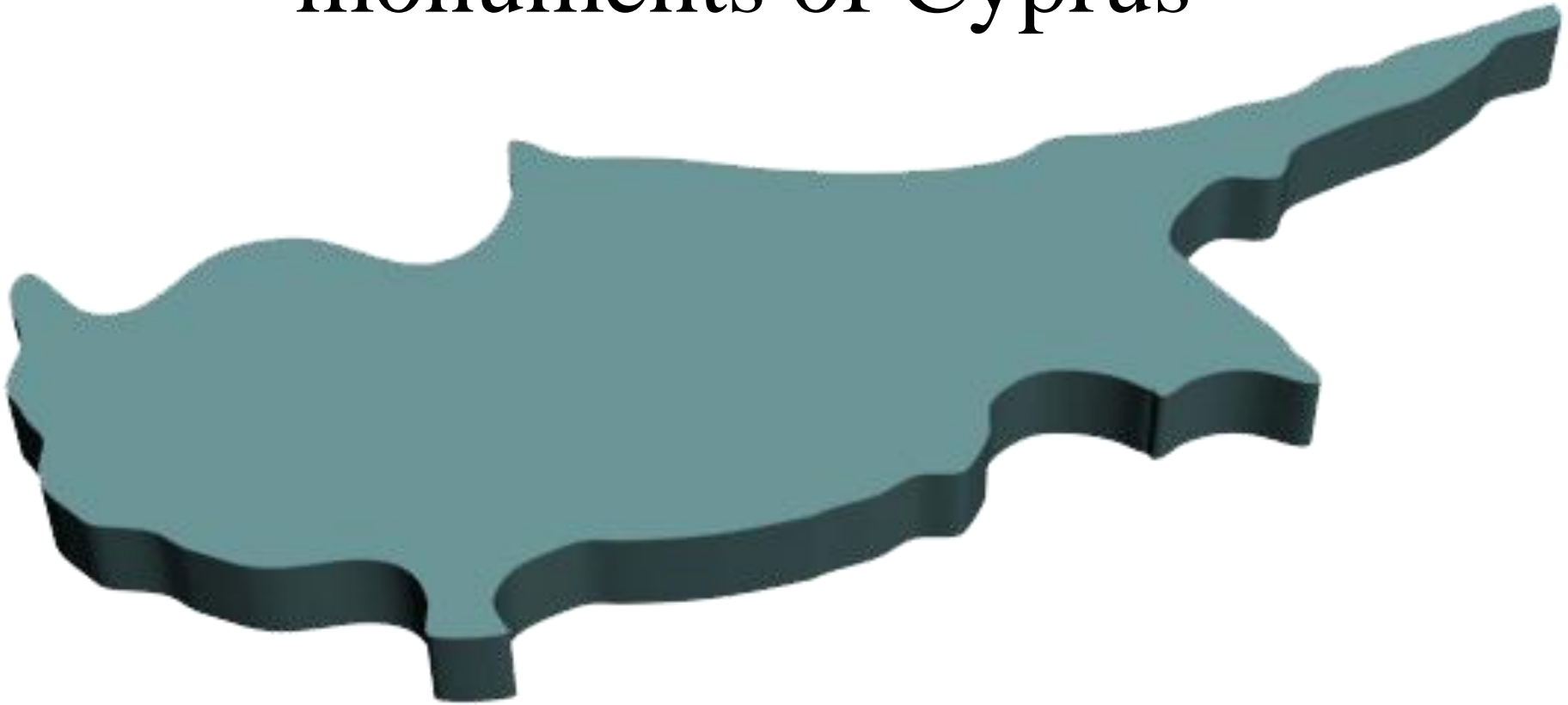


Historical and Archaeological monuments of Cyprus



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Amathounta



Amathounta

Situated near the vicinity of Agios Tychon, the ruins of one of the biggest ancient kingdoms of the island lay here: Amathus, which was also a royal city. It derived its name from Amathusa, the mother of King Kinyras from Paphos. According to folktale, the city of Amathus was home to one of the sons of Heracles, who incidentally, was worshipped there. According to another folktale, the attractive daughter of Minos, Ariadne, fled from the labyrinth in Crete with Theseus, and was later abandoned in Amathus. It is said that she died there while giving birth and was buried in a sacred tomb. Undisputed historical evidence shows that the area was populated at least 3,000 years ago.

Lemba Historical Housing Estate



Lemba Historical Housing Estate

Lemba is a village in Paphos. The village is one of the most ancient in Cyprus, and since 1976 has been the site of ongoing archaeological excavations by the School of Archaeology at the University of Edinburgh. Lemba is believed to have been first settled in the Chalcolithic Period (c. 3800–2500 BC), and a number of cruciform female figurines, carved in stone, from this period have been found. In 1982, the Lemba Experimental Village was established as an archaeological project to recreate a Chalcolithic village and use it to undertake a number of historic activities, including use of building materials, pyrotechnology, pottery firing and prehistoric cooking methods. With the cooperation of the Cyprus Department of Antiquities, as well as the mayor and villagers of Lemba, the project has developed into an important visitor attraction as well as being for research into many aspects of experimental archaeology.

Kourion Theatre



Kourion Theatre

Kourion is one of the most stunning archaeological sites on the island. It was a great city kingdom and today new treasures are still being discovered there. What is most prominent in this site is the Greco – Roman amphitheatre. Villas with extravagant mosaic floors and an early Christian Basilica are among the treasures that are found here. The splendid amphitheatre was built in the 2nd century B.C. and since its restoration, is used for theatre and music performances. The house of Eustolios also found here, consists of a complex of baths and rooms which contain exquisite mosaic floors from the 5th century A.D. It was once a private Roman villa prior to becoming a recreation centre during the Early Christian period. The Early Christian Basilica also dates back to the 5th century and was most likely the Cathedral of Kourion which includes a baptistery on the north face. Wonderful mosaic floors are also found in the House of the Gladiators and the House of Achilles. Dedicated to the water Nymphs is another Roman monument- The Nymphaeum.

Chirokitia Neolithic Settlement



Chirokitia Neolithic Settlement

Part of the UNESCO World Cultural Heritage List, this wonderful Neolithic settlement was discovered well preserved. The site depicts the Neolithic period in Cyprus, offering insight on the Neolithic culture in the area. This site contains 5 dwellings that have been reconstructed based on the Neolithic construction mould. In the reconstruction, the same methods of construction and materials were used together with the very objects found in the houses during the excavations for the furnishings. This was done to ensure a real and accurate impression of the village as it was then, all those years ago

Walls Of Nicosia



Walls Of Nicosia

The Venetian Walls are a series of defensive walls which surround the capital city of Nicosia in Cyprus. The first city walls were built in the Middle Ages, but they were completely rebuilt in the mid-16th century by the Republic of Venice. The walls are still largely intact, and are among the best preserved Renaissance fortifications in the Eastern Mediterranean. They are a major tourist attraction.

The city of Nicosia, along with Valletta in Malta, was considered to be a practical example of an ideal city of the Renaissance, and this was due to its fortifications as well as the urban life within the city.

The first fortification in Nicosia was a castle built in 1211, during the Lusignan period. A large tower called Margarita Tower was built by King Peter I in 1368. Peter II built the first fortifications surrounding the entire city, and also demolished the Margarita Tower.

Cyprus became part of the Republic of Venice in 1489. Although the Venetian governors of the city emphasized the need for the city to be fortified, initially nothing was done to improve the fortifications. This changed following the Great Siege of Malta in 1565, when fears of Ottoman expansion increased and many Christian states in the Mediterranean began to strengthen their fortifications.

Walls Of Nicosia

In 1567, the Venetians decided to fortify the city, and commissioned the Italian military engineers Giulio Savorgnano and Franscesco Barbaro to design the new fortifications. The medieval fortifications, which engineers had deemed inadequate to defend the city, were demolished to make way for the new walls. The Venetians also demolished several houses, churches and palaces within the city as well as buildings lying outside the new walls, both for the acquisition of building materials and for a clearer field of vision for the defence of the city.

At the same time, the Pedieos River was diverted outside the city to protect the residents from flooding and to fill the moat encircling the new walls.

Walls Of Nicosia



Walls Of Nicosia

The Fourth Ottoman–Venetian War broke out when the fortifications were still incomplete. Ottomans under Piali Pasha invaded Cyprus on 1 July 1570, and began the siege of Nicosia on 22 July. The city held out until 9 September, when the Ottomans breached the wall at Podocattaro Bastion. The Ottomans then killed the defenders and captured the remaining inhabitants.

After the end of the siege, Lala Mustafa Pasha left a garrison of 4000 soldiers and 1000 cavalry in the city. The city then experienced a steady decline. Although the Ottomans repaired the fortifications after the siege, by the early 17th century, they were "breached or decayed" and the city was practically defenceless.

The city eventually began to experience a revival in the mid-19th century. It was still confined within the walls when the British occupied Cyprus in 1878. An opening was made near Paphos Gate in 1879 to facilitate access to the surrounding area. Further openings were made within the walls during the 20th century.

Kition



Kition

Kition, also known by its Latin name Citium, was a city-kingdom on the southern coast of Cyprus (in present-day Larnaca). It was established in the 13th century BC.

It had an acropolis. The "mound gate" in the city wall, was located in the vicinity northwest of the Phaneromeni Tomb.

Salamina



Salamina

Salamis is 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, 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, and Cyprus was a source of the orientalizing cultural traits of mainland Greece at the end of the Greek Dark Ages, hypothesized by Walter Burkert in 1992. Children's burials in Canaanite jars indicate a Phoenician presence. A harbour and a cemetery from this period have been excavated. The town is mentioned in Assyrian inscriptions as one of the kingdoms of Iadnana (Cyprus). In 877 an Assyrian army reached the Mediterranean shores for the first time.

Salamina

In 708 the city-kings of Cyprus paid homage to Sargon II of Assyria (Burkert). The first coins were minted in the 6th century BC, following Persian prototypes. 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. Some scholars have interpreted this phenomenon as the result of influence of the Homeric Epics in Cyprus. Most of the grave goods come from the Levant or Egypt.

Salamina



Salamina

According to the foundation myth, the founder of Salamis is said to be Teucer, son of Telamon, who could not return home after the Trojan war because he had failed to avenge his brother Ajax. There is however some evidence that the area had been occupied long before the alleged arrival of Mycenaeans (at Enkomi) and the town of Salamis was developed as a replacement when Enkomi was isolated from the sea. There is otherwise little direct evidence to support the foundation myth.