

Ancient Kourion



- On the site there are several monuments and buildings.
- Greco-Roman theatre,
- Nymphaeum,
- Public Baths,
- the Fountain House,
- the House of the Gladiators,
- the House of Achilles.
- Amathus gate cemetery



- Kourion itself was one of the most important of the ten city kingdoms of Cyprus during antiquity. Human inhabitation of the area is thought to date all the way back to the Neolithic Period, i.e. up to 5500 BCE. And the Kingdom of Kourion itself was probably established around 1000 BCE.

- Built around the River Kouris along the Episkopi Bay, the city was largely destroyed and the population decimated by a severe earthquake in the 4th Century CE. In recent years, archaeologists have discovered the remains of several people who were buried under the rubble following the quake.

Theatre

- the main focal point on the site is the restored theatre. This astounding Greco-Roman theatre was built in the 2nd century BC and was extended in the 2nd century AD to be used for gladiatorial games. It held around 3,500 spectators



the House of the Gladiators,

- The House of the Gladiators is a Roman house that belongs to the second half of the 3rd century AD
- From the mosaics, which are the decoration of the east and south wings of the house's courtyard, the most important are those in the east wing depicting a gladiator combat scene which is not common in Cyprus.



House of Achilles

- a public reception hall for imperial and provincial dignitaries. Its precise function remains unknown.
- Thetis bathing Achilles



Forum, nymphaeum and forum baths

- The forum, the centre of public life, consisted of a central pavement with colonnaded porticoes set along its east, north and western sides. The eastern portico measured 65 m in length and 4.5 m wide, with a colonnade facing the courtyard, and a wall forming frontage of shops to the west. The northern portico provided access to a monumental nymphaeum and a bath complex thermae constructed around the nymphaeum



Fountain House



Amathus gate cemetery at Kourion

- The tombs range from the Hellenistic to Late Roman period (3rd century BC to 7th century AD), and include a rich range of artefactual material and the very well preserved skeletal remains of at least 111 individuals.
- Closely associated with this material is a range of other interesting and important features, such as the remains of quarrying, a rich deposit of discarded material which might be from funerary feasting, and a lime kiln.

The Sanctuary of Aphrodite

- The Roman remains date back to the 12th Century BC



Choirokoitia Archaeological Site

- This archaeological site is one of the most important prehistorical sites in the eastern Mediterranean area, and work to uncover more of the site is still ongoing today. It is a Neolithic settlement which was occupied from the 7th to the 4th millennium BC. It's located around 6km from the southern coast of Cyprus in the District of Larnaka.
- the settlement consisted of circular houses built from mudbrick and stone.

- An interesting fact is that one of the rituals they practiced is burying the deceased under the floors of the houses of the living. It's believed they did this so that the dead would always remain close to their living relatives.



Kition archaeological site



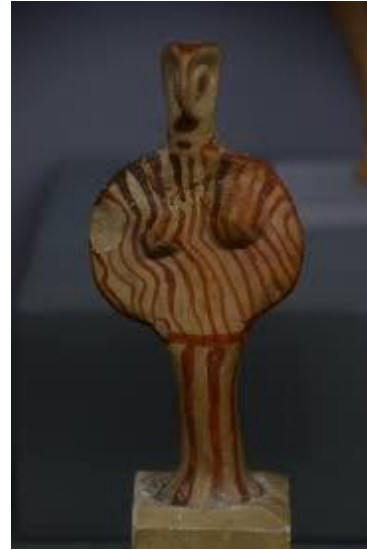
- Kition was an Ancient Greek city-kingdom on the southern coast of Cyprus. According to the text on the plaque closest to the excavation pit of the Kathari site, it was established in the 13th century BC by Greek settlers, after the Trojan war.



- The ruins of the city Kition are considered the first clear evidence of the arrival of the Mycenaean Achaeans in the thirteenth century BCE. The site was later inhabited by the Phoenicians, who built a temple to Astarte, the goddess of fertility, in the ninth century BCE.

Artefacts from Kition





Kolossi Castle

- The castle, which is built on the southern edge of the village of Kolossi, is located approximately 11 kilometres west of Limassol and is one of the most important medieval fortifications preserved in Cyprus.





- It was originally built in 1210 by the John Knights and was the seat of the highest military command of the island. In 1306 it came for a short time in the possession of the Templars, who supported the usurper of the throne of Cyprus, Amalrich of Tyre. After the abolition of the Templar Order in 1313, the Tower returned to the hands of the Johnites, only to be destroyed in 1425-1426 by the Mameluke raids of Egypt.

A sugar factory next to Kolossi castle

- To the east of the tower, are the remains of a sugar factory from sugar cane that was grown on large plantations in the area. The premises dating from the 14th century consist of three main and other ancillary spaces. The main building is the sugar factory which is a long narrow stone-built vaulted hall.



Northern occupied Cyprus



Mian Archaeological sites in Northern Cyprus

- Panagia Apsinthiotissa
- Salamis ruins in Famagusta
- Soli, Cyprus
- St. Hilarion Castle

Panagia Apsinthiotissa

- This is a Greek Orthodox monastery
- Panagia is the orthodox word for the Virgin Mary
- Apsinthiotissa is the name for a type of wormwood
- The main church of the monastery appears to have been built in the twelfth century and has a cross-in-square plan of the Byzantine type surmounted by a high dome.



- According to a local legend, the monastery was named after a wormwood bush that covered the mouth of the cave in which a monk had hidden an icon of the Virgin Mary in order to save it during the period of Byzantine Iconoclasm. Many years later, after the restoration of images, the inhabitants of the area saw a strange light shining from this point on the mountain. They found the icon and built a monastery immediately below in the name of the Virgin and the wormwood bush.

Salamis

- Salamis was an ancient Greek city-state on the east coast of Cyprus, at the mouth of the river Pedieos, 6 km north of modern Famagusta. According to tradition, the founder of Salamis was Teucer, son of Telamon, king of the Greek island of Salamis, who could not return home after the Trojan war because he had failed to avenge his brother Ajax.



- The earliest archaeological finds go back to the eleventh century BC (Late Bronze Age III). The copper ores of Cyprus made the island an essential node in the earliest trade networks.
- The town is mentioned in Assyrian inscriptions as one of the kingdoms of Iadnana (Cyprus). In 877 BC, an Assyrian army reached the Mediterranean shores for the first time. In 708 BC, the city-kings of Cyprus paid homage to Sargon II of Assyria



- Cyprus was under the control of the Assyrians at this time but the city-states of the island enjoyed a relative independence as long as they paid their tribute to the Assyrian king. This allowed the kings of the various cities to accumulate wealth and power. Certain burial customs observed in the "royal tombs" of Salamis relate directly to Homeric rites, such as the sacrifice of horses in honour of the dead and the offering of jars of olive oil.



Resistance to Persian rule

- In 450 BC, Salamis was the site of a simultaneous land and sea battle between Athens and the Persians.
- After Alexander the Great conquered the Persian Empire, Ptolemy I of Egypt ruled the island of Cyprus
- In 306 BC, Salamis was the site of a naval battle between the fleets of Demetrius I of Macedon and Ptolemy I of Egypt. Demetrius won the battle and captured the island.
- Although Salamis ceased to be the capital of Cyprus from the Hellenistic period onwards when it was replaced by Paphos, its wealth and importance did not diminish. The city was particularly favoured by the Roman emperors Trajan and Hadrian, who restored and established its public buildings.

In the Roman and Byzantine periods

- The "cultural centre" of Salamis during the Roman period was situated at the northernmost part of the city, where a gymnasium, theatre, amphitheatre, stadium and public baths have been revealed. There are baths, public latrines (for 44 users), various little bits of mosaic, a harbour wall, a Hellenistic and Roman agora and a temple of Zeus that had the right to grant asylum.



Christianity

- Paul the apostle and the Cypriot-born Barnabas made Salamis their first destination, landing there after heading out from Antioch of Syria. There they proclaimed Christ in the Jewish synagogues before proceeding through the rest of the island (Acts 13:1-5). Tradition says that Barnabas preached in Alexandria and Rome, and was stoned to death at Salamis in about 61 CE. He is considered the founder of the Church of Cyprus. His bones are believed to be located in the nearby monastery named after him.



- Several earthquakes led to the destruction of Salamis at the beginning of the 4th century. The town was rebuilt under the name of Constantia by Constantius II (337–361)
- Salamis was finally abandoned during the Arab invasions of the 7th century after destructions by Muawiyah I (reigned 661-680). The inhabitants moved to Famagusta.

Excavations

- Many of the excavations are now housed in the British Museum, London.
- Work started in salamis in 1952 but was abruptly halted in 1974 at the start of the invasion. The international embargo has prevented the continuation of the excavations



Salamis ruins in Famagusta, Cyprus



Soli

- It dates back to about the 6th century BC, and was one of the ten city-kingdoms into which Cyprus was divided at the time.
- What remains today is mainly from the Roman period, most notably the mosaic floor of the basilica with its wealth of birds, animals and geometric designs and a picture of a swan.





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St. Hilarion Castle – northern cyprus



Coinage from Kition



- it is actually named after a hermit monk who fled from persecution and lived in a cave! It also has a deep history, originally built as a watchtower to give warning of pirates that were approaching.
- Later in the 10th century, the Byzantines built a church and monastery here.
- This location provided the castle with command of the pass road from Kyrenia to Nicosia.

