple geometric frame, the whole floor is occupied by one large panel. Orpheus is seated on a rock and with his left hand holds a lyre, the sounds of which attract a multitude of creatures that gather enchanted around him. The most important feature of this mosaic is the inscription that runs above the poet's head. It reads [ΓΑΙ]OC [ΤΙΤ]OC ΙΙΝΝΙΟC/PECTITOYTOCEΠΟΙΕΙ, which translated means Gaius (or Titus) Pinnius

Restitutus made it. At first sight this may be taken for the signature of the mosaicist. Whichever the exact meaning, such inscriptions are not all that common and this is the first one we know from Roman Cyprus.

The Villa of Theseus

The Polish excavations directed by W.A. Daszewski, at the locality Maloutena in Nea Paphos, have been in progress since 1965 and have brought to light a vast Roman building known as the villa of Theseus. The villa was built in the second half of the 2nd century A.D. over the ruins of earlier houses of the Hellenistic and early Roman periods and was in use until the 7th century AD. The villa's large size, it consisted of more than 100 rooms, suggests that the building was the residence of the governor of Cyprus. Many of the rooms and three of the four porticos around the central court are covered with mosaic floors with geometric motifs. Three rooms in the south wing of the building are embellished with mosaic floors with human representations, all belonging to different phases. The oldest one is the mosaic representing Theseus and the Minotaur, dating to the very end of the 3rd or beginning of the 4th century A.D. with obvious later restorations, probably made after the earthquakes of the middle of the 4th century. At the end of the 4th century A.D. a new mosaic depicting Poseidon and Amphitrite was added to a room, which probably served as a bedroom. Finally, at the beginning of the 5th century, a mosaic floor was laid in the reception room, of which only a part is preserved today and depicts Achilles' first bath.

Theseus and the Minotaur

Archeological evidence indicates that the pavement was created at the very end of the 3rd or in the early 4th century A.D. The scene on the mosaic shows a decisive moment in the fight. Unlike most of the other mosaics with this subject known from various part of the Roman Empire, the Paphos representation does not limit itself to the main protagonists, Theseus and the Minotaur alone.

Balancing the figure of the Minotaur on the other side, there is a personification of the Labyrinth, who is shown as an elderly man. Outside the Labyrinth, on the right, there is a personification of Crete, wearing the turreted crown typical of personifications of cities, and on the left there is Ariadne, anxiously waiting for the outcome of the combat.

The House of Aion

Only part of the house has been excavated so far. On the floor of an apsidal room, lies the most spectacular mosaic of Pafos dated from the middle of the 4th century A.D. The mosaic, which is of excellent quality, consists of five figural panels depicting the newborn Dionysos, Leda and the Swan, the beauty contest between Cassiopeia and the Nereids, Apollon and Marsyas, and finally the Triumph of Dionysos.

The mosaic decoration of the reception hall is composed of five figural panels within a Π-shaped geometric frame opening in the direction of the entrance. The frame itself was made up of several borders, the outermost having the form of a band of white reticulatum ornament upon grayish background.

CHAPTER 13b

**Orthodox Churches and
Monasteries of Cyprus
The Byzantine Museum of the
Archbishop Makarios III
Foundation**

C h r i s t o d o u l o s

H a d j i c h r i s t o d o u l o u

The Monastery of St Neophytos

The Monastery of St Neophytos lies near the village of Tala in the Paphos district. Its foundation is dated back to the 12th century and is attributed to the Cypriot Saint Neophytos the Recluse. Neophytos had himself carved his ascetic cavern, the so-called *Engleistra* or hermitage, which includes a church, a cell, and a refectory. Inside the Saint's cell lies his stone desk and grave.

The Engleistra was decorated for the first time in 1183 with remarkable wall-paintings by painter Theodoros Apsēdis, who had probably come to the island from Constantinople. The wall-paintings include scenes from the Passion of Christ and isolated saints. Of special note is the illustration with St Neophytos flanked by two angels, and the Small Deesis, in which the saint is depicted kneeling in supplication to God. The icons of Christ and Our Lady Orans from the Engleistra have also been dated to the 12th century.

The Monastery's *katholikon*, just as the more recent monastic complex which surrounds it, lies to the east of the Engleistra. The church belongs to the Franco-Byzantine style and dates from the 16th century. It is very similar to the Cathedral of St Mamas in Morphou and was possibly built by the same workmen. The scarce wall-paintings preserved in the *katholikon*, which is dedicated to the Dormition of Theotokos, date from the first half of the 16th century.

The Monastery of Our Lady Eleousa (Merciful) of Kykkos

The Holy, Royal, and Stavropegic Monastery of Our Lady Eleousa of Kykkos was founded around the end of the 11th century, and according to local tradition its founder was the Byzantine Emperor Alexios Comnenos. The Emperor bestowed the miraculous icon of Our Lady Eleousa on the Monastery's founder, Monk Isaiah. The icon, attributed to the Evangelist Luke, was kept in the imperial palace.

Through the centuries, the Monastery became the most important in Cyprus, owing to a wealth of miracles performed by the Holy Icon. Our Lady of Kykkos is believed to be a rainmaker and a healer of female sterility. The old icon has a 1759 silver gilt revetment and is at all times covered with a precious veil so that her face may remain unseen by the faithful. In times of draught the icon is carried in procession to the *throni*, which lies on the top of the mountain to the west of the Monastery. There, with the uncovered icon facing the sky, far from the eyes of the faithful, a supplication for rain is performed. Our Lady is also considered a guardian of seamen, and this is why model ships used to be dedicated to her.

Despite repeated fires having ravaged the Monastery in the past, the icon of Our Lady was always salvaged.

The monastic complex comprises many constructions dating from different epochs, namely: the *katholikon*, the *hegoumeneio* (Abbot's quarters), the Library, the refectory, the guest house, and the Museum. The present-day church is a three-aisled domed basilica dating from the 19th century. It

was decorated during the 20th century with wall-paintings in the Byzantine style by painter Georgios Georgiou. During recent renovations, a large area of both the exterior and the interior wall surfaces of the monastic complex was decorated with mosaics and wall-paintings.

On the post-Byzantine wood-carved gilt iconostasis of the church there are icons of different styles and periods. Of special note among them are the icons of the apostles or isolated saints in the Italo-Byzantine style, such as the icon of St John Chrysostom, and the icons in the style of Ioannis Kornaros the Cretan, such as that of St George and of Our Lady Paramythia.

During the years of Ottoman rule, the monastery became a Pan-Orthodox pilgrimage site with several dependencies in Asia Minor and Russia. Pilgrims to the Holy Land considered that for their pilgrimage to be complete, they had to visit the Monastery.

During the days of Hegoumen Nikiphoros (second half of the 20th century) one of the most significant ecclesiastical museums in Cyprus was founded inside the monastery. From the exhibits, which span a period from the Early Christian years to the 19th century, of note are an Early Christian marble offering table, fragments of wall-paintings from the 13th century with the figures of Our Lady and St Demetrius, as well as icons from the same period, such as the icon of Christ, Our Lady Brephokratousa, and St John the Baptist from Moutoullas.

The Monastery has several dependencies, including St Prokopius in Nicosia and the Archangel Michael in Lakatamia.

The Church of Our Lady “Angeloktisti”

The church is one of the most important Christian monuments in Cyprus. The Byzantine church of Our Lady Angeloktisti is located in the village of Kiti in the Larnaca district. Tradition relates that it was built by angels, hence the designation of Our Lady as “Angeloktisti”. The foundation date of the initial church, a basilica, is set in the 5th century. Later, after the church had been ruined, its salvaged apse was incorporated into the present-day church which was built in c. 11th century.

It is a cross-in-square church that preserves fragments of wall-paintings from the 13th century. Of the same period is also an icon depicting Our Lady enthroned, flanked by the Evangelist Luke and St Lazarus of the Four Days, the first bishop of Kition.

During the years of French Dominion, in particular the 13th century, a Latin chapel was added to the south side of the church by feudal lords of the Gibelet family. Today, this chapel has been converted into a small museum, mostly exhibiting post Byzantine icons from the church. On display is also a medieval tombstone of Simone Guers, who died in 1302.

The wood-carved iconostasis dates from the 19th century, its icons from the 18th and 19th centuries. Of note among them is the icon of the Archangel Michael, possibly an 18th-century work from Mount Athos.

On the apse of the bema one of the most important mosaics in the Christian world has been preserved,

dated to the last quarter of the 6th century. The mosaic depicts Theotokos standing, *Aristerokratousa*, namely holding baby Jesus in her left arm, with the accompanying inscription ΑΓΙΑ ΜΑΡΙΑ [SAINT MARY]. This inscription evokes teachings of the Monophysite heresy and not the doctrine of Theotokos affirmed in the third Ecumenical Council of 431. Theotokos is flanked by the Archangels Michael and Gabriel doing reverence. The composition is surrounded by a band with plants, animals, and birds. The original models of such bands may be found in the art of the East but also the West.

The Byzantine Museum of the Archbishop Makarios III Foundation

This is the largest and most significant museum of its kind in the whole of Cyprus. Its exhibits originate from churches and monasteries of the island. They include wall-paintings, portable icons, sacred vessels, sacerdotal vestments, golden embroideries, and manuscripts. These items span a period from the Early Christian years to the 20th century.

Of special interest are mosaics and wall-paintings from the island's occupied monuments, illegally exported abroad after the 1974 Turkish invasion and eventually repatriated. Special reference should be made to fragments of mosaics from the church of Our Lady Kanakaria in Lythrangomi dated to the first half of the 6th century, and the wall-paintings from the 13th-century church of St Euphemianus in Lysi and from the 15th-century church of Christ Antiphonetes in Kalograia.

On display in the Museum's exhibition area are also the wall-paintings that have been removed from the cavern of St Sozomenos near Potamia, possibly of the 10th century, as well as those from the church of St Nikolas "of the Roof" of the 14th century.

Further, two *despotikai* icons of Christ and Our Lady Arakiotissa from the church of Our Lady of Arakas in Lagoudera are on display in the Museum. The icons have been dated to the 12th century and are considered masterpieces of Comnenian art.

Churches of Troodos

The ecclesiastical monuments of Troodos include Byzantine and post-Byzantine monasteries, churches, chapels, and rural churches which either adorn various picturesque villages or lie in remote, wooded areas.

These monuments are very important in that the wall-paintings which decorate them cover a wide span from the post-Byzantine years to nowadays. Ten of these monuments are included in the UNESCO World Heritage list. These churches are the following:

- **Church of the Holy Cross “Ayiasmati” in Platanistasa**

It is the katholikon of an old monastery, the monastic buildings of which have been ruined. The church is a timber-roofed basilica with an ambulatory along its south and west sides. It was built by friar Petros Perates and his wife Pepane. The founders are depicted on a wall-painting on the south external wall of the church. The interior of the church is decorated with wall-paintings attributed to two significant painters. The first is Minas from Myriantoussa, who decorated the bema apse with Our Lady of Blachernae and the Communion of the Apostles. On the front and the left gamble he painted prophets, the Annunciation, and Christ, King of Glory.

The remaining surfaces of the walls are decorated with scenes from the life of Christ, Saints, and the cycle of the Discovery and Exaltation of the Holy Cross. These paintings are the work of Philippos Goul from 1494 or 1505.

- **The Church of Our Lady of Arakas in Lagoudera**

The church was the katholikon of a monastery. A two-storey building with cells is preserved on its northern side. The church was founded by Leon Afthentis in the late 12th century. It belongs to the single-aisled domed style with a cross-shaped upper structure.

The church is decorated with wall-paintings of the Comnenian period which, according to an inscription, date from 1192. The wall-paintings are believed to be among the most significant in the Christian world in terms of their quality.

The dome is dominated by the mellow figure of the Pantokrator and on a lower level the Preparation of the Throne and busts of angels in medallions. Also depicted are prophets, the Annunciation, and the four Evangelists in pairs of two.

Of special interest is Our Lady Arakiotissa in the type of Our Lady of Passion, the scenes from the lives of Christ and Theotokos, and the depictions of Cypriot Saints.

- **The Church of the Holy Cross in Pelendri**

The church belongs to the single-aisled domed type with its oldest wall-paintings on the apse dating from 1178. They depict the Great Deesis and co-officiating hierarchs.

In the 14th century, it was decorated by at least four different painters. Scenes from the Divine Passion are depicted, as well as the events after the Resurrection, scenes from the Marian cycle, and death portraits of dedicators.

- **The Church of St Nikolas ‘of the Roof’ in Kakopetria**

This cross-in-square church has a second inclined roof with flat tiles. It was built in the 11th century to serve as the katholikon of a monastery and preserves wall-paintings dating from the 11th to the 17th century.

The large icon of St Nikolas, meant for public veneration, dates from the 13th century. Aside from the scenes with the life of the Saint, also depicted is the family of the donor – a Western knight, along with his horse. The Saint is invoked as “of the Roof”.

- **The Church of Our Lady Podythou in Galata**

The Church of Our Lady Eleousa Podythou used to be the katholikon of a small monastery. It was built by the De Coronne family in 1502, according to a relevant inscription. The church was never entirely decorated with wall-paintings.

Wall-paintings in the Italo-Byzantine style of the 16th century adorn the Holy Bema and depict Our Lady with the Archangels, Prophets, and scenes from the Marian cycle. In the interior of the church, the Crucifixion is represented, with “The prophets from above” composition on the exterior.

- **The Church of Our Lady Forviotissa in Asinou**

The church was built as the katholikon of a monastery by the magistrate Nikiphoros Ischyrios between 1099 and 1105. Nikiforos is depicted in a subsequent dedicatory wall-painting of the 14th century.

It is a small barrel-vaulted church with a second inclined roof covered with tiles. At the end of the 12th century, a narthex with a calotte was added to the west side of the church.

Densely decorated, the church preserves very significant wall-paintings dated to 1105/6, among which an inscription commemorating the emperor Alexios Comnenos. It includes wall-paintings from the 13th, 14th, and 17th centuries.

The narthex is decorated with scenes from the Second Coming, saints, and numerous portraits of donors.

- **The Monastery of St John Lampadistes in Kalopanaghiotis**

The Monastery includes three churches covered by a second timber roof with tiles. The katholikon of the monastery is dedicated to St Heracleidius, bishop of Tamassos, and was built in the 11th century. In the 12th century, the church of St John Lampadistes was built, inside which his tomb was placed. The chapel of the Akathistos Hymn was built in the 15th century.

The church of St Heracleidius preserves few wall-painting of the 12th century. The 13th century wall-paintings reverberate Eastern influences, whilst those of the 15th century in the narthex are the works of a painter from Constantinople according to a semi-ruined inscription. The church's iconostasis, dated to the 14th century, has written decoration with animals and birds.

The Italo-Byzantine wall-paintings in the chapel of the Akathistos Hymn date from the 16th century.

- **The Church of Our Lady in Moutoullas**

It is a small timber roofed church, which was built by Ioannis Moutoullas and his wife Irene in 1280. The church was decorated with wall-paintings in the so-called Crusaders style of the 13th century. They depict scenes from the life of Christ and isolated saints, among whom St Christopher on horseback as well as the dedicators offering a model of the church. Some wall-paintings date from the 16th century.

- **The Church of the Archangel Michael in Pedoulas**

This is a single-aisled timber roofed church with an ambulatory along its south and west sides. It was built in 1474 by friar Basil Chamados and his family. At the time, it was decorated entirely with wall-paintings by the painter Minas from Myriantoussa, who signs his work. Minas follows the last phase of Paleologian art. The decoration includes scenes from the Christological and Marian cycles on the upper layer and isolated saints on the lower layer. Particularly impressive is the large depiction of the sword-bearing Archangel on the north wall. The iconostasis, which is contemporary with the church, has painted decoration.

- **The Church of the Transfiguration of the Saviour or Saint Sotera in Palaichori**

This is a small timber roofed church from the beginning of the 16th century. The narthex on the west side of the church was built in the early 17th century.

The interior of the church was probably decorated by painter Philippos Goul in the second decade of the 16th century. Scenes from the Christological cycle are depicted, as well as isolated saints, monks, and soldiers at full length. Even though the painter follows the so-called Cypriot School of the 16th century, the influence of Western art may be discerned in his work. The external west wall of the church is decorated with wall-paintings of 1612 with influences from 16th century-art.

The wood-carved iconostasis includes an interesting icon of the Transfiguration of the Saviour (18th century) originating from Mount Athos.

Further Reading

Argyrou, Christos and Myrianteus, Diomedes, *Ο ναός του Τιμίου Σταυρού στην Πλατανιστάσα*, Οδηγοί Βυζαντινών Μνημείων της Κύπρου (Nicosia, 2006).

Cyprus National Commission for Unesco (ed.), *World heritage Sites in Cyprus as listed in UNESCO* (Nicosia, 2008).

Georgiou, Giorgos, *Μοναστήρια της Κύπρου* (Nicosia, 2004).

Hadjichristodoulou, Christodoulos and Myrianteus, Diomedes, *Ο ναός της Παναγίας Φορβιώτισσας στην Ασίνου*, Οδηγοί Βυζαντινών Μνημείων της Κύπρου (Nicosia, 2009).

Konstandoundaki-Kitromilidou, Maria and Myrianteus, Diomedes, *Οι ναοί της Παναγίας Ποδύθου και της Θεοτόκου (ή του Αρχαγγέλου) στη Γαλάτα*, Οδηγοί Βυζαντινών Μνημείων της Κύπρου (Nicosia, 2005).

Myrianteus, Diomedes and Perdikes, Stylianos, *Ο Ναός της Παναγίας στον Μουτουλλά*, Οδηγοί Βυζαντινών Μνημείων της Κύπρου (Nicosia, 2009).

Papageorgiou, Athanasios, *Η Μονή του Αγίου Ιωάννου Λαμπαδιστού στον Καλοπαναγιώτη*, Οδηγοί Βυζαντινών Μνημείων της Κύπρου (Nicosia, 2008).

Stylianou, Andreas and Stylianou, Judith A., *The painted churches of Cyprus. Treasures of Byzantine Art* (Nicosia, 19972).

Μεγάλη Κυπριακή Εγκυκλοπαίδεια, vols. 1-15 (Nicosia, 1984-1996).

CHAPTER 13c

**Ayia Sophia, Omerye Mosque,
Ayia Napa**

C h r i s S c h a b e l

Ayia Sophia, Omerye Mosque, Ayia Napa

The Frankish conquest of 1191 brought Cyprus into the sphere of western art and architecture at a time when the gothic style was dominant. During the period of Cyprus' greatest prosperity, gothic was employed in the Latin cathedrals that were constructed in all four cities, in the major Latin monastic establishments in the countryside at Bellapais (Episcopia) and probably Stravrovouni (the Cross), and in the numerous foundations of the western monastic and mendicant orders in the cities, around twenty in the capital, ten in Famagusta, and three or four each in Paphos and Limassol. After over a century of coexistence with the Latin clergy, the Greeks, Syrians, and Armenians adopted the gothic style when they built or reconstructed their own churches from the fourteenth century onwards, the spectacular ruins of the cathedral of St George of the Greeks in Famagusta being the greatest example, but the Greek cathedral of the Virgin Hodegetria in Nicosia, the so-called Bedesten, is also notable. One can still see the remains of some Latin gothic churches in Paphos and Limassol, and the Carmelite church near Polemidhia outside Limassol is still intact. Bellapais Abbey, in its enchanting setting between the mountains and sea close to Kyrenia, still constitutes one of the most beautiful gothic structures in the world. Nicosia boasts several examples in varying states of preservation, from the intact church of St Catherine and the modified structure of the Benedictine nunnery of Our Lady of Tortosa to the ruins of the New Mosque and the foundations of the Cistercian convent of St Theodore. Famagusta is undoubtedly the most impressive locale, with over a dozen gothic churches either intact or with substantial remains, from the great St Nicholas Cathedral and the mysterious Sts Peter and Paul to the ruins of the large churches of the Carmelites and Franciscans. Following the century of decline after the Genoese invasion, Venetian rule brought the Italian Renaissance to Cyprus, especially in the fortifications of Kyrenia, Famagusta, and Nicosia, but also in domestic architecture. This chapter will go into some detail about three buildings: the Cathedral of Holy Wisdom of Nicosia, or Ayia Sophia; the church of the Augustinian Hermits in Nicosia, or the Omerye Mosque; and the monastery of Ayia Napa in the southeast of the island.

Ayia Sophia

The cathedral of Ayia Sophia either gradually replaced its domed Greek predecessor or was built alongside it, taking its typical Greek name, "Holy Wisdom." The first building campaign probably began in 1209 when Archbishop Albert laid the foundation stone. Construction may have accelerated in the early part of Archbishop Eustorge's reign (late 1210s and 1220s). Perhaps Eustorge managed to finish the east end with the normal pointed arches, ribbed vaulting, and flying buttresses of the early gothic style, which came to Cyprus before the Syrian mainland. Contrary to a common hypothesis, King Louis IX of France's visit in 1248-49 probably had nothing to do with the development of Cypriot gothic. The nave was begun and partly carried out by the middle of the century, as was the two-storied sacristy/treasury connected to the north transept. The entire interior maintains the traditional scheme of nave with single lower side aisles, reflected in the three west portals, but Ayia

Sophia is two-storied, lacking a triforium. Still, the plain round columns of the arcade resemble those of Notre-Dame of Paris, while the (eastern) clerestory windows of two lancets are similar to those of Sens Cathedral before thirteenth-century alterations. The aisle plan, with elevated galleries below the windows, shares a certain similarity with that of churches in Burgundy and Champagne.

Another great spurt of activity took place in the later thirteenth and the first half of the fourteenth century. The structure of the west end of the nave was probably complete by the late 1310s. Further evidence of building works is furnished for the reign of the Dominican Archbishop John of Conti (1312-32), who arrived on Cyprus in 1319 and consecrated the cathedral in 1326. He completed the gallery up to the vaults and the chapel dedicated to St Thomas Aquinas, the Dominican theologian who was canonised only in 1323. In the Middle Ages most churches were more richly adorned than they appear to us today. This decoration, where it survives (for example in the heavily restored Sainte-Chapelle in Paris), often strikes the modern visitor as gaudy, but was of great significance to the medieval viewer. John thus “provided a large baptismal font and a rich marble rood-screen, two large bells and two silver angels, probably for the high altar; he had the vaults of the nave and the six columns of the choir painted and enriched the sacristy with a large number of expensive draperies, silk tapestries, altar frontals and sacerdotal vestments.” Travellers later noted that the choir vaults were painted blue with golden stars (much like the Sainte-Chapelle), and that John’s Aquinas chapel was painted with scenes from the saint’s life, contained a plaque on the altar describing Aquinas’ “acts,” and held a marvelous jasper sarcophagus.

The central western portal accidentally preserves the sculpture of its archivolt, dating to the end of the thirteenth century. The many statues reflect, in style and symbolism, the influence of Reims Cathedral, the coronation church of the kings of France, which served as a model for the coronation church of the kings of Cyprus. Thus the sculptural programme of Nicosia contains elements of coronation symbolism and statues of kings and queens, in addition to church prelates and biblical prophets. A possible influence from Orthodox art may be seen in the apparent placement of niches for icons on the sides of the portals.

After John of Conti’s reign a series of disasters befell the cathedral, city, and kingdom. Further construction became difficult, and the money available probably went to maintenance and repairs, except for the small, square, fifteenth-century “chapel” with a sole exterior entrance, attached to the third bay of the south aisle. There is some question as to whether the “second” façade was ever completed. What remains is the north tower, the beginnings of the south one, and the start of an arch that would connect the two. A traveller, in 1518, remarked that the west façade had three porches under “the finest possible beginning of a bell tower of well cut sandstone,” and he repeats that there was only one tower.

With the possible exception of the royal palace, Ayia Sophia was the main landmark of the capital. Still, western visitors remarked more on its decor than its size, which was even termed “little.” In fact, although it may have been the largest church built in the Eastern Mediterranean in the millenium between the rise of Islam and the late Ottoman period, Ayia Sophia pales in comparison to the greatest French cathedrals in terms of magnitude. The exterior measures roughly 43 metres wide at the transepts by about 80 metres long, the nave being 22-23 metres high. Amiens Cathedral, by

contrast, gives the figures 70, 145, and 42. Due to the climate, the exterior was perhaps never fitted with its pitched wooden roofs over the aisles and nave, although they might have been planned over the choir, and this makes the cathedral appear even more squat than its continental counterparts.

The cathedral was a focus of activity throughout the Latin era, hosting, for example, the trial of the Templars in 1310. It was a part of a complex of structures, including the archbishop's palace opposite the north transept entrance, built by Archbishop Eustorge and probably much modified later. There does not appear to have been a separate chapter house for the committee running the cathedral; instead, the cathedral chapter met in the palace or the sacristy/treasury. The complex also contained the cathedral school, which George the Cypriot, later Patriarch Gregory of Constantinople, surely attended in the 1250s. Ayia Sophia served as the coronation church for the Lusignan kings of Cyprus and, after the Genoese invasion, Jerusalem and eventually Armenia. Until 1314, Nicosia Cathedral was also a preferred place of interment, with a dozen significant burials, including Kings Aimery and Hugh III. The archbishop was supposed to hold, in the cathedral church, church councils for the diocese of Nicosia twice a year and councils for the whole province of Cyprus on a regular basis. The *Synodicum Nicosiense* provides the proceedings of some synods, which could be the occasion for Greek rioting, as in 1313, 1360, and 1567. The last known public gathering in the cathedral took place in 1570, when Francesco Contarini, the bishop of Paphos, attempted to inspire the Nicosia populace to defend the capital against the Turks. When Nicosia fell, Ayia Sophia was converted into the capital's main mosque, with added minarets, although it retained the name "Aysofya" until 1954 when, amid rising tensions, it became the "Selimiye Mosque," after the sultan of the time of the conquest.

Omerye Mosque

Unlike the reclusive monastic orders, the mendicant orders, or "beggars," were created to preach to the urban poor, combat heresy, act as missionaries, and promote learning. Thus, unlike monks, mendicants were comfortable in the cities. Franciscans and Dominicans probably settled in Nicosia in the 1220s, Carmelites a few decades later. The presence in Nicosia of the Augustinian Hermits (or Austrin Friars), not to be confused with the Augustinian Canons, is first attested in 1299. By 1394, the convent contained two cloisters. The Nicosia Augustinians like John of Cyprus, master of theology, and Andrew Audeth, doctor of canon law, took an active role in higher education. The discovery of several tombs of Augustinian Hermits in the Omerye Mosque in Old Nicosia is enough to identify that structure with the Augustinians' church, often wrongly called St Mary. Over 110 tombs were found in total, including those of seven Greeks. The oldest clearly legible tomb is dated to 1341, and Camille Enlart's claim that the church is from the first half of the 14th century fits the other written evidence perfectly. After Ayia Sophia, it is the largest surviving medieval church in Nicosia.

Externally, the church is over 50 metres long and about 14 metres wide, consisting of a western porch, two rectangular bays of the nave, and an eastern bay ending in a three-sided apse. Like many mendicant churches, which were built for preaching to the masses, the Augustinian church has no side aisles, and so the interior of the nave is actually slightly wider than that of Ayia Sophia. Originally it was roofed with ribbed vaults about 15 metres from the floor, but the church was damaged by

the Ottomans during the siege of 1570 (or possibly an earthquake?), and a simple wooden roof on transverse arches was installed in its transformation into a mosque. The tall lancet windows and much of the porch also perished, but the central door and the porch's south arch remain. The side chapel, however, measuring 10 by 6 metres, not only retains its ribbed vaulting, but also a beautiful rose window on the west side. The chapel has a rectangular western bay and an eastern bay ending in a three-sided apse, whose ribs converge in the conventional way. Attached to the east of the chapel are ruins that presumably belonged to a sacristy and the conventual buildings (?). Interestingly, besides a well-crafted Gothic doorway, there are two pedimented Renaissance windows. It is uncertain whether this monumental front was part of the "Hostel of St Augustine" that Queen Charlotte of Bourbon constructed around 1420 or, more likely, "the guest houses" Archbishop William Goneme built before his death in 1473, a refurbishing thereof or some other structure. It should probably be ascribed a sixteenth-century date.

Ayia Napa

Ayia Napa monastery is situated in the centre of the busy tourist town of the same name. It is a curious combination of Byzantine, gothic, and Renaissance elements, probably reflecting its complicated past. The church, on the west, is partly an underground cave. In the 1370s it seems to have been a convent of Greek nuns, but in the so-called Latin chapel in the church there was a Latin inscription commemorating its construction in 1530, during the Venetian period. When a Czech traveler visited sixteen years later, he noted that "a monk who belonged to the order of St Augustine treated us to bread and wine and put us up for the night." He went on to say that "in the chapel in which the icon of the Virgin was located Greek Orthodox monks celebrated, while in the area more in front Catholics of the order of St Augustine celebrated." After 1571 the references are again to Greek nuns, although the Latin chapel was still in occasional use 1625, probably by visiting Franciscans, and the monastery functioned down to the end of the eighteenth century.

Thus it appears that in the Venetian period, when the claustral buildings were constructed, the monastery was shared by Greeks and Latins, the latter probably monastic Augustinian Canons, rather than the mendicant Hermits of Nicosia. The claustral buildings are interesting, within the same walled enclosure as the church. The north entrance to the enclosure is a two-floored structure with interesting gothic and Renaissance details both on the inside and outside. Below this building on the interior of the cloister water brought from outside via an aqueduct, originally Roman, exits from a beautiful marble boar's head. In the cloister yard, or garth, there is a sculpted octagonal fountain within a square, domed pavilion. The east and south ranges of the cloister are rather simple, except for the heavy barrel-vaulted south entrance.

Further Reading

Carr, A.W., *Cyprus and the Devotional Arts of Byzantium in the Era of the Crusades*, Aldershot 2005.

Enlart, C., *Gothic Art and the Renaissance in Cyprus*, English trans. and ed. D. Hunt, London 1987.

Olympios, M., *Gothic Church Architecture in Lusignan Cyprus, c. 1209-c. 1373: Design and Patronage*, PhD thesis, University of London 2010.

CHAPTER 13d

Sites of Nicosia

E u p h r o s y n e

R i z o p o u l o u - E g o u m e n i d o u

The Old Archbishopric, Nicosia

The Old Archbishopric stood to the north of the Cathedral, and both occupied the site of the Benedictine Abbey of St. John the Evangelist of Bibi. After the Mameluke raid of 1426 the Benedictine Order left Cyprus, and the building passed into Orthodox hands and remained a Greek monastery until 1720, when the seat of the archbishop was transferred to this area, in the southern part of the town where most Christians resided. The building was then renovated to become the residence of the Orthodox Archbishop Silvestros (1718-1733). The renovation is commemorated by an inscription over the door of the room which later became the residence of Archbishop Kyprianos (1810-1821). In 1814, John Macdonald Kinneir was conducted to the “episcopal palace” and was received in the vestibule by the Archbishop, who ordered an apartment to be prepared for the visitor in the Palace, “a large and straggling building containing upwards of a hundred chambers ... all required for the accommodation of the bishops, priests and their attendants”. Kyprianos himself took Kinneir by hand and led him through a gallery into the refectory, “a long and dirty hall”, for supper. In 1816, the young traveller Otto Friedrich von Richter was also received by Kyprianos. He described the archbishopric as a monastery built around the courtyard of the cathedral. In 1835, the American missionary Lorenzo Warriner Pease paid a short visit to the “Archiepiscopal residence”. He was invited into a reception room and was served with the usual refreshments. In this room, most probably the *synodikon*, he found a copy of Demosthenes, a manuscript produced by one of the inmates of the convent. In 1862/3, Archbishop Makarios I (1854-1865) built the Great *Synodikon* (Synod Hall) and the adjoining rooms in the garden, to the north of Apostolos Varnavas Street. He also built the two viaducts over the street, in order to connect the new building with the Old Archbishopric. Ten years later, in 1873, the Archduke of Austria Louis Salvator recorded his visit to the “archiepiscopal palace ... flanked by clay houses and colonnades ... an irregular building with lofty halls, surrounded by wooden and stone balustrades. The interior is plain, but spacious, the Archbishop having a suite of fifty persons, of whom twenty are priests”. Archbishop Sophronios III had ordered a pope to show the palace to the visitor. They started with the inspection of the outer corridors, and came up the stairs: “After passing through the bare looking ante-room we came into a hall, where we found the Archbishop: he was sitting on a divan covered with Turkish carpets, on which he also offered me a seat after a friendly greeting...”. Afterwards, several popes conducted the guest through the other apartments. “First we went across to a new wing of the building, in which there is a modern Turkish reception-room, with a fine view over the garden. We entered now the very modest bedroom of the Archbishop, with a few pointed arches supporting the ceiling, and a very small alcove. From the balcony, you look over both the gardens belonging to the palace and the azure mountains at the back. A small apartment over the arcades and the stable of the mules contains a small library and the insignia of the bishop”. The rooms mentioned by Louis Salvator can be identified with rooms in the surviving north wing of the Old Archbishopric. The divan room could be the small Synod Hall, while the reception room in the “new” wing is undoubtedly the great Synod Hall of 1862, which is flanked by two rooms on either side. The “modest bedroom of the Archbishop” must be a small room with arches opening to the balcony, while the “small library” over the arcades was Kyprianos’ room.

The 18th/19th-century archbishopric incorporated the north wing of the monastery of St. John of Bibi. These earlier remnants – walls and arcades – are still visible, mainly on the ground floor, and contribute to the wonderful effect of the architecture of the building. This, in its present form, is L-shaped, with two storeys and covered verandas facing the courtyard of the cathedral. A series of rooms opens to the south onto the covered veranda, which is accessible through a stone-built staircase. Before its 20th-century restoration, the staircase had, at the lower end, an iron arch with a cross at the top and the date 1886. This arch can be seen in the “The Old Archbishopric”, painted by Ioannis Kissonergis. The tiled roof with its wide eaves, the rows of windows with shutters or jalousies on the upper floor, the wood-carved balustrades of the balconies and the decorated cornices around the roof connect the architecture of the Old Archbishopric with that of the monasteries and grand mansions of the 18th/19th centuries. Until the late 1950s, the Old Archbishopric also extended along the west and partly along the south side of the cathedral in a Π-shaped arrangement. The entrance to the courtyard was an arched doorway with a wooden door and built benches, one on each side for mounting and dismounting. Next to the doorway, to the south, there were rooms for the porter. The south and west wings were also two-storied and were partly built of mud brick. On the upper floor of the south wing, there was a covered veranda with wooden posts. Most of the rooms were used for the accommodation of priests or laymen who worked for or had some connection with the Archbishopric. The surviving north wing extended further to the west, where there were the kitchen, storerooms and servants’ rooms opening onto a courtyard. The refectory formed an extension of the west wing to the west. The south wing, part of the west wing and the buildings extending further to the west were demolished and replaced by the New Archbishopric, built between 1956 and 1960, and the Makarios III Foundation Cultural Centre, inaugurated in 1982. The courtyard and auxiliary rooms extended to the west, up to Isaakios Komnenos Street, where the camel stables and a high doorway (*kameloporta*, camels’ door) were. Later, the archbishopric’s printing office and shops were built on this side but they were demolished in the 1950s. The ground floor of the north wing was used for storing wine, oil, etc. – not as stables, as it was at Louis Salvator’s time – and as servants’ rooms. In the early 1960s, the surviving part of the building was adapted so as to house the Cyprus Folk Art Museum. The northern rooms were later occupied by the Museum of National Struggle 1955-1959.

As the seat of the Orthodox Archbishopric during the troubled 18th and 19th centuries, this building is of high historical importance. It was here that Archbishop Kyprianos was captured and taken to his martyrdom. His bust now stands in front of the courtyard of the Cathedral. The Old Archbishopric remained the centre of all spiritual, national and political movements of the Greek Cypriots down to the struggle for independence of the 1950s.

Further Reading

Archduke Louis Salvator of Austria, *Levkosia. The Capital of Cyprus* (original German edition, Prague 1873), London 1983 (first published in English 1881).

Cyprus Folk Art Museum

The Cyprus Folk Art Museum belongs to the Society of Cypriot Studies. It was founded in 1937 by a few pioneer members of the Society, and is the earliest ethnographic museum in Cyprus. It is housed in the premises of the Old Archbishopric, a Gothic building which was used as a monastery by the Order of the Benedictines before it passed into Orthodox hands to be used as a Greek monastery and from the early 18th century onwards as the seat of the Orthodox Archbishop. Its long and varied history is reflected in the architecture of the building, which dates back to the 15th century and later on has undergone several renovations and repairs. When the seat of the Archbishop of Cyprus was moved to the new palace, in 1961, His Beatitude Makarios III, handed over the whole of the premises of the Old Archbishopric to the Society of Cypriot Studies, and sponsored its restoration. Extensive reconstruction of the building was carried out from 1962 to 1964, and also later, in the early 1990s. In April 1996, the new exhibitions of the Museum in the ground floor opened for the public. Today the Museum Collection comprises over 5000 items. Many of them were donated, while others were bought from private collections or directly from villagers all over Cyprus. Most of the items come from areas that are occupied by Turkish troops since 1974.

The Cypriot folk art is the artistic expression of a preindustrial rural society, which mostly created functional objects of everyday use, produced with local raw materials and traditional techniques. Folk art items from the period of Ottoman rule have hardly been preserved; thus, most of the handicrafts exhibited in the museum, date to the 19th and the first half of the 20th century. However, there are also items dated to the 18th, or even to the 17th century. The Collection consists of artifacts which represent all branches of folk art, mainly weaving, embroidery and lace, pottery, woodcarving and stonecarving, metalwork, basketry, painting, leatherwork.

The exhibition has been adapted to the restricted space and the architecture of the building, which preserves its composite style. It is a museum housed in a historical monument. Upon entering the spacious reception room, the visitor can see a variety of exhibits, such as traditional costumes and embroideries, an iron four-poster bed with loom-woven clothing, an 18th century grandfather clock in a wooden painted case, carved stone plaques with protective symbols, used as door lintels, etc. An important item here is the wooden door from the Church of St. Mamas in the village of Dali; the wood-carved bird on this door inspired the poet George Seferis, who refers to “the little owl” in his poem “Little things of Cyprus”, dedicated to his friend and first Director of the Museum, Adamantios Diamantis.

Before proceeding to the main exhibition room, the visitor walks through the entrance to the old building, a long vaulted corridor with arches; on the wall above a richly decorated Gothic arch, is preserved a 16th century fresco of the Annunciation bearing a Greek inscription (only the end of it is preserved). Here are exhibited some icons and wood-carved and gilded pieces of ecclesiastic art, such as the 18th century central door of iconostasis, depicting the three hierarchs and St. Heraklidios, with the Annunciation above; there are also votive offerings made of wax in the shape of human figures, mostly children, body parts and animals. They were dedicated to churches in order to be

cured from illnesses.

In a small room to the right are exhibited representative examples of wood-carved pieces of furniture, such as chests and cupboards, a table and chairs. Along the walls are fixed *souvantzes*, wooden shelves with relief and painted decoration. On these are exhibited plates with painted ornaments, mostly imported, as well as *tsestoi*, shallow circular panniers made from the stalks of ears of corn and decorated with multi-coloured stripes of cloth. The centre of the room is occupied by a large bed with four wood-carved posts. This is one of the very few specimens found in Cyprus; they recall the Venetian four-poster beds, which are recorded in the late 18th /early 19th century lists of belongings of deceased Christians.

The spacious main exhibition hall is a long room which includes a variety of folk art items: a loom of the horizontal type with all its accessories and tools used for the preparation of yarn; different kinds and sizes of baskets; cylindrical pots used as beehives and a tall cylindrical jar used for dyeing in black the traditional *vrakes* (baggy trousers); a potter's kick-wheel from Lapithos; wood-carved and painted shelves, wall-cupboards and chests.

The Museum has a rich collection of chests which are exhibited in all rooms; on their front panels are carved the most beautiful motifs of folk art, such as flowers in pots, cypress trees, eagles and other birds, buildings with arches, rosettes and geometric patterns; the variations in the composition of the designs, the method of execution and the forms of the motifs, all give each piece a singular identity of a handcrafted work of art. The most important exhibits in this room are two panels with frescoes; these paintings were detached from the walls of a coffee-house in the village of Geri, before its demolition. One depicts the arrest of Athanasios Diakos, a hero of the Greek Revolution in 1821, and the other the famous wrestler Panais Koutalianos. The respective names of the persons represented, and the date 1892, are painted on the panels. These subjects were popular by that time, and similar paintings have been found in two other coffee-houses, public buildings frequented by villagers. More often, national and folk heroes, as well as religious scenes, animals, flowers and other themes were painted in oil paint on glass. The Museum possesses a wide variety of such works of art. One of the best exhibits is an oil painting by the naïve artist Michael Kashialos, from Ashia in Mesaoria; it depicts various scenes of a traditional wedding. Among other items of everyday use in the same room, is a rare piece of painted leatherwork: it is a *tampoutsia*, a kind of sieve with leather base, used also as a drum; on the base is depicted a "modern" lady between two disproportionally large flowers; she is holding an umbrella, and the date 1899 is painted on her dress.

On one side of the large exhibition hall there is a series of five small rooms, all of which communicate with the central space. The first three are used for the exhibition of textiles and embroideries, silver objects and jewellery, and traditional costumes; the last two house the rich collection of pottery; wood-carved pieces of furniture are found in all exhibition rooms.

The variety of textiles made of cotton, wool, linen, silk or mixtures of these raw materials, usually in bright colours, reflects the specialization in different parts of the island and the development of local weaving traditions. Weaving was the women's principal occupation not only in the villages but also in the towns. The designs of embroideries were either made on the cloth as it was woven on

the loom -the most characteristic examples being the *fythkiotika* woven polychrome embroideries, named after Fyti village in Pafos- or sewn by hand; of the latter type is the cross-stitch embroidery, which is very common in many parts of the island. The designs comprise mostly geometric motifs or stylized flowers and human figures. White embroidery is best represented with fine examples from the village of Lefkara, decorated in various distinctive stitches and elaborate cut-work patterns. The Museum also presents fine specimens of lace work, such as needle-point laces and crochet work. Local variations of traditional costumes, both rural and urban, include, among others, the Karpass festive costume with the *sayia* (gown open in front), the Paphos costume with *foustani* (dress), the Amalia costume, named after the Greek Queen Amalia, as well as men's costumes with the *vraka* (pleated baggy trousers). Fine pieces of jewellery accompany the festive costumes, such as silver buckles in filigree technique, brooches, necklaces, crosses, amulets etc. Household utensils, forks and spoons, filigree baskets, incense burners and rose-water sprinklers, *zarfs* (cup-holders) and bowls with delicate decoration reflect a flourishing craft practiced by local silversmiths.

Pottery is another craft with a long tradition going back to prehistoric times. A variety of clay vessels represent the main pottery producing centres -Kornos, Foini, Lapithos, Varosia. Worth mentioning are also pumpkin gourds, which are decorated with incised patterns and scenes of everyday life; they were mainly used as wine vessels. Gourds are exhibited together with musical instruments in a small room on the other side of the main hall.

Objects of big dimensions, such as pithos jars, a cart and parts of wooden water-raising wheels, are found outside the Museum. Numerous other folk art items are kept in rooms of the upper floor; one room is devoted to the shadow theatre. Furthermore, there are rooms for temporary exhibitions, lectures and other cultural activities. The equipment used for making silk, a wine-press and other items are exhibited in the veranda. Most important on the upper floor is the room of Archbishop Kyprianos, from where he was taken to the place of his martyrdom, in July 1821.

Further Reading

Eleni Papademetriou, *The Cyprus Folk Art Museum – Society of Cypriot Studies*, Nicosia 1996.

Margarita Demetriou, *Treasures in the Cyprus Ethnographic Museum*, Nicosia 2002.

The House of Hadjigeorgakis Kornessios

The most important example of urban architecture of the last century of Ottoman rule that survives in Nicosia is the House of Hadjigeorgakis Kornessios, the Dragoman or Interpreter of the Serai. In its time, this Konak must have stood out as one of the few grand residences in the city. The austere façades, built of hewn sandstone, and the iron-barred and latticed windows placed high up on the walls, give the building a fortress-like character. Above the pointed arch of the entrance, there is an immured marble slab. On it is carved the winged lion of Venice facing to the front, its right paw holding an open gospel with the Latin inscription: “Pax tibi Marce Evangelista meus”. To the right of the lion there is a ruined tower with a flag and in the centre a double-headed eagle in a shield charged with the Passion cross on a sextuple mount on its breast, a simplified form of the coat of arms of the Podocataro family, to whom the house originally belonged. Three hills are depicted on either side of the eagle above branches bearing leaves and five pomegranates in a horizontal position; a series of anthemia decorate the lowest concave part of the plaque. Above the plaque, there is a protruding wooden kiosk. On the interior of the main entrance above the door, there is a second marble plaque of protective character, set into the wall; it bears the monogram of Hadjigeorgakis and the year 1793 under three crosses in relief.

The entire building, U-shaped in plan, is organized around the courtyard, with a colonnaded portico supporting pointed arches developing on three of its sides. The Hadjigeorgakis mansion has been defined as an example of the “original courtyard house”, in which all parts of the house are connected to the unifying courtyard, the entrance being just a communication passage between the street and the courtyard. This passage, which cuts through the building creating a covered space (*iliakos*) flanked by rooms behind the entrance, is a feature typical of houses that are built onto the street, and a commonplace in traditional Cypriot architecture. In the Dragoman’s house, all ground floor rooms are accessible through the portico. On the upper floor, the dominant feature is a spacious hall that communicates with all rooms. This hall, the ceiling of which is supported by a broad wooden arch, was originally a covered veranda that extended up to the raised floor of the kiosk to the north and to the official reception room to the south. In the eastern part of the house, there was another covered veranda with wooden posts supporting the roof, but this too was walled in at a later stage, in order to increase the living space. This transformation of verandas into rooms during the late 19th century has been observed in many houses. The reception room occupies the southern end of the building’s east wing, the much lighter construction of which -in deliberate contrast to the stone blocks used for other parts of the house- is stressed by the profusion of wooden elements (e.g., the wide eaves of the tiled roof, and the window frames and lattices), a multitude of openings and the white-washed walls. The airy, pavilion-like character of this room is accentuated by its being supported by pillars and projecting from the main body of the building. Its exterior walls were originally decorated with a frieze with chevron patterns painted below the eaves. Much more interesting, however, is the painted decoration of the interior, which is confined to this room.

In layout and internal arrangement, the Dragoman's reception room follows Anatolian tradition. Characteristic of this style are: the tiny vestibule leading to an entrance opening onto the corner of the room; the wooden wall cupboards which occupy the whole entrance side of the room in a symmetrical arrangement; the alcove with superimposed shelves under a niche with a mural painting of a city; the wooden panelling; and the decorated ceiling. The painting in the apse-like niche shows domed houses painted in perspective, walls, cypress trees, springs and, in the foreground, the sea with sailing ships and a bridge. This painting has been interpreted either as a distorted view of Venice or, most probably, as a conventional representation of Constantinople. On either side of the painting flies an angel with a trumpet.

The reception room is actually divided in two parts, a rectangular space in front of the wall cupboards and the main part, which is square and raised by a step. The decoration of the corresponding ceilings is also differentiated. The framed rectangular ceiling of the smaller, lower part consists of two moulded beams crossing diagonally, with rich painted decoration of flowers, fruit and birds. The ceiling of the main, raised part of the room has the most elaborate carved, painted and gilded decoration. Its central panel has the form of a sun wheel with rays in gilded carved wood on a painted dark blue background - the sky - with stars. The cornices framing it carry floral decoration and are profiled so as to create the effect of a dome. A wooden cornice extends all around the walls above the nine windows of the room, dividing it horizontally into an upper and a lower section. By contrast, the wooden panels between the windows underline the vertical axis, and extending from the cornice downwards, stop 36cm above the floor, suggesting a low seating arrangement along the walls. The general pattern of the painted decoration is more or less similar on all wall panels, and includes beribboned bunches of flowers, roses, tulips, lilies, in different colours and combinations, that reflect the richness and variety of nature and create the atmosphere of a garden. In their artistic expression, the decorative features in the konak (mansion) of Hadjigeorgakis show a close relationship with those in grand houses found in other parts of the Ottoman Empire, from the Balkans to the East, from the grand houses in northern Greece (e.g. in Siatista and Ampelakia), to the konak of Çakır Ağa in Birgi, or Murat's house in Bursa, where the decorative art of the east blends with western, baroque and rococo influences.

According to the description given by the Dragoman himself in the inventory of his property, written in 1794: "the upstairs sitting room [was] furnished with divans, felt covers, velvet cushions, and three santouria [musical] clocks, and two paintings, and eight lummières [chandeliers]". It is with this interior arrangement in mind that the reception room is now presented as a museum. According to the inventory, there were several other divan-rooms in the Dragoman's house. The reception room, which at the time of Hadjigeorgakis (1779-1809) must have been very spectacular, had, as was customary, the official seat of the Dragoman in the corner diagonally opposite the door. The visitor would enter the vestibule, leave his shoes on the lower part of the floor and would then step onto the carpeted area, where he could sit cross-legged on a divan.

Gilded ceilings, covered with thin leaves of gold, like in the Dragoman's house, are exceptional and a sign of prosperity. The monumental character of the konak and its embellishment reflect the Dragoman's wealth as well as his political and social status. In fact, Hadjigeorgakis was very rich.

Being a Dragoman of the Serai for thirty years (1779-1809), appointed by the Supreme Court, the liaison between the Ottoman administrative authorities and the Christian subjects, responsible for the collection of the taxes paid by the Christians of the island, he had amassed a large fortune.

The history of the house is closely linked with the turbulent life of Hadjigeorgakis himself, his family and heirs who lived in the konak, adapting it according to their needs for about two hundred years. During a rioting by the local Moslem inhabitants but also Christians against the officials in 1804, because of the heavy taxation and shortage of foodstuffs, the rebels set fire to the main door and looted the mansion. Hadjigeorgakis and his family abandoned the house and fled to Constantinople. After the Dragoman's decapitation there in 1809, for the folk poets in Cyprus Hadjigeorgakis' house became a symbol of wealth and grandeur at a time of great poverty and misery.

His family, the wife and six children, continued to live abroad until 1830. Then, the youngest son Ioannis returned to Cyprus and bought back his paternal home, which in the meantime was sold to a Turkish lady; Tzelepi Yiangos, as he was called, lived in the mansion with his wife Iouliani until his death in 1874. Unable to have any more children after the loss of their only son at the age of six months, Iouliani adopted her niece Ourania. When Iouliani died in 1894, Ourania continued to live in the house together with her four daughters. By the end of the 19th century, the building had been split up between the various members of the family. The last resident of the main part of the house was Ourania's granddaughter, Ioulia Pikis, who died in 1979. Ioulia and her sister Anna bequeathed the house to the Archbishopric with the expressed wish that the building become a Byzantine or Ethnological Museum.

Due to its distinctive architecture and historical importance, the House of Hadjigeorgakis was declared an Ancient Monument, under the Antiquities Law, as early as 1935. It was the first example of urban architecture to be declared an Ancient Monument. The first repairs to the building were carried out at the end of the 1940s and then continued practically every year by the department of Antiquities. Systematic restoration work began in 1981 and by May 1987 the largest and most important part of the house was opened to the public as a Museum. The basic rule followed during the work of preservation was that the form and structure of the building and the existing elements would be reinforced, and only replaced when absolutely necessary. Traditional materials were used as much as possible and only in some cases (e.g. the roof) were modern materials used for their strength and durability. The work was aimed at restoring the house to the form it had taken at the end of the 19th century, before it had been divided up by the heirs. Thus, later additions which had changed the character of the mansion were removed, such as a second entrance with a balcony above it, a second staircase in the west wing and a dividing wall which had cut across the large arch in the upstairs hall. By restoring the building and furnishing it in the style of the period, the Department created a living museum which captures the atmosphere of the period during which Hadjigeorgakis had been alive, as well as the later periods during which the building had housed his son and later heirs. The small bath-house in the courtyard was also restored and furnished with items traditionally used in hammams. The garden has been replanted with trees which embellished Nicosia in the past. The spacious courtyard is a perfect setting for various cultural activities.

In 1988, the House of Hadjigeorgakis received the Europa Nostra award.

Further Reading

Rizopoulou – Egoumenidou, E. *The House of the Dragoman of Cyprus Hadjigeorgakis Kornessios*, Nicosia 1991.

Pihler, M (ed.), *A Dragoman's House. The House of Hadjigeorgakis Kornesios in Nicosia. A Study of its Background and Architecture*, Copenhagen 1993.

CHAPTER 13e

**Museum Of The National
Struggle, Imprisoned Tombs,
Machairas' Hideout**

A n d r e a s K a r y o s

The Museum of the National Struggle

The Monument

One of the most significant periods of the Cyprus Question is that from April 1955 to February 1959 when EOKA (*Ethniki Organosis Kyprion Agoniston* - The National Organisation of Cypriot Fighters), a Greek Cypriot underground organisation carried out an armed struggle against the British garrison in Cyprus. The anti-colonial struggle did not result in the union of Cyprus with Greece (*enosis*), as the Greek majority of the island aimed at, but the creation of an independent island republic on 16 August 1960. During the early post-independence period, the Greek Communal Chamber -which acted as a lower Parliament with jurisdiction over religious, educational and cultural affairs- decided to proceed with the establishment of an institution that would reconstruct the experience of the anti-colonial movement against the British rulers. It is precisely this mission that the Museum of the National Struggle (MNS) has been serving since its foundation on 26 January 1961.

Nowadays, the MNS occupies a part of the Old Archbishopric Palace, an eighteenth century two-storey building in the heart of Nicosia that is closely associated with the modern religious and political history of Cyprus. Nevertheless, during the first period of its existence, the Museum was housed at 25 Hera Street in Nicosia, at a building donated by Zenonas Sozos. The inauguration ceremony took place in these premises on 1 April 1962, coinciding with the annual celebrations for the opening of EOKA's campaign in 1955. In 1966, however, the institution was transferred to a renovated part of the Old Archbishopric Palace after a grant offered by Anastassios Leventis, a prominent wealthy Greek Cypriot benefactor. During the period 1996-2001, the collection of the Museum was temporarily exhibited in a building situated at 7 Kinyra Street in Nicosia because of further renovations at the old premises. The result of these works was the present building of the MNS, which basically constitutes a complex of the renovated part of the Old Archbishopric Palace and a newer establishment.

Apart from conserving the memory of the struggle that preceded the independence of Cyprus, the MNS also intends to honor those individuals who were killed during the course of the conflict in the service of EOKA. The collection of primary material (oral testimonies, documents, items etc) to assist the reconstruction, exploration or analysis of the various aspects of the four-year rebellion also falls within the scope of the institution. Finally, according to its own publications, the institution intends to serve as an inspiration to future generations with regards to the duty to participate in liberation struggles.

In seeking to accomplish its multi-level tasks, the MNS uses a variety of mediums or activities. A comprehensive collection of photos and items are employed to reconstruct incidents from EOKA's operational program as well as the resistance performed by the Greek Cypriot masses against the British counter-insurgent measures. Furthermore, a series of documentaries about the Cyprus Revolt

in the museum's projection room offers a vivid representation of Cyprus during the 1950's, paying emphasis upon the political and military field. The institution's library with its books collection (that covers not only the period of the Cyprus emergency but also the post-independence years) provide valuable material, thereby rendering the MNS as a dynamic collector of information for the scientific research of the Modern History of Cyprus. Finally, lectures to visitors and students and tours of the Museum is another set of activities developed by the museum personnel to fulfill its purpose to picture the temperament of the Cypriot people in the decade of the 1950's.

Touring each room clockwise, the Museum's exhibition adopts a thematic structure. The first corridor contains an introduction to the History of Cyprus and photos or newspaper articles covering the opening of EOKA's campaign on 1 April 1955. A room follows, which contains replicas of items that testify the close interrelations between Cyprus and the rest of the Greek world through time. In the same room, a visitor meets various exhibits that demonstrate the ways in which the Greek Cypriots manifested their will for *enosis*: a Greek flag from the spontaneous uprising in October 1931 (*Octovriana*) that was severely suppressed by the British and led to the abolishing of many Cypriot constitutional and democratic rights; the three referendums organised on 25 March 1921 (coinciding with the celebrations for the centenary of the Greek War for Independence), on 25 March 1930 (coinciding with the celebrations for the centenary of the Greek Independence) and on 15 January 1950. The Museum holds and exhibits the thirty volumes in which nearly 96% of the Greek population of Cyprus signed for union with Greece.

The next corridor exhibits photographic material about EOKA's organizational period as well as Archbishop Makarios III, the political leader of the majority of the Greek inhabitants of Cyprus during the Cyprus Emergency and Colonel George Grivas, the military leader of the EOKA movement. The oath that the twelve personalities of the Struggle Committee (who belonged to the broader Greek and Greek Cypriot political and intellectual elite) signed in Athens in 1953 to support *enosis* or die trying is another valuable item of the museum's collection. The key concept of EOKA was evolved and gradually implemented by this committee.

The collection of Room D includes photos from various incidents that occurred while the Struggle was on: the participation of the masses of the people supporting EOKA and the British repressive reaction involving curfews, collective fines, extensive searches or arrests, detention camps and mistreatment of the population. Additionally, the collections on show preserve items that assisted and supported the EOKA struggle against the British colonial administration: leaflets of EOKA's underground publications, typewriters, orders for forthcoming action, guerilla uniforms, binoculars, a note with the oath which EOKA used during the recruitment process, the text of the first proclamation circulated by the rebellious organization, personal possessions of EOKA fighters as well as arms, explosive devices (Pipe Bombs, Junction Pipe Bombs) and ammunition either smuggled from the organization's supplying mechanism in Athens or locally manufactured by EOKA members, in order to achieve self-efficiency.

The main topic of the corridor next to Room D is the incident in a Cypriot village, Kontemenos, where a Turkish Cypriot mob killed eight Greek Cypriot civilians in June 1958. Physical attacks against Greek Cypriot civilians or property was one of the efforts of the second largest ethnic group of Cyprus

to promote its opposition to *enosis* and advance its own aim, the demand for partition of the island between Greece and Turkey. A series of photos includes British members of the Police who mistreated Greek Cypriots during interrogation. Another collection informs visitors about an initiative of EOKA in 1958, the 'Arbitration Committees', which settled disputes between individuals from the Greek Cypriot community. The functioning of these Committees, naturally sought to displace the colonial judiciary. In this manner, not only was the government deprived of certain revenue, but disobedience to civil administration was encouraged.

In large Room E the main topic of the exhibition is physical insurgent activities or EOKA members killed by the British garrison. EOKA dead fighters are described in the post-independence Greek Cypriot collective memory as 'heroes' or 'martyrs'. Moreover, material from three famous incidents appears in a collection of photos: Gregoris Afxentiou's death in his hideout at the region of Machairas (on mount Troodos) where he was surrounded and fought off British troops for more than 8-10 hours in March 1957; the 'Farm Yard Siege in Liopetri' when in September 1958 the British soldiers faced in the village of Liopetri unusual resistance put up by four hard-core EOKA fighters (Andreas Karyos, Christos Samaras, Elias Papakyriakou and Photis Pittas), all of whom were eventually killed; and the killing of Kyriakos Matsis, an EOKA leading member, by the British on 19 November 1958 in Dikomo (near Kyrenia). In all three circumstances, the British Army used fire, bombs and inflammable materials in order to neutralize the EOKA combatants. Apart from the above events, the material refers to other forms of EOKA's operations or to incidents that shaped the collective Greek Cypriot remembrance: the results of EOKA sabotages, pupil demonstrations that often ended in bloody street fights with the British anti-mob squads, EOKA personnel killed by the British, guerrilla groups and the large numbers of Greek Cypriots who attended not only the funerals of EOKA cadres, but also their memorial services (for instance, the funeral of Charalambos Mouskos was attended by about a thousand people whilst the memorial service for Stylianos Lenas was attended by more than four thousand people). The bitter experience from British or Turkish Cypriot forceful activities is also presented via the photograph collection; additionally, the Imprisoned Tombs (where the British buried the dead bodies of thirteen EOKA fighters), the everyday life of prisoners in the detention camps, the wanted persons for EOKA-related activities, the celebrations after the official cessation of the Cyprus Revolt with the warm reception of the EOKA combatants by the masses of the Greek Cypriot people and the official declaration of the Cypriot independence on 16 August 1960.

In the same room, personal belongings of the protagonists in the events at Machairas, Liopetri and Dikomo are exhibited in the glass showcases: diaries, poems, books, letters or manuscripts. Possessions of other EOKA members who were killed by the British forces (Markos Drakos, Petrakis Giallouros, Savvas Rotsidis, Stylianos Lenas and others) are also exhibited as well as those of the nine individuals who were sentenced to death by hanging for EOKA-related activities (Evagoras Pallikarides, Andreas Demetriou, Michael Karaolis and others).

The last corridor is dedicated to the nine EOKA members upon whom the British colonial regime imposed the death penalty by hanging. The exhibition includes newspaper articles, the last pictures of the nine EOKA members taken by the British or correspondence with their relatives. One of the most outstanding exhibits of the collection is the two-page letter published by the French author and

philosopher Albert Camus asking for clemency for Michael Karaolis; another important exhibit is the one of the three gullets which were used by the British Administration for the imposition of the death penalty. The second gullet is preserved in the Imprisoned Tombs and the last one is reported to have been taken by the British when they left Cyprus.

Finally, the tour of the museum ends with the photos of the one hundred and eight Greek Cypriots who were killed in the service of EOKA.

Further Reading

Crawshaw, Nancy. *The Cyprus Revolt: An Account of the Struggle for Union with Greece*. London: Allen and Unwin, 1978.

Demetriou, Giannis. *Το Μουσείον Αγώνος: Μια Απλή Περιδιάβαση (The Museum of the National Struggle: A Touring)*. Nicosia, 2008.

Grivas, George. *Απομνημονεύματα Αγώνος ΕΟΚΑ 1955-59 (Memoirs of EOKA Struggle 1955-59)*. Athens, 1961.

Holland, Robert F. *Η Βρετανία και ο Κυπριακός Αγώνας, 1954-59 (Britain and the Revolt in Cyprus, 1954-59)*. Athens: Potamos, 1999.

Karyos, Andreas. *EOKA, 1955-1959: A Study of the Military Aspects of the Cyprus Revolt*. London: Institute of Commonwealth Studies, School of advanced Study, University of London, 2011. Unpublished PhD Thesis.

Stefanidis, Ioannis. *Isle of Discord. Nationalism, Imperialism and the Making of the Cyprus Problem*. London: Hurst, 1999.

The Imprisoned Tombs

The Monument

The Imprisoned Tombs is one of the most well-known and respected places of historical memory in Cyprus. They comprise a small cemetery dug in the Central Prison (Nicosia) by the British authorities during the period of the Cyprus Revolt. The main reason behind the colonial regime's initiative was to prevent the funerals of EOKA prominent cadres from becoming mass meetings and anti-British demonstrations.

The premise is very confined and is surrounded by high walls topped with broken glass to deter illegal entrance. It lays right next to the cells of the prisoners sentenced to death (Block 8) and the room with the gullet (where executions took place). The works for its construction started in February 1956, during the governorship of Field-Marshal Sir John Harding (when the first executions of EOKA members took place). The construction team were used a mixed twelve-member team, constituted of both prisoners convicted for criminal actions and political prisoners (convicted for EOKA-related activities). The authorities had planned the cemetery to be completed in two phases; because of the termination of the rebellion, however, the second part of it was never put to use.

In the graves were buried the corpses of the nine individuals executed by hanging by the British: Michael Karaolis and Andreas Demetriou on 10 May 1956; Charilaos Michael, Andreas Zakos and Iakovos Patatsos on 9 August 1956; Michael Koutsoftas, Stelios Mavrommatis and Andreas Panayidis on 21 September 1956; and the young poet Evagoras Pallikaridis on 14 March 1957. Furthermore, in the same place were buried four distinguished EOKA members killed during exchanges of fire: Markos Drakos on 18 January 1957; Gregoris Afxentiou on 3 March 1957; Stylianos Lenas on 28 March 1957; and Kyriakos Matsis on 19 November 1958. In order to save space, four graves were used twice. Therefore, Stylianos Lenas was buried in the same grave as Andreas Demetriou, Kyriakos Matsis with Andreas Zakos, Michael Koutsoftas with Andreas Panayidis and Evagoras Pallikarides with Gregoris Afxentiou. The dead bodies were placed into the graves by British soldiers and Turkish Cypriot prison wardens. Contrary to christian religious practice, entrance to the burial ground was forbidden to any Greek Cypriot, including relatives, prison wardens and even priests. A priest was allowed to perform the funeral service in accordance with the Christian Orthodox ritual outside the closed entrance of the cemetery. Consequently, a complete lack of evidence remained about the exact manner or location of the burials, a fact which in turn made things extremely difficult for the families of the executed persons who wanted to pay their respects. Things became even more shadowy by some testimonies that chemicals were used by the British to effect the fast decomposition of the dead bodies (allowing them quicker reuse of the available space).

Information on the burials was achieved only during the post-independence years when Onisiforos Antoniou, the director of the Central Prison, accidentally discovered a plan of the cemetery and its burials. With the assistance of some prisoners, the small location was renovated. Later on, the Prison's

directorate in cooperation with the families of the executed EOKA members planted crosses on each tomb. Nevertheless, no removal of the corpses was ever attempted to verify the remnants, principally for emotional reasons. Further renovation works resulted in the opening of special access for visitors, as the monument remains until today one of the most popular historic places to visit in Cyprus.

The Imprisoned Tombs is a part of a larger museum exhibition that was established by Archbishop Makarios III, the first President of the Cyprus Republic and was further extended in 1997. The other parts of the establishment are a small garden, the room with the gullet and Blocks 8, 7 and 3 (all parts of the Central Prison). The premise where executions by hanging took place comprises the ground floor with a wooden floor and the trap-door mechanism and an underground chamber. In the ground floor, only one of the three original gullets remains (the second gullet is preserved in the Museum of the National Struggle, whereas the last one passed in British hands). The gullet is made up of a rope (tied from a beam) with a leather loop and a metal ring. On the one side of the room there is the lever that the executioner pulled to open the trap-door. The underground floor is the space where the corpses of the hanged EOKA cadres fell: as soon as the doctor verified their death, they were transported from the underground floor to the small cemetery, a short distance away.

Block 8 was the last residence of those convicted to the death penalty. It is a small establishment of two cells and a toilet. Each cell is so tiny that hardly fits a bed. Both cells include a small window and a door, all with iron bars for maximum security. Each heavy door was purposely equipped with a metallic netting of so many tiny holes so that vertigo was created to the prisoner looking at it.

Blocks 7 and 3 are larger complexes of cells similar to those of Block 8, although they housed many more prisoners. On the concrete floor one can still see the marks from the hobnailed boots of the British guards. The latter used to walk making noise with their boots, using this technique to break the morale of the imprisoned EOKA members, as the rebellious organization maintained high organizational levels, even in prisons or detention camps: uprisings, singing of the Greek national anthem, strikes, correspondence with EOKA's leadership or even organized escapes were only some of the activities of the EOKA branch in prisons and detention centres.

At the entrance of the entire museum complex, a visitor meets an inscription referring to the latest renovations which took place in 1997. On the left of the entrance of the Imprisoned Tombs, a memorial was established with the names of the thirteen EOKA fighters who are buried in the cemetery. On the memorial, an inscription states: 'And the imprisoned dead bodies praise glory to Freedom'. Above the cemetery's entrance, a dedicational inscription says: 'TO THOSE WHO DIED. And in your memory the nation kneels and salutes you'. Finally, within the cemetery and at the eastern side, an inscription refers to a folk song verse which is very common in Greek memorials or places memory: 'A brave person's death, is not considered death'.

Further Reading

Crawshaw, Nancy. *The Cyprus Revolt: An Account of the Struggle for Union with Greece*. London: Allen and Unwin, 1978.

Grivas, George. *Απομνημονεύματα Αγώνος ΕΟΚΑ 1955-59 (Memoirs of EOKA Struggle 1955-59)*. Athens, 1961.

Karyos, Andreas. *EOKA, 1955-1959: A Study of the Military Aspects of the Cyprus Revolt*. London: Institute of Commonwealth Studies, School of advanced Study, University of London, 2011. Unpublished PhD Thesis.

Stylianou Petros & Christodoulou Nike. *Τα Φυλακισμένα Μνήματα: Ανέκδοτες Επιστολές από τους Μελλοθάνατους Ηρωομάρτυρες της Κυπριακής Λευτεριάς (The Imprisoned Tombs: Unpublished Letters of the Convicted to Death Martyrs of the Cypriot Freedom)*. Nicosia, 2004.

The Machairas' Hideout

The Monument

The Machairas' Hideout is a monument reconstructed after the independence of Cyprus in 1960 and one of the most well-known monuments of the Modern History of the island. More specifically, however, the legacy of Machairas' Hideout is tied up with Gregoris Afxentiou, who became one of the most prominent guerrilla leaders of EOKA not only because of his substantial record of activities, but also because of the manner he died.

Gregoris Afxentiou was born in Lyssi, a Cypriot village between Nicosia and Famagusta, in February 1928. He was educated at the local primary school and then at the Hellenic Gymnasium of Famagusta (the principal institution of secondary education in the Famagusta district at that time). Reports by his family and friends describe him as a keen sportsman and passionate about football. On reaching adulthood he went to Athens and sat for the examinations for the Greek Military Academy without success. In December 1949 he joined the Greek Army as a volunteer. From March to October 1950, he attended a reserve officer's academy on the island of Syros. Afxentiou served in the ranks of the Hellenic Army on the Greek-Bulgarian frontier, before being discharged and returning to Cyprus, where he worked as a taxi driver. As a trained reserve officer, on joining the ranks of EOKA, he became a skillful instructor to the organization's recruits, especially as it concerned the guerrilla tactics and the use of arms and explosives. Outlawed by the British authorities, he had a price of £250 (soon rising to £5,000, a very significant sum for the time) set on his head. He adopted various noms-de-guerre: *Zidros*, *Aias* (Ajax) and *Aris*. Afxentiou was appointed by EOKA's supreme commander, George Grivas, as *tomearchis* (district sector leader), with duties extending to all aspects of political and military nature within his regional sector. Because of his effectiveness, Grivas entrusted to him command of the Famagusta district. After Famagusta, he was transferred to the Kyrenia administration where he became very active in the Pentadaktylos range. Finally, he was appointed as *tomearchis* of the Pitsilia district sector, in mount Troodos, tasked to reorganize the guerrilla mountain groups.

With regards to the guerrilla mountain groups, it must be clarified that in the effort to show that the British did not effectively control the island, EOKA's subversive activities were a combination of irregular mountain warfare, urban guerrilla and mass popular agitation. The armed groups capable of hitting targets all over Cyprus were the armed wing of the organization. In view of the regions of the island in which they operated, they were distinguished into three sub-categories: the city groups, the units in the countryside and the mountain guerillas. The mountain groups were all full-time guerrilla units, operating up in the hills or in the plains mainly by harassing security installations, personnel and routes of communication. In most cases the members were fugitives having escaped from detention, or persons wanted for EOKA-related activities undertaken while operating with town or village groups. Apart from purely military tactical reasons, they were also a haven for personnel whose EOKA identity was compromised or discovered by the authorities; who could no longer stay in their homes. Therefore, EOKA guerrilla units included some of the more experienced members of the organisation.

They were generally organised in groups of between three and eight. Mountain groups usually relied for food, mail and clothing on the nearest EOKA village unit. All provisions were paid for unless the providers did not wish for reimbursement; expenditure was kept as low as possible. According to British reports, some groups kept a good standard of personal discipline and when captured were clean and well shaven; others, were in less good shape. To achieve maximum results, each group operated within specific boundaries. The basic form of mountain group operations concentrated on ambushes of military vehicles or raids against Police and Army installations. The guerrilla groups were not intended to fight pitched battles, although in some cases the EOKA combatants resisted capture by fighting British units to the end. Such instances raised the guerrillas' value, added to the prestige of EOKA and lifted the morale of its members. Apart from their main hideouts (caves, dugouts etc), substitutes were constructed for use in case the mountain groups were surrounded or forced in some way to move from their area.

Generally, EOKA's hideouts constitute an interesting case study because of their high importance: general security measures apart, the organization's ability to survive was closely connected to various forms of concealment, by means of which the members escaped the British search operations. It is interesting to note that according to the Emergency Regulations introduced by the British authorities during the Revolt, hideouts had to be destroyed/blown up after they were discovered (even if they were constructed within houses of Greek Cypriot civilians).

Since EOKA's operational terrain occupied the whole of Cyprus (urban areas, mountains, countryside) each type of EOKA hideout corresponded to the nature of the region where it was. Hideouts in occupied houses were usually small, constructed below floorboards, above ceilings, in walls, in large cupboards or in unused water cisterns. In other cases the entrance of the hideout was behind a large piece of furniture (or under it) or under a fireplace. Another method was the construction of a trap-door under tiles. Hideouts in outhouses or farmhouses were usually built in false walls, between adjoining barns or between different levels. Most of the times, hideouts of the first two types were



The hideout of Gregoris Afxentiou in Machairas

used as a temporary bolt hole during Army searches. On the other hand, mountain or rural dugouts were constructed to house guerrilla groups for longer periods. It was an axiom of EOKA's mountain bands that apart from their main hideouts they had to have substitutes for use in case they were surrounded or forced in some way to move on. The mountain hideouts were dug on slopes where bushes provided with concealment to approaches and not far away from little used tracks and a water supply. Sophisticated hideouts had good fields of observation as well as a good field of fire. Timber and sheets of corrugated iron for the roof constituted the main construction materials. The entrance was blocked with stones whereas camouflage was carried out with care and ingenuity. Consequently, as the British troops admitted in several occasions, mountain hideouts were difficult to find even when they had information about their

approximate location.

The Machairas' Hideout was of a mountain dugout type. It is constructed in the region of Machairas up on the mount of Troodos. It lies near to the Machairas' Monastery, dedicated to the Virgin Mary. The site is both historic and prestigious, built in the 12th century with a grant from the Byzantine Emperor Manuel Komnenos. According to Avgoustis Efstathiou, a member of Gregoris Afxentiou's guerrilla group charged with the hideout's construction, works commenced on 24 February 1957. The main dugout was ready within three days and was camouflaged the following day. It was planned to be a substitute residence for the group; up to that point the guerrillas used to find shelter in the Machairas' Monastery itself or under shrubs in the area. Materials, beams and sheets of zinc, were supplied by EOKA, with the monastery serving as intermediate station. It must be considered that the Machairas' Monastery and Abbot Irineos had a major contribution to the EOKA movement (in both the material and the spiritual spheres). This is not surprising given the long tradition of participation of the Greek Orthodox clergy in wars of resistance or liberation movements.

On 3 March 1957, British troops launched another 'big sweep' (search operation involving significant amounts of troops) to keep pressure on EOKA guerilla groups in the region. Gregoris Afxentiou and his group sought refuge in the hideout that they had recently constructed. Following intelligence they had, the British came upon the hideout and called the rebels in Greek to come out. Afxentiou ordered his four men, Antonis Papadopoulos, Andreas Stylianou, Feidias Symeonidis and Avgoustis Efstathiou to surrender. As for himself, he preferred to resist capture. Following a burst of gunfire, a British officer threw a grenade into the dugout and after that Efstathiou was forced to enter the hideout to fetch Afxentiou. Finding his leader alive, Efstathiou remained in the hideout to assist him. The British troops took up shooting positions. The EOKA men's resistance was so strenuous, that the soldiers retreated many times. Afxentiou and Efstathiou planned to escape under cover of a smoke grenade. However, as soon as the smoke screen formed outside the entrance of the hideout, the British fire became heavier, to prevent the two rebels from escaping. This fact, in combination with the delay by Efstathiou to fire, forced the two guerrillas to miss the chance provided. The exchange of fire lasted for more than ten hours. Since the resistance by Afxentiou and Efstathiou proved to be difficult to subdue, the British troops decided to use inflammable materials. They poured petrol down the slope in a steady trickle towards the hideout's entrance. The first beehive charge resulted in a burst of fire coming from the hide. More petrol was poured into the exact position of the hideout and a long length of fuse was ignited. A deafening explosion was achieved this time. Avgoustis Efstathiou rushed out of the flames and arrested by the British servicemen soon after. A second deafening explosion followed. The British forced Efstathiou to enter the hideout again; entering, he saw Afxentiou dead, his body charred. Nevertheless, the soldiers were only persuaded of the truth of Efstathiou's statement about Afxentiou's death after they destroyed part of the hideout to see for themselves. The dead body of Afxentiou was not handed over to his family for a funeral. On the contrary, it was buried in the small cemetery in the Central Prison which passed in the Greek Cypriot collective remembrance as 'The Imprisoned Tombs'.



The monumental statue of Gregoris Afxentiou outside the EOKA Museum in Machairas

Thereafter, Gregoris Afxentiou's prolonged fight to death against much superior forces became a prime inspiration in EOKA ranks. It also impressed the Greek and Greek Cypriot people and intellectuals, but also British authors, with the latter describing this action as 'epic'.

Further Reading

The National Archives of the United Kingdom, Kew, London, WO 33/2736, 'A History of EOKA' by General Darling K. T., 20 April 1960, pp. 18, 21, 47-48, 64-65.

Alastos, Doros. *Cyprus Guerilla. Grivas, Makarios and the British*. London: Heinemann, 1960.

Council for the Historical Memory of EOKA 1955-1959. *Ο Απελευθερωτικός Αγώνας της ΕΟΚΑ 40 Χρόνια από τη Λήξη του (The Liberation Struggle of EOKA 40 Years after its Termination)* Nicosia: THEOPRESS, 2002.

Crawshaw, Nancy. *The Cyprus Revolt: An Account of the Struggle for Union with Greece*. London: Allen and Unwin, 1978.

Efstathiou, Avgoustis. *Αυγουστής Ευσταθίου: Ο Ματρώζος της ΕΟΚΑ και της Κύπρου (Avgoustis Efstathiou: the Matrozos of EOKA and Cyprus)*. Nicosia: Epiphaniou, 2012.

Foley, Charles. *Island in Revolt*. London: Longmans, 1962.

Foley, Charles. *Legacy of Strife: Cyprus from Rebellion to Civil War*. Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1964.

Foley Charles & Scobie W. I. *The Struggle for Cyprus*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1973.

Grivas, George. *Αγών ΕΟΚΑ και Ανταρτοπόλεμος: Πολιτικοστρατιωτική μελέτη (Guerrilla Warfare and EOKA's Struggle: Political-military Study)*. Athens, 1962.

Grivas, George. *Απομνημονεύματα Αγώνος ΕΟΚΑ 1955-59 (Memoirs of EOKA Struggle 1955-59)*. Athens, 1961.

Grivas, George. *Χρονικόν Αγώνος ΕΟΚΑ, 1955-59 (Chronicle of EOKA Struggle, 1955-59)*. Nicosia, 1972.

Holland, Robert F. *Η Βρετανία και ο Κυπριακός Αγώνας, 1954-59 (Britain and the Revolt in Cyprus, 1954-59)*. Athens: Potamos, 1999.

Kaouris, Andreas. *Γρηγόρης Αυξεντίου (Gregoris Afxentiou). 2 Vols*. Nicosia: Drosistis Publications Ltd, 2010. Vols 1 and 2.

Karyos, Andreas. *EOKA, 1955-1959: A Study of the Military Aspects of the Cyprus Revolt*. London: Institute of Commonwealth Studies, School of advanced Study, University of London, 2011. Unpublished PhD Thesis.

Papageorgiou, Spyros. *Ζήδρος (Zidros)*. Athens: Ladia, 1978.

Papageorgiou, Spyros. *Κυπριακή Θύελλα, 1955-59 (Cypriot Storm, 1955-59)*. Nicosia: Epiphaniou, 1977.

Spanou, Giannis. *EOKA: Έτσι Πολεμούν οι Έλληνες (EOKA: That is How the Greeks Fight)*. 3 Vols. Nicosia: Andreas Spanos, 1996. Vol. 1.

Stylianou Petros & Christodoulou Nike. *Τα Φυλακισμένα Μνήματα: Ανέκδοτες Επιστολές από τους Μελλοθάνατους Ηρωομάρτυρες της Κυπριακής Λευτεριάς (The Imprisoned Tombs: Unpublished Letters of the Convicted to Death Martyrs of the Cypriot Freedom)*. Nicosia, 2004.