



# PHOTOGRAPHIC EXHIBITION ORGANIZED BY THE CYPRUS MUNICIPALITIES UNDER TURKISH MILITARY OCCUPATION

**THE DESTRUCTION OF THE EUROPEAN  
CIVILIZATION OF CYPRUS BY TURKEY  
THE TRAGEDY GOES ON...**

*"If we should hold our peace,  
the stones will cry out" (Luke 19: 40)*





# THE DESTRUCTION OF THE EUROPEAN CIVILIZATION OF CYPRUS BY TURKEY

## THE TRAGEDY GOES ON...

*"If we should hold our peace,  
the stones will cry out"* (Luke 19: 40)

The photographic exhibition is organized by the nine occupied municipalities of Cyprus: Ammochostos, Kyrenia, Morphou, Lysi, Lapithos, Kythrea, Karavas, Lefkoniko, and Akanthou.

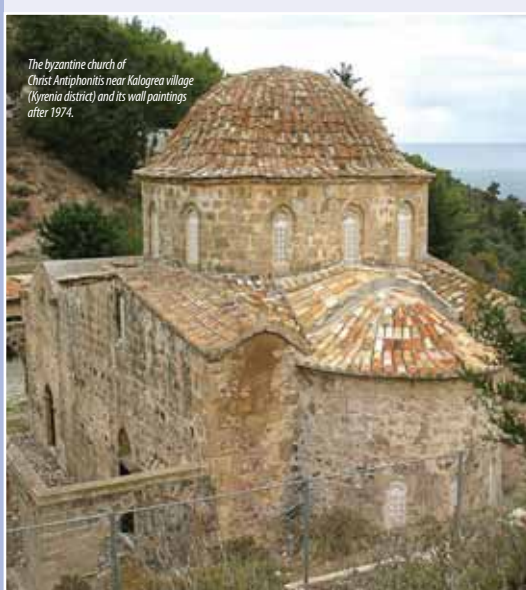
The exhibition aims at sensitizing the broader public to the tragic consequences of the Turkish invasion of Cyprus in 1974. An effort is made to trace, as much as possible, the pain caused by the war and the uprooting of tens of thousands of people from their homes. At the core of the presentation lies the systematic destruction of cultural heritage in the island's occupied areas, which persists to this day as a result of ethnic cleansing and religious fanaticism. As proof of the above, damages to archaeological sites, ecclesiastical monuments and all non-Muslim cemeteries, as well as thefts intended to offer antiquities for sale at a profit, are showcased here. In some cases, photographic evidence which has been brought to light for the first time is put forth.

This exhibition is divided into thematic units which are separated from one another by their different colours. Each panel includes a title and a brief text, whilst being supplemented by pertinent 'before and after 1974' visual material.

The first unit introduces the nine occupied municipalities, with a historical outline, their most significant monuments and their present state.

This is followed by the unit on the most important monasteries and the way they are being used by the occupying forces today. The remaining units give evidence of archaeological sites and the smuggling of antiquities, Orthodox churches and churches which have been desecrated and demolished by the Turks, as well as churches belonging to Maronites, Armenians and Latin Cypriots, cemeteries, and educational institutions. Special emphasis is placed on the medieval city of Famagusta inasmuch as the whole area constitutes a vast museum in itself. Both the archaeological sites and the monuments are in urgent need of special conservation and protection, which Turkey as the occupying force, refuses to provide.

**THE SAVING OF THE RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL HERITAGE IS AN URGENCY !**





# The 1974 Turkish invasion

On 15 July 1974, the Greek military junta then ruling Greece and its collaborators in Cyprus, staged a coup against the Cypriot President, Archbishop Makarios III. The Turkish side used the coup as a pretext to invade Cyprus in the early hours of 20 July 1974, violating the UN Charter, and initially gained control of Kyrenia.

In violation of the ceasefire, in August of the same year, Turkey continued to advance and went on to seize Famagusta, Morphou and Karpass. The main consequences of the Turkish invasion of Cyprus have been as follows:

- Occupation of 36, 2% of the Cypriot territory and de facto partition of the island by means of the "Attala Line" which divides Cyprus in two.
- Approximately 170.000 refugees, namely 40% of the Greek Cypriot population.
- Thousands of casualties, either dead or missing.
- Three cities and 204 villages have been seized and illegally colonized by settlers from Turkey.
- According to recent estimates and information, about 55.000 Turkish Cypriots remain in the occupied areas today (approximately 120.000 in 1974), as the majority of them have emigrated because of the economic and moral destitution imposed in the area by Ankara through the settlement of hundreds of thousands of settlers whose number, according to recent evidence, rises to around 700.000.
- 70% of the island's wealth-producing resources lie under Turkish occupation.
- Today, fewer than 600 enclaved Greek Cypriots and Maronites live in their occupied villages, amidst conditions of oppression, intimidation and want. In August 1974, 20.000 enclaved inhabited their villages, but were forced by means of inhuman methods to abandon their houses and properties.
- Approximately 40.000 Turkish soldiers, fully equipped with state-of-the-art gear and backed by the Turkish Air Force and Navy are stationed in the occupied part, thus making it, according to the UN Secretary General, one of the most heavily militarized areas in the world.
- In 1983, in an effort to consolidate their hold over the occupied part, the Turkish Cypriot side unilaterally declared that the area be called "Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus", recognized solely by Turkey and fully dependent on it.
- The illegal regime in the occupied part has been methodically trying to obliterate every trace of Greek and Christian civilization dating back thousands of years, whilst place-names and names of cities and villages have been replaced by Turkish names.





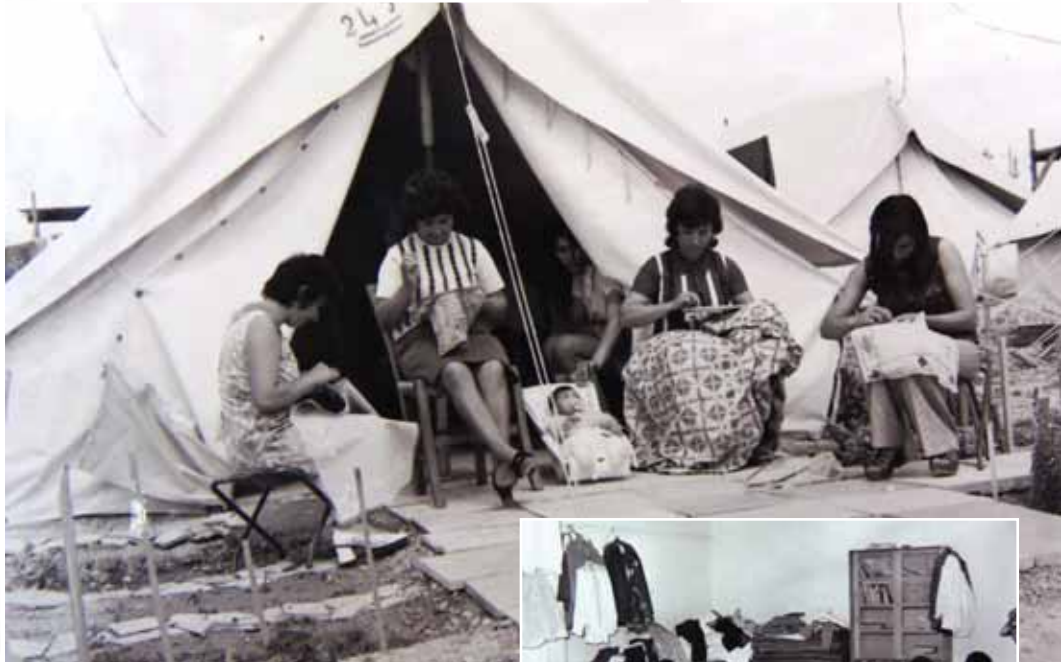
# Refugees

As soon as they seized the Northern part of Cyprus, the Turks violently expelled 170.000 Greek Cypriots, namely one quarter of the indigenous population. These people were forced to leave their homes and seek refuge to the free areas, as refugees in their own country.

Homeless and worn out, they stayed outdoors for a number of weeks before being temporarily housed in tents assembled in refugee camps set up to this particular end. The government's long term policy has been the provision of better temporary lodging in refugee housings, whilst its permanent objective remains to this day the return of all refugees to their ancestral land. The inevitable result of this mass uprooting was the collapse of the social tissue.

The European Court of Human Rights has ruled that Turkey violated articles of the European Convention on human rights pertaining to the right of Greek Cypriot refugees to return to their homes, and their right to have access to and make use of their property.

By means of relevant resolutions, the United Nations and other international organizations have demanded the urgent return of the refugees in safety. They also required the full restoration of the human rights of the Cypriot people, especially refugees. Yet, Turkey refuses to abide by these resolutions, in gross violation of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of the Greek Cypriots, including the freedom of movement, the freedom of settlement and the right to property.





# The Looting of the Cultural Heritage of Cyprus

## International Conventions and Resolutions

Efforts made ever so often by UNESCO towards salvaging the cultural heritage in the occupied areas of Cyprus have stumbled over the intransigent denial of the Turkish occupying forces to collaborate and abide by international conventions.

The report composed in 1975 by UNESCO's special envoy, the Canadian architect Jacques Dalibard, on the state of Cyprus' occupied monuments, was suppressed following covert interventions by Turkey.

The Turkish army refused to allow international observers access to the occupied areas, contrary to the decision made by the UNESCO General Assembly in Belgrade, in 1980.

The destruction by Turkey of cultural heritage in the occupied areas was condemned by the European Council sub-committee for the "architectural and cultural heritage of Cyprus" which met in Nicosia in October 1982, as well as by EUROPA NOSTRA by means of a resolution dated September 1987.

In 1989 a delegation of specialists from the European Council performed an eye witness observation of specific monuments in occupied Cyprus. The relevant report makes reference to the deliberate destruction of monuments and looting of mobile antiquities, alongside the need for the immediate commencement of conservation and restoration works on the monuments.

**A series of international Treaties, Conventions and Protocols condemn the ongoing looting and pillage of the cultural heritage of Cyprus by Turkey. Turkey itself has co-signed but never abode by them. Some of these are mentioned below:**

- the European Convention signed in London on 6 May 1969 for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage;
- the UNESCO Convention, article 2(2), 7 of 14 November 1970, which prohibits the illegal import, export and transfer of ownership of cultural property;
- the International Paris Convention of 16 November 1972, on the protection of the world cultural and natural heritage;
- Paragraph 53 of 1977 of the Protocol Additional to the 1949 International Geneva Convention, which prohibits any acts of hostility directed against the historic monuments which constitute the cultural or spiritual heritage of peoples;
- the Convention on the Protection of Archaeological Heritage (article 5/1992) and article 128, paragraph 2/92 of the Maastricht Treaty, as well as Directive 3911/92 of 9 December 1992 on the illegal export of cultural goods;
- Council Directive 752/93 of 15 March 1993, on the return of cultural objects unlawfully exported to E.U. Member States;
- GATT Regulation, paragraph 10, on restrictions on trade and taking measures for the protection of national treasures of artistic, historic and archaeological value;
- the Roma Convention of 14 June 1995, on the illegal export of objects of cultural heritage;
- the Declaration of the European Parliament P6-TA(2006)0035 of 5 September 2006 on the obligation to protect and preserve the religious heritage in the northern part of Cyprus.
- In 2007, the USA and the Republic of Cyprus co-signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) concerning the eradication of the illegal trade in antiquities dating from ancient times down to the 16th century. The Memorandum was renewed in 2012.



*The head of the Archangel from the church of Antifonitis (12th c.) was cut off by the Turks.*





# The Smuggling of Antiquities

The Greek history of Cyprus and a wealth of evidence collected in a span of three millennia were meant to be amputated, plundered and destroyed at the hands of the Turkish invaders in the summer of 1974 and the years that followed the invasion.

**M**ore than 580 churches of various Christian doctrines in the occupied territory of Cyprus are reported to have been subjected to the fury of the invaders. Notable archaeological sites were located in these areas e.g. Engomi, Salamina, Soloi, Lampousa, the Monastery of the Apostle Barnabas the church of Christ Antiphonetes in Kalograia, the church of St Mamas in Morphou, the Sourp Magar Monastery in Chalefka, the Monastery of St Spyridon in Tremetousia, the Monastery of St John Chrysostom in Koutsoventis etc.

The ethnic cleansing launched in the wake of the invasion paved the way for a stream of lootings and devastations either by organized antiquities smuggling rings, such as that of the Turk Aydin Dikmen, or by random destroyers and rapists of a rich civilization. From as early as the 22nd of November 1974, the first arrest of a Turkish dealer in illicit antiquities was reported in Great Britain, trading in icons

and ancient vessels from occupied Cyprus. Regrettably, this was only the first in a long series of acts of cultural destruction of immense dimensions: the obliteration of the mosaic of Panagia Kyra (7th c.) in Livadia, Famagusta; the dismantling and sale of the mosaics in Panagia Kanakaria (6th c.) in Lythrangomi; of the wall-paintings of St Solomone in Koma tou Gialou (9th c.); of the wall-paintings of St Ephemianos (Themonianos) in Lysi (13th c.), repatriated in 2012 owing to the efforts of the Church of Cyprus and the Republic of Cyprus – are but a few among hundreds of tokens of systematic looting and unlawful exploitation.

Cypriot works of art, violently and illegally extracted from their natural settings, are being traded in international contraband markets and museums abroad. A number of mosaics, wall-paintings and icons from the occupied areas of Cyprus have been taken into custody by the Munich Police, in Germany.



1. Terracotta figurine of a bear (760-750 B.C.) and Zoomorphic rhyton of clay (1100-1050). From the Christakis Hadjiprodrromou private collection in Famagusta.
2. Cruciform idols (3200-2500 B.C.). From the Christakis Hadjiprodrromou private collection in Famagusta.
3. St Mark the Evangelist. From the destroyed mosaic on the apse of Panagia Kanakaria Church in Lythrangomi.
4. The icon of Panagia Hodegetria (19th c.) repatriated in 2012.
5. The icon of Christ from the church of St Charalampous in Kottea was returned by the British singer Boy George to the Church of Cyprus.
6. Ancient torso of a statue, available for sale at an antique shop in the occupied areas.
7. Four-wheeled bronze stand. Mycenaean period (12th c. B.C.).





# Archaeological sites

The 1974 Turkish invasion proved the most devastating blow to the Department of Antiquities, which at that time was in its 40th year of operation.

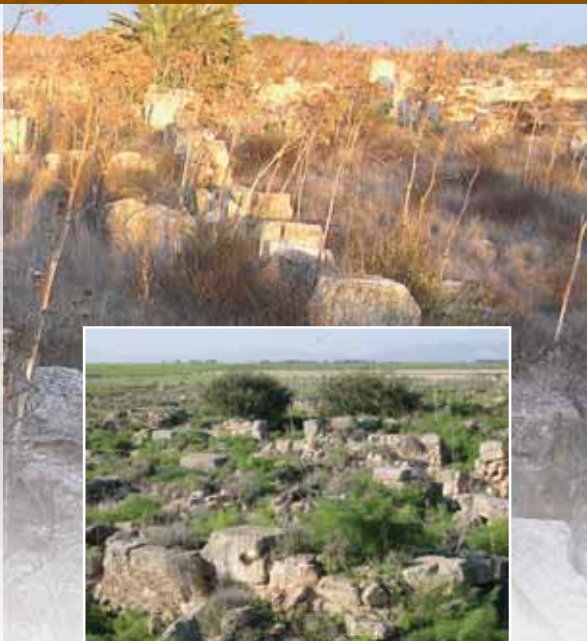
**P**aramount archaeological sites and findings, e.g. Engomi, Salamina, Soloi, Lampousa, the Neolithic settlement in the area of Kastro of Apostolos Andreas, Byzantine, Medieval and Post-Byzantine monasteries and churches, the monasteries of St John Chrysostom in Koutsoventis, of Panagia Apsinthiotissa, of Panagia Avgasida, of St Spyridon in Tremetousia, as well as monuments of traditional architecture, have been looted or even obliterated by the occupying army.

A total of 197 ancient monuments, proclaimed so in accordance with the Law on Antiquities, are found in the occupied area. Hundreds of additional archaeological sites and monuments, located in the course of preparations for the Archaeological Sites Protection Index had not been included in the Law, as research was still in progress when the Turkish invasion took place.

The Famagusta District Museum, the Kyrenia Museum of Folk Art, the ecclesiastical collection in the Palace of the Holy Bishopric of Kyrenia and many other listed archaeological collections of private ownership, have been mercilessly looted.

The notable work performed by the Department of Antiquities and foreign archaeological delegations on the Northern part of Cyprus was interrupted after the area was seized by the Turkish army. Archaeological excavations in Salamina, Engomi, Soloi, Agios Epiktetos, Apostolos Andreas and elsewhere were brought to a halt, their findings robbed. Archaeological sites and monuments had suffered extensive damages on account of random bombing by the Turkish air force, e.g. the renowned Paphos mosaics, even though the area had been spared armed fighting with the Turkish invaders.

The preservation and protection of cultural heritage in the occupied areas is a joint aim of the Cyprus Republic and the Church of Cyprus and persists to this day across different levels, albeit in adverse conditions.



Engomi archaeological site.



Architectural parts from Agia Triada Basilica.



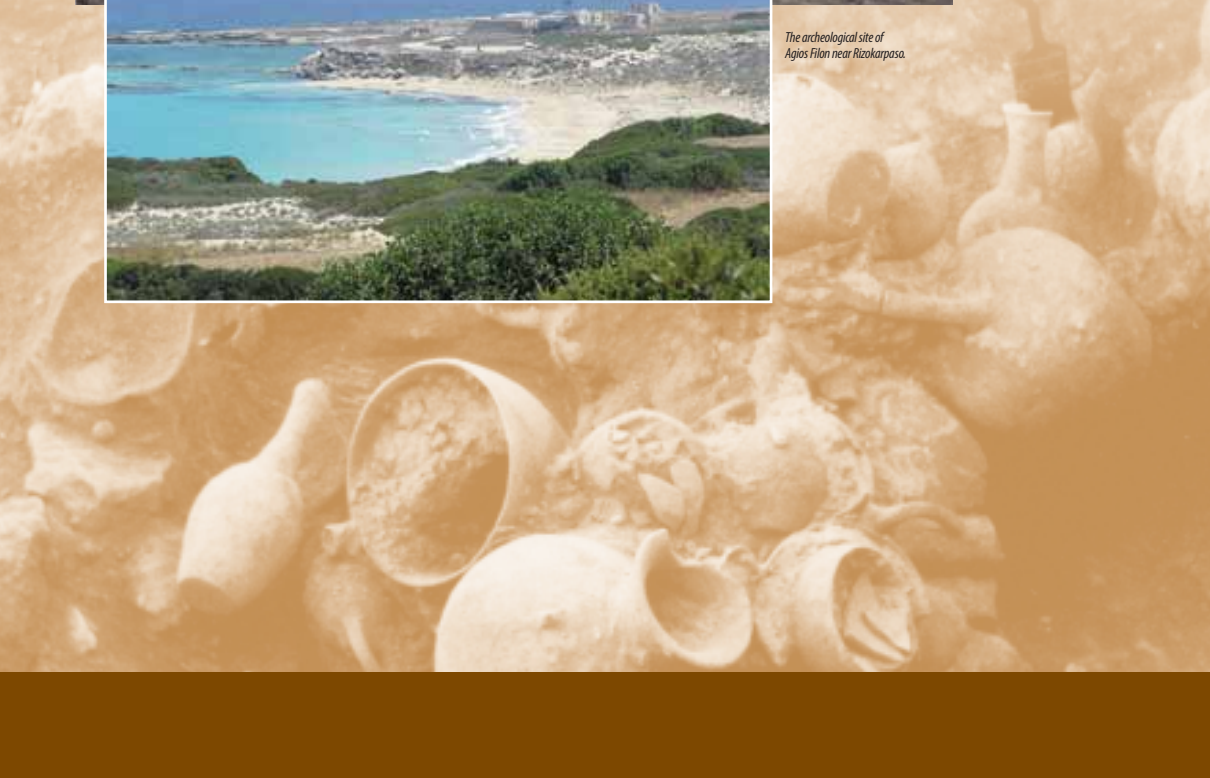
In order to raise their flags the Turkish army destroyed the neolithic settlement of Kastros-Apostolos Andreas (below).



Above: Baptismal font from Agios Filon Basilica.



The archeological site of Agios Filon near Rizokarpasa.



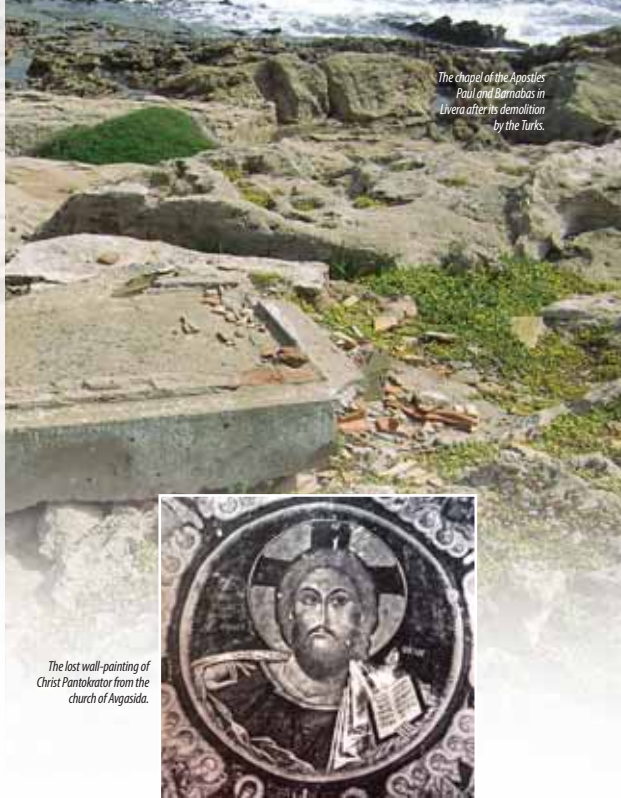


# Demolished Orthodox Churches

The looting and denuding of churches of their mobile items and anything reminiscent of their Christian identity, the use of churches as storehouses, stables, workshops, latrines, and recreation halls, provide undeniable evidence of the lack of culture and a modicum of respect on behalf of the Turkish invaders. A considerable number of churches have been converted into Muslim mosques. By contrast, the preservation and safeguarding of Muslim sacred places in the jurisdiction of the Republic of Cyprus readily exposes a stark difference in conduct.

The destruction of churches to their very foundations (Monastery of Panagia Avgasida in Milia, Famagusta; St Habbakum in Rizokarpaso; St Catherine in Yerani; St Mamas in Skyloura; the Prophet Zacharia in Dikomo; St Thekla in Vokolida etc), the absence of even a basic provision of protection, and the wilful abandonment of monuments of exceptional artistic and historic value to the mercy of time, weather conditions and smugglers of antiquities — all have dealt a serious blow to world civilization

*The chapel of the Apostles Paul and Barnabas in Livera after its demolition by the Turks.*



*The church of St Thekla before its demolition by the Turks.*

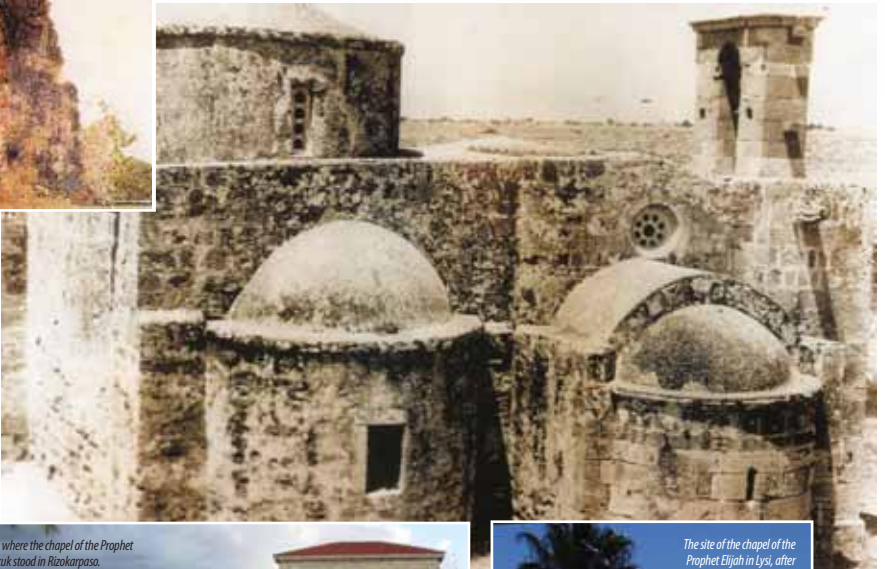


*The lost wall-painting of Christ Pantokrator from the church of Avgasida.*



*Above: The mosaic with the Virgin Orans (7th cent.) from Panagia Kyra church in Livadia was destroyed completely by the Turks.*

*Right: The medieval Monastery of Panagia Avgasida, Famagusta district, was destroyed by the Turks after 1974.*



*The site where the chapel of the Prophet Habakkuk stood in Rizokarpaso.*



*The chapel of the Prophet Habakkuk in Rizokarpaso, before its demolition by the Turks.*

*The site of the chapel of the Prophet Elijah in Lysi, after the building's demolition by the Turks.*

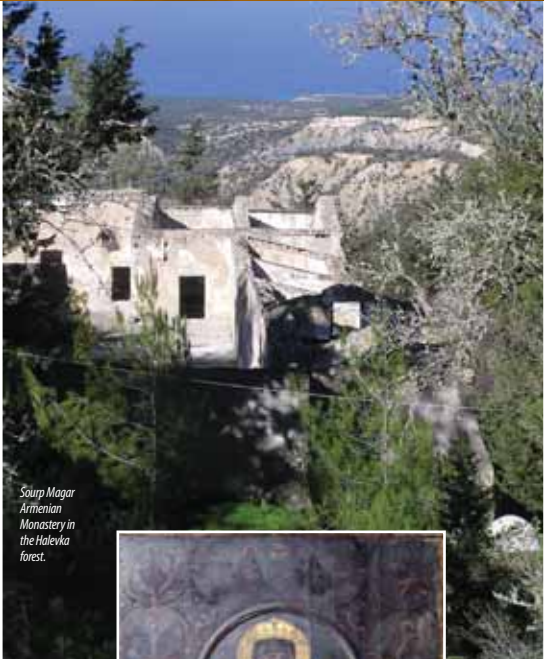




# Maronite, Armenian and Latin churches

Cyprus has always been a place of convergence of different religions and civilizations. Apart from the major Greek Orthodox community, the island has for centuries now been inhabited by adherents of other religions and Christian denominations, e.g. Jewish, Muslims, Syrians, Abyssinians, Copts, Armenians, Maronites and Latin Cypriots. Despite the fact that through the centuries the peaceful coexistence of all religions and denominations was an accomplished fact, immediately after the Turkish invasion and the ensuing ethnic cleansing, the monuments and sites of veneration of these groups were subjected to irreverent treatment.

Notable monuments, such as the prominent Sourp Magar Armenian Monastery (St Makarios) in Chalefka, were left to ruin. The most important monastery of the Maronites in Cyprus, the Prophet Elijah in Agia Marina Skyllouras, was bombed and dilapidated. The Latin church of St Antony in Assia has collapsed. The Armenian church of Our Lady of Kantzvor in the medieval city of Famagusta was for years being used as a storehouse of the Turkish army, whilst the Cathedral of Sourp Asdvadzadzin (Our Lady of the Armenians in Nicosia) was subjected to impious treatment. The result has been extensive damage to the churches' medieval wall-paintings and theft of their precious relics.



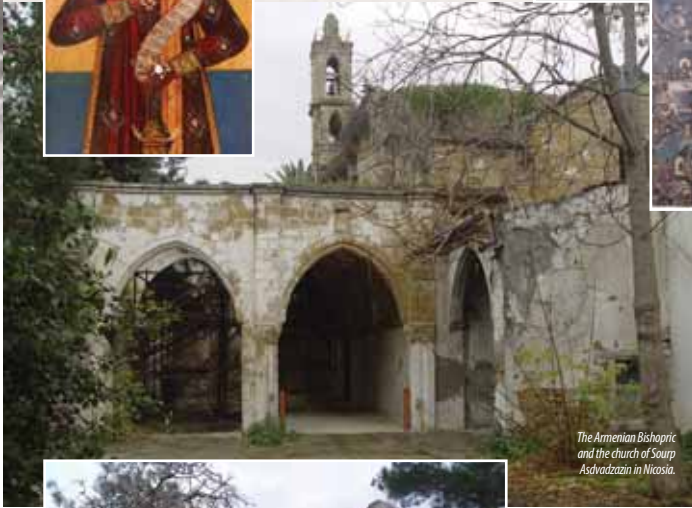
*Sourp Magar Armenian Monastery in the Halevka forest.*



*The icon of St. Romanos from the Maronite Church in Vouno village.*



*The icon of Our Lady from the church of Sourp Asdvadzadzin in Nicosia.*



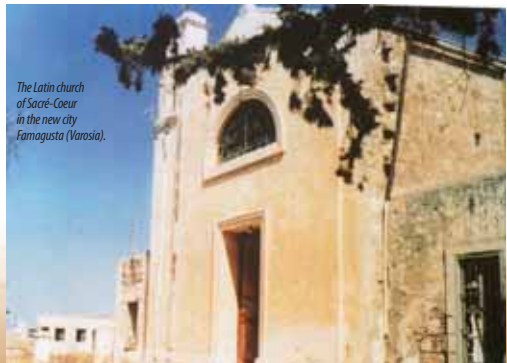
*The Armenian Bishopric and the church of Sourp Asdvadzadzin in Nicosia.*



*The icon of the Virgin with the Christ Child from the Maronite Church in Kythrea.*



*The Armenian church of St. George 'tis Attalou, on the Pentadaktylos mountain range.*



*The Latin church of Sacre-Coeur in the new city Famagusta (Varosia).*



*Icons in the Maronite church of the Holy Cross, Karpasia village.*



*The Crucified from the Maronite church of Karpasia village.*





# Cemeteries

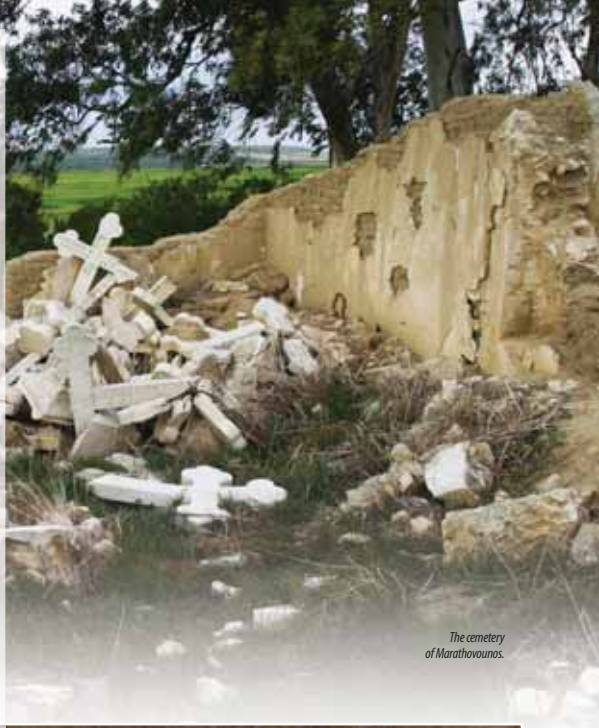
The destruction of non-Muslim cemeteries in the occupied area is perhaps the most extreme demonstration of nationalistic hatred on behalf of the occupying forces. No cemetery has remained intact, as destruction acquired an almost systematic character, attesting to a devastating mania for obliterating anything reminiscent of the lawful inhabitants of these areas.

**W**hen a number of checkpoints opened in 2003, Greek Cypriots who visited their villages and cities witnessed with their own eyes the extent of barbarity and devastation, especially so in Kyrenia, Yialousa, Assia, Genagra, Lysi etc. Similar treatment was reserved for the Jewish cemetery in Margo, which was desecrated in a grossly irreverent manner.

The pain and anguished astonishment of the Greek Cypriot refugees were immense, as all of them wondered: "What did the dead do wrong?"



Assia cemetery.



The cemetery of Marathovounos.



Jewish cemetery in Margo.



Lysi cemetery.



Gypsou cemetery.



A young Greek Cypriot tries to reset the tombstone in Genagra cemetery.



Jewish cemetery in Margo.





# School Buildings

The school and educational buildings in the occupied cities and communities of Cyprus were tokens of the Greeks of Cyprus' love for belles-lettres and their will to educate themselves in harsh times, as the periods of the Ottoman and British Dominion.

The edifices that were built during the Ottoman rule (1571-1878) were humble, whilst those built under British rule (1878-1960) were closer to the classic models. Regardless of their style, their main feature is the extensive use of the local porous stone, then the prevalent construction material used in both public and private buildings. Especially impressive were their neoclassical façades, imitating those of Ancient Greek temples.

The more recent school buildings were built at the end of the British rule, mainly after the island's independence. These buildings, considered modern for their time, stand out for their functionality, correct orientation and typical repetition. After the Turkish invasion, some of those remained in use as schools by the occupying authorities, whilst other were maliciously altered, e.g. the Morphou II High School. The remaining school buildings, after being looted, have been left to ruin, e.g. the private Silvestros Commercial School in Morphou and the Elementary Schools in Katokopia and Styloi, Famagusta.

In the fenced-off city of Famagusta, many elementary and high schools remain pillaged and left to waste, e.g. the historical Famagusta I Greek High School, the Technical School, the Elementary school of Chrysi Akti, St Memnon I and II Elementary School and the fine marble building of the Lyceion Ellinidon Ammochostou (Lyceum of Greek Women of Famagusta).



The looted library of the Famagusta I Greek High School.



Famagusta I Greek High School.



High School in Morphou.



A classroom in Agia Triada Elementary School.



The Agricultural College in Morphou.



The Elementary School in Katokopia.



Class of 1972 from Karavas Primary School. In the third row, third from the left, stands Yiannis Kazakos, murdered in cold blood by the Turkish invaders together with another 11 civilians in the village of Elia to the east of Karavas, on 21 July 1974. He was fourteen.



High School of Lapithos.



The High School of Kyrenia before 1974.





# The Medieval City of Famagusta

The Medieval city of Famagusta was in all likelihood created after the decline and abandonment of its neighboring Salamina / Constantia. The city reached its heyday under the Lusignan Dominion (1192-1489).

**T**radition relates that there were in Famagusta a total of 365 churches, one for each day of the year, which points to the wealth of its inhabitants. Even to this day, despite the overall devastation, its walled area is probably the most beautiful medieval city in the Eastern Mediterranean.

Its solid wall, which survives almost in its entirety, but also its harbor, had made the city a safe and ideal meeting place for mercantile transactions involving many different countries. Its cosmopolitan air is readily perceived by means of a simple walk around the city, during which one can see a multitude of churches of different denominations and religions: the Gothic Cathedral of St Nikolas (14th c.), or the striking church of St George "of the Greeks", which was bombed and deserted during the grueling 11-month siege of Famagusta by the Ottomans in 1571. Adjacent to the south of St George is the small church of St Symeon (12th c.) wherein, according to tradition, lay the tomb of St Epiphanius. Across the city stands the Armenian church of Our Lady Kantzvor (14th c.) Until recently, the elegant, single-aisled church of St Anna (14th c.) was used by the Turkish occupying army as a storehouse, akin to other churches in Famagusta. In more or less the center of the city stands the church of St George "Xorinos" or "of the Nestorians" with wall-paintings dated to the 14th and 15th c., now accommodating a drama workshop. Next to the deserted Venetian palace, looms the striking Gothic church of Sts Peter and Paul (14th c.) whilst further east, the so-called Twin Churches of the Knights Templar and Hospitalliers are now used as pubs!

The medieval city is effectively a vast open-air museum in need of urgent and essential care, given that its numerous museums have been barred from any conservation works since 1974 when the competent Department of Antiquities was denied access to them. The Global Heritage Fund has listed the city in the 12 most important archaeological sites threatened by extinction. Efforts made by the Municipality of Famagusta towards collaborating with the Turkish Cypriot city hall for the conservation of the monuments of the medieval city, have not yielded the desired outcome.

*The church of St George "of the Greeks".*



*Stone relief from St Nikolas Cathedral.*



*The church of St George of the Nestorians.*



*The Church of St Anne, interior view towards the west.*



*The cathedral of St Nikolas converted into a mosque, 1571.*



*The church of Agia Zoni.*



*The pillaged church of Agia Zoni, interior view.*



*The Twin Churches.*





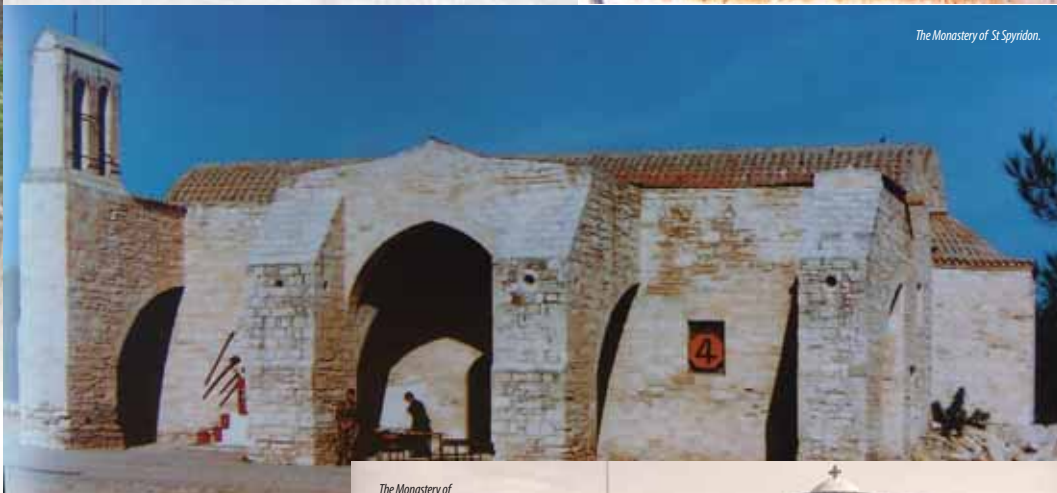
# Monasteries converted into military camps of the occupying forces

Some of the most significant Byzantine monuments of Cyprus have, after the summer of 1974, been turned into military camps of the Turkish occupying army, namely:

- The Monastery of Panagia Acheiropoietos in ancient Lambousa (5th, 11th-12th c.). The monasteries' relics and notable icons have been stolen, whilst a small icon depicting the Exaltation of the Holy Cross was located in Germany, in the storehouses of illicit Turkish dealer Aydin Dikmen.
- The Monastery of St John Chrysostom in the village of Koutsoventis, built in the 11th c. and known for its significant Comnenian wall-paintings, has been desecrated. The only visit to the monastery by an expert was carried out in 1989, when Professor R. Cormack, member of the European Council delegation, ascertained that some of the wall-paintings had been whitewashed, whilst other had suffered damages.
- The Monastery of St Spyridon (18th c., built on the ruins of a basilica of the 4th-5th c.) in the village of Tremetousia, where an Icon Conservation Centre belonging to the Church of Cyprus was in operation until 1974. After the invasion, the church was turned into a military camp, its icons stolen, whilst the condition of its notable Palaeo-Christian mosaic floor remains unknown. Evidence is also lacking about the fate of the saint's Palaeo-Christian sarcophagus.



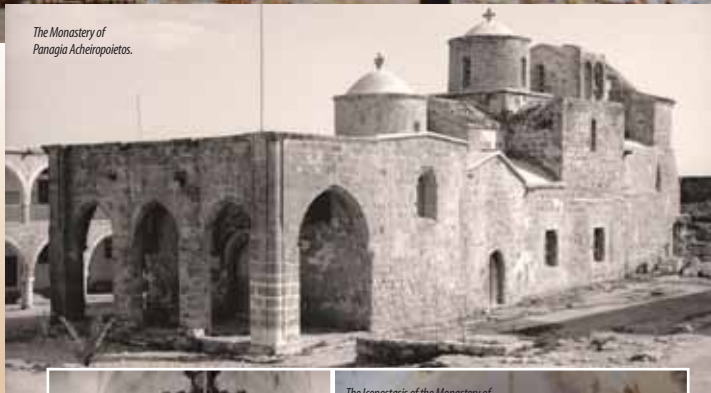
Wall painting of St Spyridon with a donor.



The Monastery of St Spyridon.



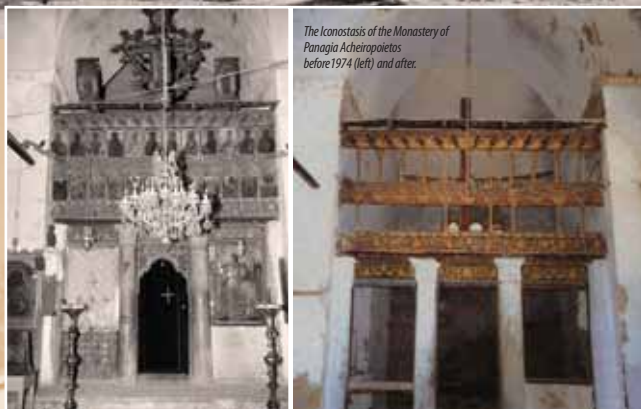
Wall painting from the Monastery of St John Chrysostom.



The Monastery of Panagia Acheiropoietos.



The Monastery of St John Chrysostom.



The Iconostasis of the Monastery of Panagia Acheiropoietos before 1974 (left) and after.





# Apostolos Andreas Monastery

## IN KARPASS PENINSULA

**T**he Monastery of Apostolos Andreas (St Andrew the Apostle) belongs to the jurisdiction of the suffragan bishopric of Karpass and is located on the homonymous cape in Karpass. It is one of Cyprus' most important and popular sites of veneration.

According to the local tradition, the Apostle Andrew had passed by the region where the monastery was to be built, and miraculously carved a spring into the rock. In the area of the monastery stands a medieval gothic church, built on the source of agiasma or holy water. The more recent katholikon, looming over the sea landscape, was constructed sometime before 1867. Hospices and other auxiliary rooms had been erected in the monastery's square, to meet the needs of pilgrims who used to arrive there by the thousands from all over Cyprus in order to celebrate the saint's feast day on 30 November but also on 15 August.

Numerous Turkish Cypriots from various places around Cyprus were among those visiting the monastery, bringing with them votive offerings as tokens of respect for the Apostle. Even today, brochures published by the occupying regime for the Apostolos Andreas Monastery, refer to it as being "a sacred place for Turks and Greeks alike".

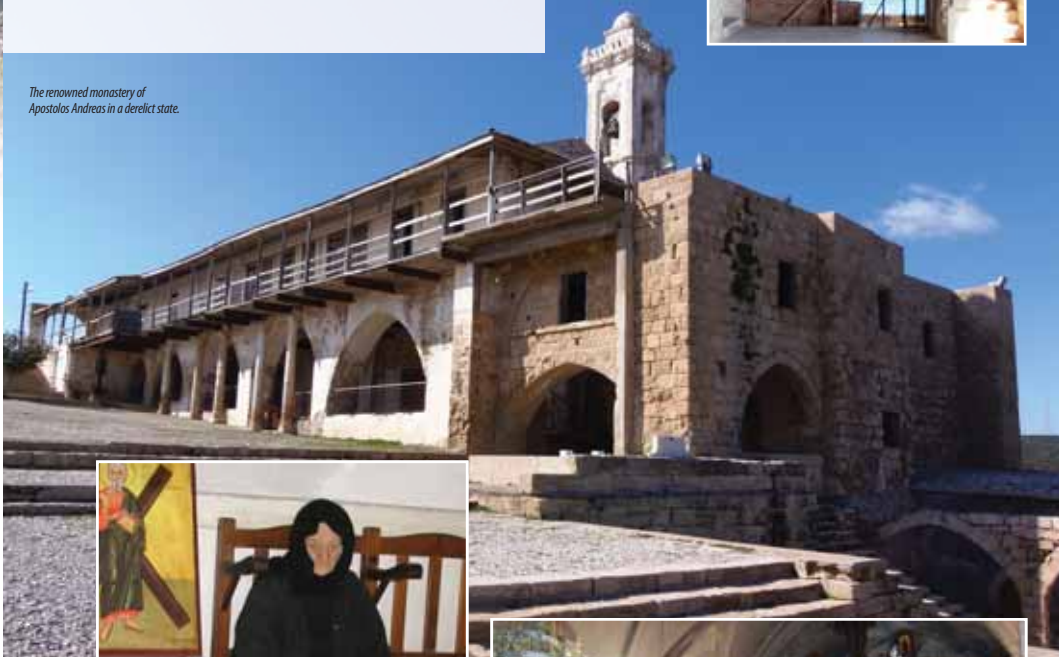
From 1974 and for the next 30 years, the Apostolos Andreas Monastery was inaccessible to the Greeks because of the Turkish occupation. When a number of checkpoints opened in 2003, the faithful began revisiting the monastery, and still do so to this day. In the harsh years of enclavement, the few Greek-Cypriots enclaved in Karpass remain its only keepers.

From the belfry of the katholikon the cross has been removed, whereas the precious silver gilt icon of the Apostle Andrew and other valuables have been robbed. Also, the marble bust of the proprietor priest Ioannis Nikola Diakou, placed above his grave, has been ruined.

The monastic buildings and the katholikon have suffered serious damages, due to long abandonment and lack of maintenance on behalf of the occupying authorities. Even though several studies focusing on the building's conservation and restoration have been made, and despite international interest in this matter, nothing has been materialized, as every effort stumbles over the Turkish intransigence.



*The renowned monastery of Apostolos Andreas in a derelict state.*





# The Monastery of St Panteleimon

## IN MYRTOU



The Monastery of St Panteleimon after 1974.

**T**he Monastery of St Panteleimon is located at 28 km to the southwest of the city of Kyrenia, in the occupied village of Myrtou. Until 1974, when it was occupied by the Turkish troops, the village was one of the most important pilgrimage destinations in Cyprus.

During the years of the Ottoman rule the Monastery was renovated by Chrysanthos, the Metropolitan of Kyrenia, whereupon it acquired a two-storey complex to the south and west so as to meet the needs of the monks and the Bishopric of Kyrenia, which until 1917 had its See there.

Its *katholikon* consists of a two-aisled vaulted construction adorned by abstract wall-paintings, ruined after 1974, and by a carved wooden gilt iconostasis of exceptional artistry, made in 1743. Notable post-Byzantine icons, stolen by the Turks, were placed on the iconostasis. Of them, two icons depicting St Panteleimon were of special note. The first, meant for public veneration, had a silver revetment (the work of Ioannis Kornaros, 1798) and was always replete with votive offerings by the faithful. The other, a proprietary one, depicted St Panteleimon, with Chrysanthos, the Bishop of Kyrenia, kneeling on his left (1770).

In the early 20th century, the monastery was inhabited by 10 monks, the last of whom was Sophronios Michaelides, one of the enclaved in Myrtou. After the 1974 Turkish invasion, the Turks went on to use the village of Myrtou as a military base. The Monastery of St Panteleimon was converted into barracks for the Turkish occupying army. Not only did the invaders desecrate and loot the Monastery, steal and destroy its relics and treasures; they also literally ravaged the monastic buildings, some of which they demolished.

Today, albeit vacated by the Turkish army, the Monastery of St Panteleimon lies in a derelict state, on the brink of collapse.



Relics from the Monastery saved by Greek refugees during 1974.





# The Monastery of St Mamas

## IN MORPHOU

Until 1974, the Monastery of St Mamas in Morphou was one of the holier sites of worship for the Christians of Cyprus. The church of St Mamas (16th c.) is built on the ruins of at least three different architectural phases (5th-6th, 7th, possibly 12th c.). It belongs to the Franco-Byzantine style, a combination of a Gothic three-aisled basilica with a Byzantine domed church.

In the middle of the north wall, a blind arch of elaborate carved decoration roofs the marble sarcophagus of St Mamas dated to the 3rd c. A.D.

The carved wooden ciborium which covers the holy altar, perhaps the most important ciborium surviving in Cyprus, has been dated to circa the mid 16th century.

In 1974 the church was seized by the Turkish troops and converted into a "museum of icons". The silver-decorated gospel book of the 18th c., the 19th c. reliquary with the remains of St Mamas and other saints, and the holy paten have been stolen from the church. In 1994, the cross was removed from the dome, whilst the belfry at the northeast corner is in need of conservation, just as the church's wall-paintings and icons. Also, problems of statics have manifest themselves on the monastic buildings on the north and east side of the church.

Since 2004, Neophytos, the Metropolitan of Morphou, officiates Vespers and the Divine Liturgy in the Turkish-occupied church on 1 and 2 September, on the feast of St Mamas, patron saint of Morphou.



*The Monastery of St Mamas used as a museum of icons.*







ΔΗΜΟΣ  
ΑΜΜΟΧΩΣΤΟΥ



Famagusta  
(Varosia)

The fenced-off city of

# Famagusta (Varosia)

A European city at the hands of an Eastern conqueror



**P**rior to the 1974 Turkish invasion, Famagusta was the most developed city in Cyprus, thriving in tourism, commerce and culture. It also boasted the most important harbor on the island.

A wealth of significant archaeological monuments, the Lyceion Ellinidon Ammochostou (Lyceum of Greek Women of Famagusta), the Municipal Art Gallery, the Scientific and Philological Association of Famagusta, the 'Evagoras' Sports Club, the football and sports clubs of 'Anorthosis' and 'Nea Salamina', its 34 hotels, but above all the inhabitants of Famagusta themselves, progressive, cosmopolitan and diligent, had elevated their city to a true jewel, an envious tourist destination, but also a wonderful place to live in.

After the second phase of the invasion, in August 1974, a large part of Famagusta was singled out and fenced off by the Turkish occupying army, placed under its immediate administration and control. Its rightful inhabitants are barred admittance to the city, in a unique example of barbaric conduct. Upon its conquest, the city was savagely looted, its houses, shops, and churches stripped of their belongings and relics. Famagusta became a ghost-city, left to die a slow death, decomposing year over year, whilst its lawful, proud inhabitants perish one after the other, with the longing and the pain of injustice and displacement. . . ■



The church of Agia Zoni.



The interior of the church of Chrysopoliotissa, today.



The church of Chrysopoliotissa has been converted into a mosque.



The ruined church of St Paraskeve.



The interior of the church of St Paraskeve.



View from the Famagusta Municipal building.



House in the fenced-off city of Famagusta.







# Kyrenia

The smallest yet most picturesque city of Cyprus was Kyrenia, a name owed to the homonymous ancient Achaean city, whence hailed the heroes of the Trojan war who, according to tradition, were its founders.

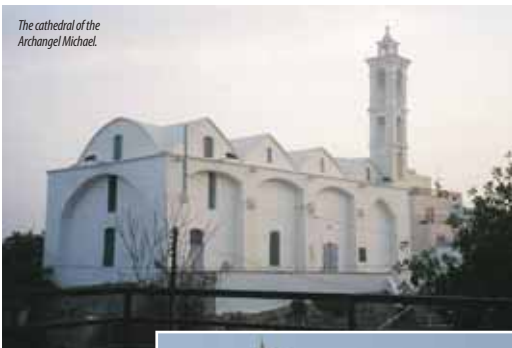


Its historical roots are as ancient as its name. The city of Kyrenia had three parishes: the Archangel Michael (Lower Kyrenia), St George (Upper Kyrenia) and Thermeia. The Municipality of Kyrenia was founded after 1856.

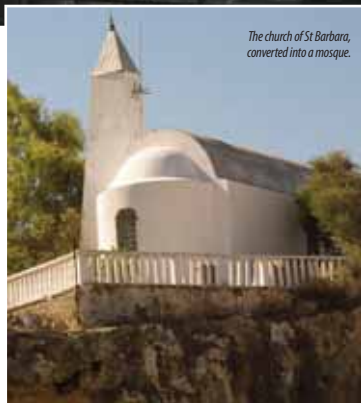
Kyrenia was rich in antiquities dated to the Neolithic era and onwards. Its Christian monuments are significant, with their most ancient remnants having been located here, such as the tomb in Eleftheria street (4th c.) and the cemetery of Chrysokava. Of course, the city's most distinctive monument is undoubtedly the Byzantine Medieval castle which towers above its port. It is within this castle that the renowned ancient Hellenic ship of Kyrenia is exhibited (circa 300BC). After the second Turkish invasion in 1974 the occupying authorities collected icons from the desecrated churches and stored them in appalling conditions in the interior of the castle. The strikingly white cathedral of the Archangel, looted and destroyed in its interior now converted into a museum of icons, still stands as a symbolic monument. The church of Panagia Glykiotissa, a significant site of veneration for the inhabitants of Kyrenia, on the west side of the city, was badly looted and turned into a Muslim mosque immediately after the invasion. The Medieval church of Panagia Chrysopolitissa, near the port, has collapsed, whereas the imposing Metropolitan Palace was pillaged and then put to the service of the Turkish occupying army. Kyrenian refugees have even been deprived of their right to exercise their religious duties since 1974.

In the last years before the 1974 invasion, economic growth was remarkable and manifest in every aspect of the city's social life. The well-known Dome hotel was used by the Turkish army as an area for gathering the Greek-Cypriot hostages immediately after the city's capture. For a few months following the invasion it served as an Elementary School.

The 1974 Turkish invasion brought to a halt the city's progress and development, whilst its inhabitants were violently displaced and scattered all over Cyprus and abroad. Today, against all odds, the inhabitants of Kyrenia join efforts to keep the memory of their occupied, much-praised motherland alive, in the hope of returning and reconnecting with their roots. ■



The cathedral of the Archangel Michael.



The church of St Barbara, converted into a mosque.



Above: Semi-ruined wall-painting depicting the Ascension of Christ in Chrysokava (10th c.).



Right: The church of St Catherine in Chrysokava.



The church of Panagia Chrysopolitissa, today.







# Morphou

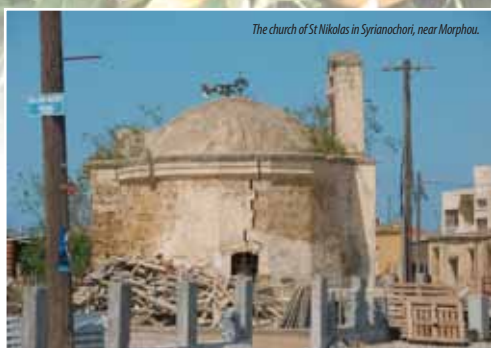
The thriving town of Morphou was on its way to becoming the seventh city of Cyprus. In 1883, it was proclaimed a municipality by the colonial government. In 1973, the Bishopric of Morphou was founded on the See, of the long spoken of, bishopric of Soloi. But alas, everything was brought to a halt in 1974.



**M**orphou was divided into four parishes: Agios Mamas, Agios Georgios, Agia Paraskeve and Chryseliou. The Morphou region was one of the most prosperous and advanced in Cyprus due to the growing cultivation of citrus fruit and vegetables in recent years. In the areas of Karavostasi and Xeros copper was extracted from the Skouriotissa mines.

There are, in the wider Morphou region, important archaeological sites, such as 'Petra tou Limniti' (7,000-5,310 BC), 'Toumba tou Skourou' (16th – 12th c. BC), the ancient city of Soloi etc. At the initiative of the Bishopric of Morphou and the Republic of Cyprus, the basilica of St Auxibius (4th – 7th c.) in Soloi, one of the largest basilicas in Cyprus, adorned with important mosaics, was cleaned with financial assistance from USAID. The remaining area of the archaeological site has regrettably been left to ruin.

In August 1974 Morphou and its villages were occupied by the Turkish troops, then illegally colonized. The cathedral of St Mamas was desecrated and turned into a museum of icons, whilst the Metropolitan Palace was converted into an archaeological museum, also featuring stuffed animals. The church of St George was denuded and converted into a dance hall; the church of St Paraskeve was turned into a mosque and the church of Soterios at Chryseliou into a morgue! The city was renamed Guzelyurt by the Turks. ■



*The church of St. Nikolas in Syrianochori, near Morphou.*



*The church in Chryseliou has been converted into a morgue.*



*The interior of the church of St. Paraskeve, today.*



*The church of St. Mamas has been converted into a museum of icons.*



*The church of St. Barbara on the road to Vouini.*

*The church of Panagia in the old cemetery of Morphou, today.*







# Lysi

Lysi was one of the major townships of the Famagusta province. It has been under Turkish occupation since the summer of 1974. At the wish and decision of its inhabitants, Lysi was proclaimed a municipality in 1962. Part of the town's expanse falls within the territory of the British Base Area of Dhekelia.

Lysi was renowned for its notable achievements in sports and belles-lettres, aside from its successful farming and livestock rearing practices, owing to which it ranked among the richest townships in Cyprus. In fact, the first grass football field was created in Lysi. The imposing, elaborately crafted church of Panagia looms over the township. The church took ten years to complete, with voluntary work by all the inhabitants of Lysi. It was finally finished in 1888.

After the 1974 Turkish invasion, a few Turkish Cypriots from the free areas took up residence in the township, together with settlers from Turkey. In their effort to obliterate the Greek character of the township, the Turks renamed it Akdogan. A large part of Lysi is used as a military camp by the Turkish occupying army. The renowned church of Panagia was converted into a Muslim mosque, its Christian cemetery ruined. Prior to 1974, a Palaeo-Christian basilica was excavated in the Lysi area. Its rural churches have been pillaged. The most important among them is St Ephemianos (Themonianos). Its wall-paintings (13th c.) have been dismantled by Aydin Dikmen, a Turkish smuggler of antiquities, and sold abroad, in particular to the Menil Foundation, Texas. Upon the coordinated efforts of the Church of Cyprus and the competent authorities of the Republic of Cyprus, the wall-paintings were repatriated in 2012, and are now temporarily kept in the Byzantine Museum of the Archbishop Makarios III Foundation in Nicosia. ■



*Dismounted wall-painting depicting the Christ Pantokrator (13th c.) from the church of St Ephemianos.*



*The church of Panagia has been converted into a mosque.*



*The desecrated church of St Ephemianos.*



*The Primary School of Lysi.*







ΔΗΜΟΣ  
ΛΑΠΗΘΟΥ



# Lapithos

Lapithos is one of Cyprus' most beautiful townships, with a rich history and traditions that reach deep in time. Leaned against the slopes of Pentadaktylos, with running water and fertile soil, it captivated visitors at first sight. Lemon trees and orange trees flourished in the area, dominating the landscape.

**T**he Municipality of Lapithos was founded in 1878 by the British colonial government. Prominent personalities of Cypriot history hailed from Lapithos, e.g. Georgios the Cypriot (1241-1289) who was to become the Ecumenical Patriarch; the intellectual and philosopher Georgios Lapithis (14th c.); general Ioannis Tsaggarides (1887-1939); the entrepreneur and benefactor Gogos Paraskevaides (1916-2007) as well as the historian Costas Kyrris (1927-2009).

A rich tradition but also the love of the inhabitants of Lapithos for it, is reflected onto a multitude of churches and chapels, erected in its wider district. Unfortunately, after 1974 these monuments were desecrated, some converted into mosques, e.g. the parish church of St Paraskeve, or left to the mercy of time and weather, e.g. the chapels of St Marina and St Mamas, whereas the church of the Archangel Michael has collapsed. The whole complex of the parish church of St Anastasia has been converted into a hotel, whereas the chapel of St George "Xorinos" has been turned into construction company premises.

After 1974 the township was renamed Lapta, whilst the illegal exploitation and unruly construction of residences and tourist accommodations on Greek-Cypriot land has greatly distorted the area. ■



*The church of St Luke has been converted into a dance hall.*



*The church of St Anastasia has been converted into a hotel.*



*The church of Archangel has collapsed.*



*The church of St Theodoros.*







# Kythrea

The township of Kythrea lies on the south slope of Pentadaktylos, at 15 km from the capital city of Nicosia, gazing at the lowland of Mesaoria.

In 1974, Kythrea was inhabited by approximately 4,500 Greeks and included six parishes: Syrkania, Chardakiotissa, Agios Georgios, Agios Andronikos, Agia Marina and Chrysidia. The Municipality of Kythrea was founded in 1915 by the colonial government.

The well-known Kefalovryso, renowned across the whole of Cyprus, watered not only Kythrea but its neighboring villages too; sometimes its water reached as far as ancient Salamis. After the town's conquest by the Turkish troops in 1974, Kefalovryso dried out, which in turn led to the desiccation of the green growth covering the whole of Kythrea.

After 1974 the Greek Cypriot inhabitants of Kythrea became refugees and moved either to free Cyprus or abroad. Its churches have been pillaged and abandoned. Panagia Chardakiotissa and the church of St Anne have been turned into mosques, whilst the church of St Andronikos was first pillaged, then set on fire. A large part of it has now collapsed. The church of St George serves today as a storehouse for military equipment, and that of St Marina as a dance studio. The renowned monastery of the Theotokos has been demolished. The church of St Antony, in Syrkania, belonged to the Maronite Church.

The Municipality of Kythrea has been trying in adverse conditions and in diverse ways to keep the flame of return burning, but above all to imbue the young generation with love for their ancestral land. ■



The church of Panagia Hardakiotissa has been converted into a mosque.



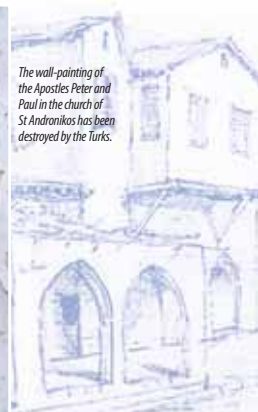
St Andronikos church has collapsed.



The water mill of Viatros.



The wall-painting of the Apostles Peter and Paul in the church of St Andronikos has been destroyed by the Turks.



Below: Church of St Anne at Syrkania.



The church of St Andronikos.



The church of St Marina used as a storehouse.







# Karavas

The township of Karavas, together with its neighboring Lapithos, formed a beautiful complex which adorned the foothills of Pentadaktylos. The natural wealth of the land was aptly reflected on an array of elegant edifices.

The municipality of Karavas was founded in 1884. Folk art and handicraft flourished in the area as a result of an ongoing, age-long living tradition cherished by the inhabitants of Karavas. In the last years before the invasion, tourism started to develop in the area, offering visitors a rich package of natural beauty and vigorous tradition.

Unfortunately, the 1974 Turkish invasion violently interrupted a history of thousands of years and forced the townships legal inhabitants to scatter across the whole of free Cyprus. There were, in the township and its wider region, three parish churches and fourteen chapels. The church of St George (1843-1854) was first desecrated, then left to ruin, just as the church of St Irene (1894). The impressive church of Our Lady Evangelistria (1906-1917) has been converted into a mosque.

The historical monastery of Acheiropoietos (6th, 11th century), St Eulalios (6th-7th, 15th c.) and the small rock-cut church of St Eulambios stand within Karavas' municipal boundaries, and attest to the region's affluent past. Today they are inaccessible as they lie within a military area.

After 1974 the township was illegally renamed Alsancak (red area). ■



Southeast side of the church of St Irene.



The pillaged church of St Irene, interior view toward the east.



North entrance to the church of Our Lady Evangelistria, today.

The church of Our Lady Evangelistria has been converted into a mosque by the occupying forces.

Below: The interior of the church of Panagia Evangelistria after its conversion into a mosque.



Wall paintings in the small rock-cut chapel of the Virgin Mary (Panagia Galaterousa).



The church of St George, desecrated by the Turks.







# Lefkoniko

The township of Lefkoniko was one of the largest rural centers in the Famagusta province. Prior to 1974 its population numbered approximately 3.000 inhabitants. In 1939, the colonial government proclaimed the area a municipality. The Lefkoniko high school, erected in 1938 in the Neoclassical style, was one of the most beautiful edifices in the area.

**N**otable personalities of Cypriot history hailed from Lefkoniko: Kyprianos Oikonomides, the Metropolitan of Kition (1833-1886), a fervent advocate for the rights of poor farmers; his nephew, Ioannis Oikonomides (1864-1934), who pursued his uncle's struggles and went on, in 1909, to found the Cooperative Bank of Lefkoniko.

The foundation of the Bank led to the introduction of cooperative banking in Cyprus, which greatly aided the island's economic growth. But the most prominent among the learned men who were born in Lefkoniko was the national poet of Cyprus, Vassilis Michaelides (1849-1919), author of the epic poem *The 9th of July 1827* in Nicosia, Cyprus.

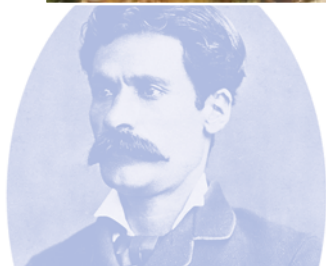
However, history and tradition were violently interrupted by the 1974 Turkish invasion of the island. The township was settled with Turkish Cypriots and settlers from Anatolia, its character altered. Its most important church, the Archangel Michael (possibly 14th c.) has been desecrated and lies today on the brink of collapse, whereas the church of the Saviour has been converted into a mosque. In their effort to obliterate the Greek history of the occupied areas, the Turks renamed Lefkoniko Geçitkale. ■



The Lefkoniko High School.



The church of the Archangel Michael is about to collapse.



The church of Soterios (Saviour) has been converted into a mosque.



The church of the Holy Cross, desecrated by the Turks.

The wall-painting of the Archangel (19th c.).



The church of the Holy Cross today.







# Akanthou

Akanthou, a township in the Famagusta province and the seat of the homonymous municipality, has a splendid amphitheatrical location along the northern foothill of Pentadaktylos. Founded in 1908, it is one of the earliest municipalities in Cyprus.



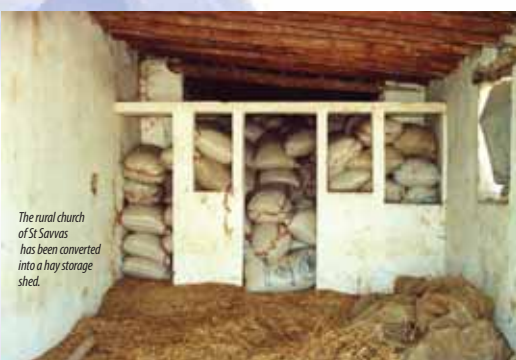
Oil production flourished in the community. The great expanse of the township provided the basic factors required for a noteworthy tourist development, but the 1974 Turkish invasion cancelled all the targets and dreams of Akanthou's forward-looking inhabitants.

Akanthou was renowned for a wealth of more than twenty ecclesiastical monuments. The most prominent among those is the church of Chrysosoterios, which used to be one of the most significant and popular sites of veneration for the Cypriots. The church was converted by the Turks into a Muslim mosque, after being stripped of its furnishings, portable icons, and crosses from the dome and belfries. The miraculous icon of *Chrysosoterios* (13th c., with 16th c. additions) was located in 2009 in Turkish-occupied Morphou and is found today in the church of St Mamas. The church of Pergamiotissa, albeit desecrated just as the rest of the churches in the community, was recently restored through the US Save programme and the auspices of the municipality of Akanthou.

After the Turkish invasion, Turkish Cypriots from the free areas as well as settlers from Anatolia took up residence in Akanthou, altering and destroying the traditional character of what used to be a beautiful township, now renamed Tatlisu. ■



*The church of Agia Fotini (Fotou).*



*The rural church of St Savvas has been converted into a hay storage shed.*



*The church of St John.*



*The icon of Chrysosoterios was transferred by the Turks to Morphou.*



*The church of Chrysosoterios has been converted into a mosque.*



*Cemetery of St Barbara.*







Contributors to the photographic exhibition

# THE DESTRUCTION OF THE EUROPEAN CIVILIZATION OF CYPRUS BY TURKEY

## THE TRAGEDY GOES ON...

**Organization:** Committee of Cyprus Occupied Municipalities

**Scientific consultation and texts by:** Dr Christodoulos Hadjichristodoulou, Dr Andreas Foulis

**Coordination:** Yiannis Papaioannou, Mayor of Karavas

**Planning-Design-Graphics:** Anna Kyriacou

**Translations:** Despina Pirketti

**Photos offered by:** Holy Bishopric of Morphou, The Church of Cyprus Synodical Committee of the Churches Architecture - Monuments and Christian Art, The Maronite Archeparchy of Cyprus, Department of Antiquities, Press and Information Office of the Republic of Cyprus, Municipality of Ammochostos, Municipality of Kyrenia, Municipality of Morphou, Municipality of Lysi, Municipality of Lapithos, Municipality of Kythrea, Municipality of Karavas, Municipality of Lefkoniko, Municipality of Akanthou, Anmahouni Artin, Avxentiou Loizos, Chotzakoglou Charalampos, Foulis Andreas, Georgiades Michael, Hadjichristodoulou Christodoulos, Louca Nicos, Myrianthefs Diomides, Papageorgiou Athanasios, Papaioannou Yiannis, Severis Rita, Stylianou Vasos.

