

The archaeology (and a bit of
history.....) of the island of
Cyprus



Cyprus is the only country with a divided capital



Why is it divided?

- The Cyprus problem, also known as the Cyprus dispute, Cyprus issue, Cyprus question or Cyprus conflict, is an ongoing dispute between Greek Cypriots in the south and Turkish Cypriots in the north. Initially, with the occupation of the island by the British Empire from the Ottoman Empire in 1878 and subsequent annexation in 1914, the "Cyprus dispute" was a conflict between the Turkish and Greek islanders

- It entered its current phase in the aftermath of the 1974 Turkish military invasion and occupation of the northern third of Cyprus. Only Turkey recognises the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, while there is broad recognition that the ongoing military presence constitutes occupation of territories that belong to the Republic of Cyprus. According to the European Court of Human Rights, the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus should be considered a puppet state under effective Turkish control.

Early history

- The island of Cyprus was first inhabited in 9000 BC, with the arrival of farming societies who built round houses with floors of terazzo. Cities were first built during the Bronze Age
- The Greek population of Cyprus survived through multiple conquerors, including Egyptian and Persian rule. In the 4th century BC, Cyprus was conquered by Alexander the Great and then ruled by the Ptolemaic Egypt until 58 BC, when it was incorporated into the Roman Empire.

- Roman rule in Cyprus was interrupted in 649, when the Arab armies of the Umayyad Caliphate invaded the island.
- This arrangement persisted for nearly 300 years, until a Byzantine army conquered the island in around 965. Cyprus would become a theme of the Byzantine Empire until the late 12th century.
- Between September 1570 and August 1571 it was conquered by the Ottoman Empire, [citation needed] starting three centuries of Turkish rule over Cyprus.

- Starting in the early 19th century, ethnic Greeks of the island sought to bring about an end to almost 300 years of Ottoman rule and unite Cyprus with Greece. The United Kingdom took administrative control of the island in 1878, to prevent Ottoman possessions from falling under Russian control following the Cyprus Convention, which led to the call for union with Greece to grow louder.
- Under the terms of the agreement reached between Britain and the Ottoman Empire, the island remained an Ottoman territory.

- When the Ottoman Empire entered World War I on the side of the Central Powers, Britain renounced the Agreement, rejected all Turkish claims over Cyprus and declared the island a British colony. In 1915, Britain offered Cyprus to Constantine I of Greece on condition that Greece join the war on the side of the British, which he declined
- From 1918 to 1955 the island remained under British rule.

- Archbishop Makarios III was appointed in 1950 who had very strong opinions about Cyprus being ruled by the Greeks.



Colonel George Grivas



- He was one of the main actors in the Cypriot War of Independence, securing the independence of Cyprus against the British Empire.

- Grivas resented having to share leadership with the archbishop. Makarios, concerned about Grivas's extremism from their very first meeting, preferred to continue diplomatic efforts, particularly efforts to get the United Nations involved. The feelings of uneasiness that arose between them never dissipated. In the end, the two became enemies
- By 1958 the island was on the verge of civil war

1960-1974-Greek Cypriot president and a Turkish Cypriot vice-president.



- Vice-President Dr. Fazıl Küçük
- Küçük represented the Turkish Cypriot community and was able to secure constitutional safeguards for the people.

1960 - 1974

- According to constitutional arrangements, Cyprus was to become an independent, non-aligned republic with a Greek Cypriot president and a Turkish Cypriot vice-president. General executive authority was vested in a council of ministers with a ratio of seven Greeks to three Turks. (The Greek Cypriots represented 78% of the population and the Turkish Cypriots 18%. The remaining 4% was made up by the three minority communities:

1974 Greek coup d'état and Turkish invasion

- On 20 July, Turkey invaded Cyprus with limited forces. The invasion achieved limited initial success, resulting in Greek forces occupying Turkish-Cypriot enclaves across the island. Within two days, Turkey secured a narrow corridor linking the northern coast with Nicosia, and on 23 July agreed to a cease-fire after securing a satisfactory bridgehead.
- On 14 August, Turkey demanded that Greece accept a Cypriot federal state, which would have resulted in the Turkish Cypriots - making up 18% of the population and 10% of land ownership – receiving 34% of the island

- Turkey launched a second offensive. Turkey controlled 36% of the island by the time of the last ceasefire on 16 August 1974. The area between the combatants became a United Nations-administered buffer zone, or "green line"



Why is it called the Green Line?

- It was formed in order to stop the escalation of tension between the Greek Cypriots and the Turkish Cypriots. It was given the name Green Line due to the fact that General Yang had drawn it with a green pencil on the map.

Map of Cyprus showing the division

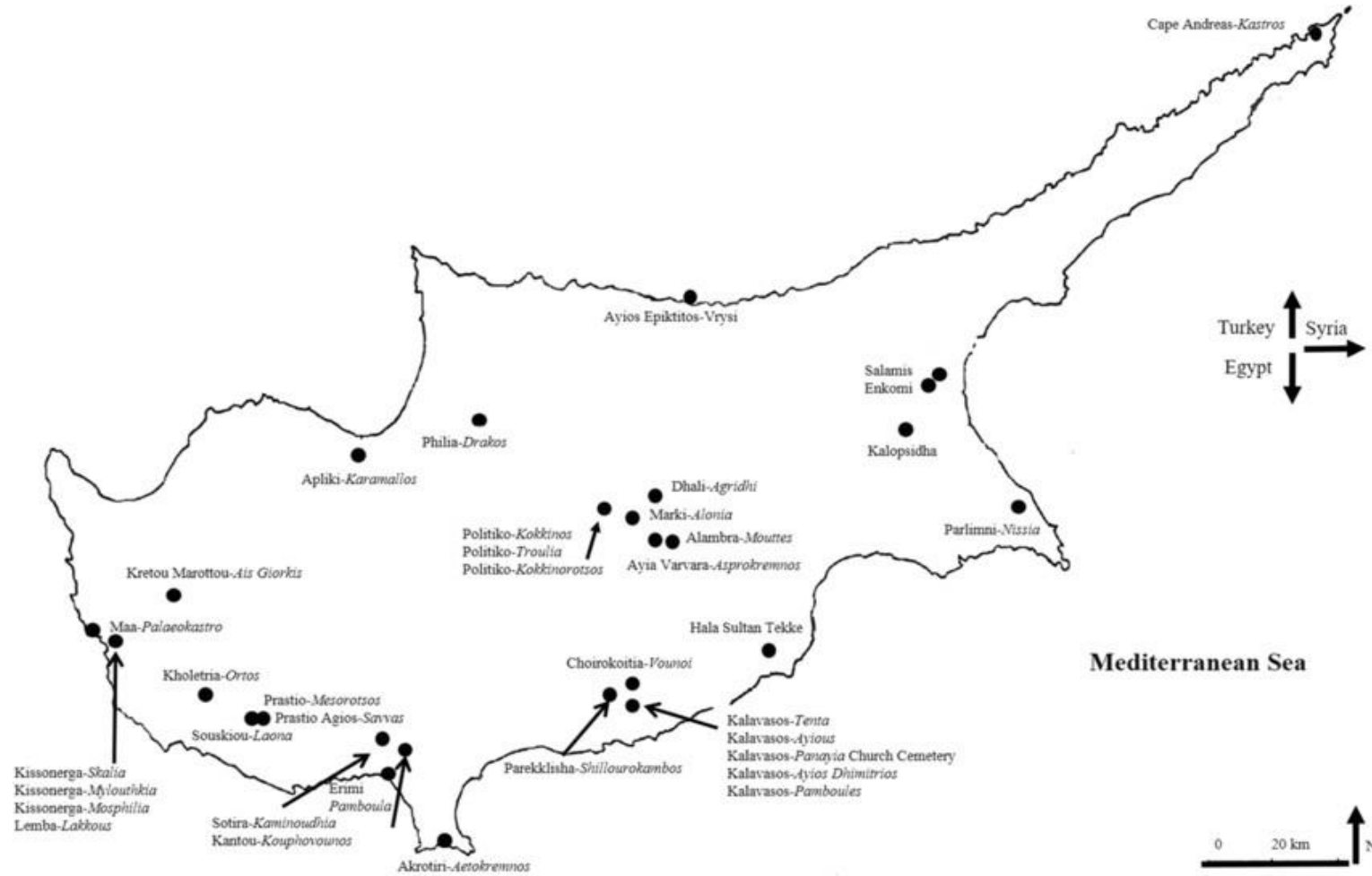
- Since 1974, the two ethnicities have settled separately in the North (Turkish-Cypriots, TC) and the South (Greek-Cypriots, GC) of the island, divided by a 112-mile-long line called the Green Line 1 which still marks Nicosia as the last divided capital in the world



The north-south checkpoint has been open since 2003



Archaeological sites



Pafos Archaeological Park (UNESCO)



- Its sites and monuments date from prehistoric times through the Middle Ages. Among the most significant remains so far discovered are four large and elaborate Roman villas:
- the House of Dionysos,
- the House of Aion,
- the House of Theseus
- the House of Orpheus, all with superb preserved mosaic floors

Some views of the archaeological site









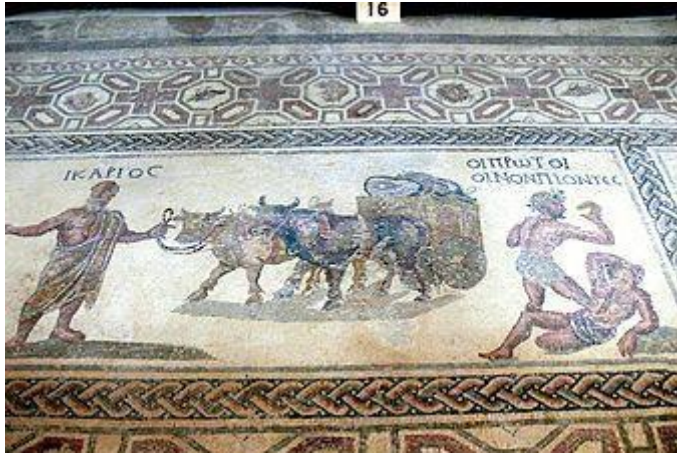
- In addition, excavations have uncovered an agora (open meeting place), asklipleion (medical centre), basilica, odeion, and Hellenistic-Roman theatre, and a necropolis known as the "Tombs of the Kings"

House of Dionysos

- This exceptionally rich villa occupies 2000 sq. m of which 556 are covered with mosaic floors decorated with mythological, vintage and hunting scenes. It is named after the god Dionysos who features on several of the mosaics.
- Its rooms are arranged around a central courtyard, or atrium, which functioned as the core of the house. It was built at the end of the 2nd century AD and was destroyed and abandoned after the earthquakes of the 4th century AD.



Mosaic designs



House of Aion -(3rd – 5th cent AD)

- Although only three rooms of this large villa have been excavated by the University of Warsaw, the mosaic floor from the House of Aion is considered one of the most exceptional works of ancient Roman art, It dates from around the mid-4th century AD and is named after the god.

House of Theseus to the right and house of Aion to the left



Entrance to house of aion



Triclinium Second quarter of the 4th century AD.







The House of Theseus -2nd - 6th cent. A.D.)

- The area has been excavated by the Polish Archaeological Mission of Warsaw University. It is a building of palatial character, whose construction began in the 2nd century A,D and underwent many modifications. It was inhabited until the early 7th century A.D. According to the excavators, the building was the official seat of the proconsul, the Roman governor of Cyprus.
- rooms are decorated with mosaic floors representing mythological scenes such as Theseus and the Minotaur



Theseus and the Minotaur -This is the mosaic that gives the house its name



Mosaic With Theseus



- The mosaic floor depicts in a medallion, the mythical duel between Theseus and the Minotaur in the Labyrinth of Crete. In the centre of the scene Theseus is depicted holding a club in his right hand, while with his left hand he grabs the horn of the Minotaur, who has fallen to his knees.

It's mind-blowing to think about how much of the ancient City of Paphos must still remain buried. This is all just one part of a very large house.



The first bath of Achilles - 5th Century AD



The House of Orpheus - 2nd to 3rd AD

- Similar to the House of Dionysus, it is a luxury building which belongs to the Hellenistic type of house. It is also decorated with important mosaic floors.



Tomb of the Kings



- The 'Tombs of the Kings' is the impressive necropolis that is located just outside the walls, to the north and east of Pafos town. It was built during the Hellenistic period (3rd century B.C.) to satisfy the needs of the newly founded Nea Paphos.
- Its name is not connected with the burial of kings, as the royal institution was abolished in 312 B.C., but rather with the impressive character of its burial monuments.
- The 'Tombs of the Kings' was the place where the higher administrative officers and distinguished Ptolemaic personalities as well as the members of their families were buried.
-

- The necropolis was continuously used as a burial area during the Hellenistic and Roman periods (3rd century B.C.-beginning of 4th century A.D.).
- There is sufficient evidence to support the fact that the first Christians also used the site for their burials, while at the same time the site constituted an endless quarry. Squatters established themselves in some of the tombs during the Medieval period and made alterations to the original architecture.



- The existence of the site was already known from the end of the 19th century by Cesnola, who severely looted the tombs. In 1915-16 the then curator of the Cyprus Museum, Markides excavated some shaft tombs, while the honorary curator of Paphos Museum Loizos Philippou started clearance work in a few others tombs in 1937.
- But it was in 1977 that systematic excavations were undertaken by the Department of Antiquities, which brought to light eight large tomb complexes.

- Most of the tombs are characterised by an underground, open aired, peristyled rectangular atrium completely carved into the natural rock. Columns or pillars of the Doric style supported the porticoes, which surrounded the atrium. The burial chambers and the loculi for single burials were dug into the portico walls.







