

Cyprus –Political Impact on its Cultural Heritage

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Abstract: This article provides an overview of how the fate of cultural assets depends on political and social circumstances, in the course of the history of a country or region. In Cyprus, troubles for cultural heritage are evidenced not only by the history and the propagandistic means used by two ethnicities (Turks and Cypro-Greeks), but also by the influence of various foreign powers. Cultural heritage fell victim to robbery, looting and destruction. The article is based on two levels: The emphasis should first be on the political situation, the population and their historical heritage from antiquity to the present, then on the associated problem, which affects cultural heritage and tourism countries with it relying on. Very often, the controversy between theory and practice comes to the surface. Cultural assets have always been, and continue to be, victims of ethnic, religious and political conflicts, as well as economic and social poverty.

Keywords: Cyprus, ethnic conflicts, cultural heritage, excavation, protection, cultural cleansing
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INTRODUCTION

Antiquity and The Middle Ages had very few restrictions on military conduct. Cities were often razed to the ground or their treasures and symbolic valuables were dragged away for material and ideological reasons. The Romans – the civilization bearers of the “ancient” (Western) world - are well-known for examples of destruction (Corinth and Carthage) and looting (Jerusalem). Despite critical voices already emerging in antiquity (Polybios, Cicero), the true importance of cultural assets started from the Renaissance, but not least in order to serve as “the subject of robbery, reprisals and acts of humiliation” (Albericus Gentilis: *De iure belli* III.IV). A clear statement came ultimately from the Swiss international lawyer Emer de Vattel (1714-1767): “La destruction volontaire des monuments publics et temples, des tombeaux, des statues, des tableaux e.t.c. est donc condamnée absolument, même par le droit des gens volontaire, comme toujours inutile au but légitime de la guerre.” (Vattel § 169).¹

It was during the time of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic campaigns that historical objects were taken. Thus, scholars of international law increasingly dealt with the protection of cultural property which gradually gained a firm place in international military law. At the Congress of Vienna (1815), it was for the first time officially announced that works of art should not be stolen from their place of origin in times of war.² Though, agreements such as those of the Congress of Vienna of 1815 represent only ink on paper, as the situation on Cyprus evidences

Cyprus: Ethnological and cultural background – population’s inclusion and exclusion

The island had suffered setbacks in the protection of cultural sites since ancient times: The Persians destroyed the city of Kouklia near Paphos in the 4th century BCE. The nearby temple and its inventory had been used for the construction of a siege ramp (Feldbacher 2011, 35). Due to excavation and due to modest maintenance, some remains of both are preserved.

¹ “The wanton destruction of public buildings and temples, of tombs, statues, paintings, etc., is therefore absolutely to be condemned, even in voluntary international law, useless as ever in the face of the legitimate goal of war.” Translation by the author.

² More about this development from 1815-1954 in Lattmann 1974, 37-38; Savoy 2006, 206-207; Jenschke 2006, 362-363. A summary of “soft law”-agreements concerning cultural property protection and the difficulties to implement, can be found at: Selle-Zschunke 2006, 385. Among the legally binding contracts (“hard law”): Roca-Hachem 2006, 394-395 and footnote 3. On the definitions of artwork and cultural heritage: Schönberger 2009, 50; Ure 2009, 20-21.

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During the conflicts among Alexander's successors in Hellenistic times, to which the inhabitants of Cyprus are often assigned, cities were destroyed and the population relocated by force, too, such as NeaPaphos (referred to by Diodorus XIX 59.1 and 62.6, cited after Schollmeyer 2009, 57). With the rise of Christianity in the 5th century, the pagan temples were destroyed.³ Later, churches were threatened due to Arab raids during periods of their expansion. During the iconoclasm that emanated from the Byzantine Empire in the 8th and 9th centuries, many iconophiles fled to Cyprus, leading to an upsurge of Christian art.⁴ In Larnaca – the former Kition, renamed after the sarcophagi found (Greek "Larnax") – the Byzantine ruler Leo the Wise built the church of St. Lazarus, named after the first bishop of Cyprus.⁵ Its relics were brought to Constantinople, from where they were taken to Marseille as trophy by French crusaders after sacking the city in the year 1204.⁶ The church itself became a Benedictine monastery, after the Ottoman conquest a mosque, then again a place of worship for Latin and Orthodox Christians.

Generally, ethnic and religious conflicts have repeatedly occurred in Cyprus throughout history. It was precisely the seizure of the island by the so-called "Latin people" from the 12th to the 16th century⁷ (Richard II. Lionheart, Templar, Lusignan, Venetians⁸) that led to tensions between the Latin Catholic and Greek Orthodox Churches. The Ottomans brought relief to the local population (at least in the beginning), when they ended the Latin supremacy in 1573. Under the Ottoman rule (1571-1878), the island soon became an insignificant province, and the people were just as quickly at the mercy of the Turkish governor as well as the Greek clerics and tax collectors. This led to increased conversion to Islam.⁹ Yet the Ottomans brought more freedom and privileges to the Orthodox Church itself – more than it experienced even under Byzantine rule. The Ottomans (apart from the devastation in the course of the conquests) are originally responsible for the preservation of many places of worship, which were converted into mosques due to the Islamic attitude.¹⁰ Some of the best preserved churches stand in Famagusta on the Turkish northern side of the island, despite great destruction in the 16th century. The Gothic cathedral of St. Nicholas has been converted into a mosque, with a minaret on the side and with the name of the Turkish conqueror of the city, Lala Mustapha Pasha.¹¹

It must be emphasized, however, that in later times many building materials were installed in the Qais of Port Said, the fortifications of Alexandria and the walls of the Suez Canal.¹² Nevertheless, there was destruction during the Ottoman occupation, such as the Kykkos Monastery in 1821, when its monks participated in the Greek War of Liberation (Hein et al. 1997, 111). When "Turkism" became a state ideology at the beginning of the 20th century, following the European model (Gülbeayaz 2004, 24), and when the Hellenic people wanted to restore their old splendour, stronger tensions arose.

³ Some of the pagan rites saved themselves over to Christianity, such as the annual festival of Kataklysmos ("Festival of the Flood", fifty days after Easter), originally dedicated to the goddess Aphrodite who became reshaped to Mary (Maris Stella = "Star of the Sea"). Note.

⁴ Archbishop Konstantinos of Cyprus contributed much to the end of this dispute on the occasion of the 7th Ecumenical Council, convened by Patriarch Paul of Constantinople – a native Cypriot. Reden in 1974, 18.

⁵ Lazarus is traditionally equated with the man brought back to life by Christ (Gospel of John 11:1-45).

⁶ Today they are revered as relics in Autun (Burgundy). Hein et al. 1997, 32, 35 and 131-132.

⁷ These conquests went along with the Crusades: Renaud de Chatillon plundered the island, Richard II conquered Cyprus on his way to the Holy Land and sold it to the Templars. Guy de Lusignan, former king of Jerusalem, found his exile on Cyprus as king whose dynasty was to rule for four centuries. Maalouf 2010, 172 and 236.

⁸ Venice stole during the Crusades the well-known relic of Saint Mark from Egypt, who had Christianized Egypt according to tradition, and who is considered an evangelist (symbolized as lion). In 1968, on the occasion of the 1900 anniversary celebrations, parts of the ("recovered") relics were returned to the Coptic Egyptian Patriarch of Alexandria, which are now kept in Cairo. Note.

⁹ Many Christians, however, continued to carry out their duties and bore both a Christian and Muslim name – they were called Linobambakis (a word composition of linen and cotton, since they were considered neither). Gülbeayaz 2004, 31.

¹⁰ The Catholic monk Calepio witnessed the reopening of the Cathedral of St. Sophia. Gülbeayaz 2004, 21.

¹¹ The former church, however, did not suffer desecration in the course of the transformation. Reden 1974, 219. Moreover, worth to mention: A Veronese stole Bragadinos' – the heroic defender of Famagusta – relic on behalf of his family and smuggled them to Venice via the Venetian consul. They rest today in the church of SS. Giovanni e Paolo. Reden 1974, 261.

¹² Famagusta experienced in recent history its inglorious role as one of the post-World War II internment camps called Karaolos for Jewish exiles, intercepted by the British on their way to Palestine. The British tried to prevent too many immigrants to the British Mandate territory. Those events are also described in the famous novel "Exodus" by Leon Uris. Note by the author.

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When the Ottoman Empire weakened, Britain occupied Cyprus. For the Cypriots it became just another occupying power. The Greek Cypriots saw themselves as Greeks by language, culture and religion, rooted in Byzantium and therefore uniting both components, the “Old Hellenic” and “Eastern Roman” (Tzermias 1995, 35). The Turkish Cypriot side wanted to be united with Turkey. With both sides’ rising nationalism and the conflict that came along with it, Turkey began to support Northern Cyprus since 1948 under the guise of cultural work (Gülbeyaz 2004, 87 and 95). When the Greek influence increased, Turkey feared for security on its southern coast, and used Taksim in 1954 to prevent threats.¹³ The Cypriots of both sections wanted to gain their independence, which they were not granted until 1960, but were thus left to the ethnic-cultural problem. An identification of both sides in the drafted constitution was lacking after British supremacy.¹⁴ Archbishop and President Makarios saw the Turkish Cypriots as merely an “unimportant minority”.¹⁵ Even smaller ethnic and religious groups were completely ignored: Armenians and Maronites from Lebanon, and the “Latins” as a religious and non-ethnic group whose geographical reference represented Cyprus. Those groups identified themselves according to their origin as proper ethnicity, and not as part of Cyprus. Since these minorities were much smaller than the Turkish ones, they were granted far fewer rights in the Cypriot constitution (Weiß 2004, 22-23; Tzermias 1995, 244).¹⁶ Conflicts increased with upcoming independence. The Green Line, created in December 1963 by a British officer with a green pen as a Turkish Cypriot battle line on a map of Nicosia, became best known. It represented the official beginning of the division of the island.¹⁷ Due to the increasing tensions, the UN sent a peacekeeping force (UNFICYP: United Nations Peace-Keeping Force in Cyprus) in 1964 to prevent fighting between the two ethnic groups. The ethnic separation of residential areas included primary schools, religious and other public institutions that did not bring any rapprochement (Edlinger 2006, 52 and 91). Political goals such as Enosis led to the further isolation of the island Turks. The Turkish minority had been increasingly excluded from economic and social advances on the island.¹⁸ Subsequently, former Catholics who had embraced the Islamic religion during Ottoman rule were considered Turkish Cypriots, and had to stay in the north, but only spoke Greek.¹⁹ These conditions subsequently lead to a lack of care for cultural property.

The invasion of Cyprus - beginning on 20 July 1974 by Turkish troops - was preceded by a coup d'état of the National Guard against President (and Archbishop) Makarios, supported by the Greek military junta, and the seizure of power by the Greek Cypriot Resistance organization EOKA. Turkey officially intervened as a protective power of the Turkish minority. As early as 1974, a Committee of Turkish Cypriot Ownership was established by the Greek Cypriot government, which was subordinate to the Ministry of the Interior. Refugees should be allowed to return to their homes. At the same time, the abandoned shelters were supposed to serve Greek refugees from the north, but the numbers are very different – in the district around Paphos, for example, only a small percentage was reused (Brey – Heinritz 1988, 36 and 50-51). In fact, the government left them to fall into decay with the result of losing the cultural identity of this group (Hadjisavaas 2015, 129) (Fig. 1 and 2).

¹³Taksim: Turkish word for Dividing the island between the two ethnic groups. Note.

¹⁴ The Hellenization of the landscape was also achieved by the architectural movements of the early 20th century which were also preserved after the war. During those years, wealthy Greek Cypriots built their houses and the public buildings in Ancient Greek Orders to show the island’s Greek identity, since the Greek flag was forbidden by law (Leriou 2009, 13; Hunt 1982, 254; Şevketoğlu et al. 2015, 143).

¹⁵Makarios gave a speech in 1962 in his birthplace of AnoPanthaya: “The work of the EOKA heroes only ends when the small Turkish Cypriot community is gone. For it is a part of the Turkish race, which is the greatest enemy of the Hellenes.” Gülbeyaz 2004, 110-111.

¹⁶ About the definition of people and nation: Tzermias 1995, 76.

¹⁷ The Green Line was not opened until 23 April 2003, the failure of the bi-municipal negotiations based on the Annan Plan, a week after the signing of the EU Accession Treaty of the Republic of Cyprus. This opening paved the first step for both groups to revisit each other and discredited each other’s propaganda.

¹⁸ Statistics about the distribution: Brey – Heinritz 1988, 14-15 and 23.

¹⁹ Report by Denктаş, in: Gülbeyaz 2004, 95.

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Many mosques of the Turkish Cypriot villages share the same fate. However, we can note that mosques have been preserved due to other Muslim populations in the island, who were mostly immigrants from other countries, such as Syria (Kouros&Papadakis 2014, 8-9). The Turkish Cypriot population, on the other hand, suffered for the time being from the enclave policies of their own government and Turkey, with some of them still noticeable to this day.

Domestic situation during and after partition

Despite the vast amount of UNESCO ratifications, extensive looting took place in Southern and Northern Cyprus.²⁰ Greek Cypriots were trading antiquities but they “incentivized to place origins in Turkish Cypriot enclaves, because that would secure them licenses for their illicit antiquities” (Hardy 2014, 471). The handling of Cypriot cultural assets is to be examined in the course of recent history, and here a step back in time must be taken. Only subsequently the historical and ethnic conditions will lead to the current situation. The impact of these events on the fate of culture(s) in question is now to be examined:

Dealing with Cypriot culture before partition

Although Cyprus did not have as much influence on modern European culture as the Greek and Roman antiquity, in the mid-19th century scholars focussed on the island of Aphrodite. The early years were limited to collecting objects by officers and diplomats (Sir Robert Hamilton Lang, Georges Colonna Ceccaldi, Max Ohnefalsch-Richter, and Luigi Palma di Cesnola). Excavations were only financed for their procurement. Cesnola sold thousands of artifacts to private collectors and museums, which he acquired by looting. Despite major scandals over contextual fraud, he presided over New York’s Metropolitan Museum as a director.²¹ In general, excavations were often carried out in a highly dilettante manner. Contexts were destroyed, and finds were rarely acquired for a museum in Cyprus, but purely sold abroad for profit (Goring 1988, 18; Schollmeyer 2009, 12).

The reason had been the settled law under the Ottoman rule. During the 19th century, it basically allowed the antiquarians (and looters sometimes defined as archaeologists) to export the antiquities with the Ottoman authorities’ permission (Alphas & Pilides, 2008, 189). The Ottoman “règlement sur les antiquités” (1869) stated that everybody was allowed to carry out an excavation with one regulation: According to Ottoman law of 1874, all archaeological finds had to be divided between the excavators, the landowners and the government, each one-third. Under this law, many antiquarians bought the land where they were excavating to get two-thirds of the archaeological finds (Emerick 2014, 123; Knapp & Antoniadou 2002, 29). The same law was applicable during the first decade of the British annexation. In 1884, the British authorities changed the law and prohibited the export of the antiquities. However, this regulation was not fully enforced (Alphas & Pilides 2008, 189).

The Cyprus Museum in Nicosia and the Cyprus Exploration Fund were established to provide support to professional excavations. Nevertheless, there was still damage to cultural property due to unprofessional renovations. Churches suffered “embellishments” due to the understanding of the 19th century, having lost frescoes forever, for example in St. John Chrysostomos in Koutsoventis (Hein et al. 1997, 147). Due to stricter conditions for excavations, Cyprus was no longer attractive. The Swedish group under Einar Gjerstad placed the research in Cyprus since 1929 on a completely new basis, which aroused more international interest – not least because of the volumes “The Swedish Cyprus Expedition”, which were considered standard scientific works. This tradition remained perpetuated with excavations in Dromolaxia Vizatzia / Hala Sultan Tekke (named after the mosque, fig. 3) under Paul Aström and the “New Swedish Cyprus Expedition” initiated a few years ago under Peter M. Fischer.

²⁰ “Protocol for Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict” (Den Haag 1954), “European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage Council of Europe” (London 1969), “Convention on the Museums of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property” (Paris 1970) and “International Convention of the protection of the world cultural and natural heritage” (Paris 1972). Government of Cyprus 1997, 85. Overview about different cases offers an Online-article of the Dept. of Antiquities: <http://www.cyprusonfilm.com/?pageid=37> [2008-12-23].

²¹ Cesnola changed information about objects’ circumstances and location to boost the market price. Karageorghis 2000, 7.



In 1935, the Department of Antiquities of Cyprus was established, and a new Antiquities Act was introduced, regulating the now more upcoming excavations by foreign archaeologists. Antiquities were defined in Cyprus as “any object (movable or immovable) that is a work of architecture, sculpture, graphic art, painting, produced, sculpted, inscribed, painted, or made in Cyprus before 1850” (Antiquities Law of 1935; adapted in 1964 and 1973) (Prott – O’Keefe 1998, 60). For ecclesiastical or folk art of archaeological importance, its production must date before 1900. Despite regulation, there was increased looting during WWII due to catastrophic economic circumstances. Most of the goods thus “acquired” were brought to the UK by officers and diplomats. Once again, the lack of implementation is evident, especially in times of war or crisis. With the independence of Cyprus in 1960, interest in its own culture became stronger. New finds facilitated investment in the restoration of ancient ruins, such as in Salamis. Due to stronger Turkish enclave formations, however, the North eluded the Antiquities Act. Though, further looting happened already before the partition, supported by the purchase by Greek mediators and antiquities traders (Hadjisavvas 2001, 135).

Impact on cultural heritage

UNESCO demanded the protection of cultural heritage from both sides in 1974 with the outbreak of fighting. According to Hague Protocol (HAP) I-1²², any Contracting Party would be obliged to prevent the export of cultural goods from its area. If, however, objects are abducted, they must be taken into custody and returned to the authorities of the country from where they were “stolen”, after the cessation of hostilities (Lattmann 1974, 63). This was just ink on paper. Although (Southern) Cyprus signed the “Second Protocol of the Hague Convention 1954 for the Protection of Cultural Property in the event of an Armed Conflict” on 19 August 1999 and ratified it on 16 May 2001, violations continue.²³ With the Turkish invasion, the (partially targeted) erasure of the memory of Greek heritage in the north of the island began, as well as robbery and destruction of archaeological sites and Greek Orthodox churches. It should be stressed, however, that the legacy of the Turkish enclaves (especially mosques) had been affected the same way by the Greek side. “Cultural cleansing” is not uncommon in conflicts. One of the first implementations after the Turkish landing in Cyprus was the transformation of the church Panagia Glykotiassa in Kyrenia (Girne) into a mosque, despite two existing Muslim prayer houses for the troops already existing. Such an act was probably to be understood as a symbolic victory over the Christian Greeks. Other churches in the north were converted into stables, cinemas, barracks or hospitals, or were simply abandoned to decay, resulting not only in cultural but also in spiritual loss (Figure 4 and 5).

²² Ratified in 1954, the definitions of culture were set – the archaeological sites, for example, were only included at the request of Israel, based on the grounds that archaeological sites are for many peoples the only way to shed light on their past. (UNESCO Doc. CBC/DR/1, and for the justification UNESCO Doc. CBC/4 p.7). On the situation in Israel, which is also difficult for archaeology: Feldbacher 2010.

²³ In unstable times, an implementation to protect cultural heritage is rarely observed, mainly because it often hits the opposing side. Destruction has occurred around the globe in the recent past (among them WW II, Gulf War, ex-Yugoslavia, southern Lebanon, Afghanistan, Iraq) in: Pesendorfer – Speckner 2006, 81-85.



And though, in

Famagusta on the Turkish northern side of the island, despite great destruction in the 16th century, there are some of the best preserved churches, such as the Nestorian one from 1359, which had been demoted to a stable for centuries and acquired, restored and dedicated to St. George some decades ago by Orthodox Christians. In addition to the misappropriation of religious sites, renaming places erased their former meaning from the map and thus from the memories (Jansen 1986). The aforementioned Kyrenia was named after a king who landed at the Cypriot coast after the Trojan War. With the occupation by the Turks, the city became Girne, with the original word still recognizable. It must be emphasized, however, that name adaptations can also change by their own linguistic idiosyncrasies and develop in a “natural” way.²⁴

Mosaics, frescoes and icons as well as church inventory were stolen from other churches.²⁵ Many other churches and monasteries were not to be entered until a few years ago, for example because they were in military restricted territory, for example at St. Panteleimon (Myrtou), Acheiropoeitos (Lamboussa)²⁶ and St. Spyridon (Tremetousia). Nowadays remains of the military are left (Fig. 6).



Buildings around the church of Tremetousia were originally used as a center for the restoration of books and icons.²⁷ These workshops were closed from 1974 on, and apparently many manuscripts were lost (Hein et al. 1997, 154). The frescoes of Christos Antiphonitis in Kalogrea suffered severe damage by chisels.²⁸

Neither Turkey nor Greece had ratified the 4th Protocol to the European Convention on Human Rights, which prohibits the population’s expulsion and relocation (such as religious minorities) (Tzermias 1995, 469). In addition to the human tragedy, it was precisely here that the need to record all goods in databases was demonstrated: In 1973, the Department of Antiquities of Cyprus

²⁴ At the shores of this city, an ancient Greek ship wreck had been found. Constantinou et al. 2012, 185; Santos 2014; Stathopoulou 2015, 295-300.

²⁵ According to estimates, 16,000 icons and mosaics were stolen from about 500 churches. Ionnides 1991, 178.

²⁶ The German traveler Petermann emphasized as early as 1851 that 90 years before the Turks, thieves of Karamania had looted the monastery of Lamboussa and burned it together with the library. Hein et al. 1997, 144-145.

²⁷ It should be borne in mind, however, that many important places have now been reopened to tourism, but also (in the case of churches) to believers. Note by the author after interviews.

²⁸ Comparisons between figures from the years before 1974 and those from 1995 in: Hein et al. 1997, 149-153.

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amended the Antiquities Act and allowed private collections to declare their property of archaeological objects within a six-month period. More than 1,250 collections were subsequently recorded in the government database (Hadjisavvas 2001, 135). Looting continued to the present – a worldwide phenomenon that cannot be attributed to foreign occupations alone. Not only the objects often get damaged, but above all the context and consequently some of the historical background are lost, since there is no documentation. Subsequently, people lose part of their cultural heritage and identity. Finally, international interested parties were guilty of complicity.²⁹

In addition, maintenance is often not implemented, which subsequently leads to decay. The author observed that situation among others, in the necropolis of Karaman / Karmı at the Beşparmak Mountains, in which a relief statue is exposed to wind, weather, and tourists and losing accordingly more and more its shape (fig. 7).



That happens not only for lack of financial support, but also when places of worship are located on private land. The Hala Sultan Tekke mosque, the fourth most important site of Muslim faith after Mecca, Medina, and Jerusalem, has been difficult for Turkish worshippers to approach since the island's separation.³⁰

The associated plots were awarded by the authorities to the Greek Cypriot farmers and parts of the area have since been exempted for Swedish excavation since 2010 as mentioned above. The Antiquity Authority's requirement to put up a fence to protect the excavation area did not prevent third parties from partially removing it. The findings uncovered did not suffer any damage.

Nevertheless, the situation in the south is sometimes not better than in the much-cited north, where the Turkish director of the authorities was forced to admit that the situation was difficult: 'For the protection of the archaeological site of Salamis a fence has been placed. Recently, we ascertained that unknown persons have stolen the fence' (Anonymous 1982, cited in ROCPIO 1997, 35. Hardy 2011).

CONCLUSION–

Hope for the future

Cultural assets have always been, and continue to be, victims of ethnic, religious and political conflicts, as well as economic and social emergencies, whether as a result of targeted destruction or in the form of illegal commercial objects. UNESCO is trying to counteract this, including in Cyprus. Some of these conflicts cannot be resolved, and in some cases no further consideration is

²⁹ On eligibility bases and seizure standards in the US: National Stolen Property Act (NSPA), Cultural Property Implementation Act (CPIA) und Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA): Schöneberger 2009, 76-80; Ricciardi 2007.

³⁰ Meanwhile, there was a meeting of the Orthodox Archbishop Chrysostomos II and Ahmed Yonluer, religious head of the Turkish Cypriots, discussing about restorative cooperation: Restoration projects should be initiated by the north, as a Hodja (Muslim religious leader) is responsible for the mosque of Hala Sultan Tekke. Ricciardi 2007.

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given to them. Archaeology is more active than ever. In addition, the fight against the loss of cultural property of any kind should generally be strengthened – the Coordination Centre for Cultural Property Losses, which was established in 1994, is to be mentioned here (Franz – Hartmann 2006, 401).

In addition to the protection of cultural assets, which concerns the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot sides, it should bring benefits for both their economy. Certain archaeological sites such as Salamis and Enkomi became more available³¹, and tourist numbers caused to soar upwards.³² The tourism industry continues struggling with the usual problems of overcapacity, declining competitiveness, pronounced seasonality and a sharp decline in tourism demand. This unfortunate state of affairs is compounded by general unchecked settlement policies and urban sprawl along the coast by real estate companies for foreigners (with declining demand) and inadequate spatial planning policies. Further troublesome for heritage protection is the circumstance that the former director of the Department of Antiquities, S. Hadjisavvas, has been trying to set up a joint project for the preservation of the site of Enkomi, but his efforts have been unsuccessful. The Turkish Cypriot Department of Antiquities turned down his proposal because the Enkomi archaeological site is under the management of the University of Ankara (Hadjisavvas 2015, 135).

Economic policy shows to be incorrect in other matters as well: The Island of Yeronisos, northwest of Paphos, is not only of cultural value, but also serves as a nesting site for rare birds. Still, discussions had apparently arisen to build a hotel on it once the excavations, which have been conducted by JB Connelly of New York University since 1990, have been completed. Now, on Yeronisos, not only the excavations of the archaeological remains are important, but above all their preservation as well as the ecological exploration of the island, in order to prevent loss of that heritage. Finally, a research station and an educational center are planned without jeopardizing the unique situation on Yeronisos.³³

Both of the island's political sides have to overcome confrontations, find compromises, and forge networks that shed light on what was lost to theft or destruction over the course of the conflict. Corresponding databases would be helpful in this, not only for the acquisition of information, but for further protection. In any case, cooperation between the two peoples, who may belong to one nation in the future, should be more fruitful than a mutual recrimination, since a not fully resolved conflict affects culture and public life negatively. The Cyprus problem resembles a proxy war between Turkey and Greece. The situation is not simplified and is not off the table simply because the international community does not recognize Northern Cyprus. After all, when one considers the proclamation of Denktaş on November 15th 1983 of the “Turkish Republic of Cyprus” (TRNC), it reflects precisely the Middle East conflict with the Palestinian question, remaining unresolved: “We have not fallen away from the Republic of Cyprus, We've been kicked out of it, and we've had to pull the roof of statehood over our heads. (...) We discover that the world only respects societies that call themselves states.” (Tatlı 1986, 185-186). States or cultural heritage, a society is always defined by some specific issues, and the Turkish population is seen as an occupying one. Articles referring to the heritage of Cyprus mostly refer to looting as an activity that takes place in the North (Şevketoğlu et al. 2015; Knapp & Antoniadou 2002). However, it also occurs in Southern Cyprus (Hardy 2014, 471), and one should merely pretend that the South part of Cyprus is the superior one when it comes to heritage management (Şevketoğlu et al. 2015, 143).

Many Greek Cypriots see themselves as Greek citizens, even or mainly during the occupations of the island throughout history, and also as part of the European continent.³⁴ Accordingly, this identity has been promoted by the European Union. Nevertheless, it

³¹ Close to them, the monastery of St. Barnabas is nowadays used as a museum. Hein et al. 1997, 155-156 only describe how much has been destroyed. It should be borne in mind, however, that many important places have now been reopened to tourism, but also (in the case of churches) to believers. Note by the author after interviews.

³² According to Brey – Heinritz 1988, 33-34 in the now Turkish north, in addition to 56% of mineral production, 50% of industry and crafts, 65% of hotel beds were lost. But travelling to the northern side, a visitor observes that in Famagusta, for example, a large part of the old town serves as a port camp and most of the hotel complexes that began to be built in the 70s remained unfinished. Nevertheless – against generally held reports – the economy seems to be flourishing and society seems to be very open and liberal, at least not worse than the economic situation in the south as the financial crisis of 2012/2013 proved in spite or due to European Union's involvement. Note and opinion by the author.

³³ Mrs. Connelly stressed that research on the ground alone must be protected, not without pointing out that this project, too, is struggling with annual funding – a situation already becoming commonplace in the field of archaeology. A face-to-face interview with Mrs. Connelly took place on 30 May 2011. To the project's homepage:

<http://www.nyu.edu/projects/yeronisos/home2.html>.

³⁴ This Hellenistic attitude arose at the latest when the “Panhellenic world” (so at least the representation) began its liberation struggle against the Persian Empire. The Western reception keeps emphasizing it when it comes to the struggle of Greek

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is precisely thanks to the accession of Cyprus to the EU that borders are still present, though more open. It must be stressed that many norms and conventions of the *acquiscommunitaire* were not implemented by Cyprus. It will become apparent how far the resolution of the Strasbourg Parliament, a systematic cataloguing of religious monuments in Northern Cyprus and a list of the damage and looting caused by the war will be approved by the European Union. Restoration and protection of the cultural sites are in progress, in which representatives of all religious groups should participate (Ricciardi 2007). Another important step is that since the opening, Turkish Cypriots have been attending language courses in Greek, and likewise, Turkish is offered as an elective subject in schools (Gülbeyaz 2004, 195). Language is after all, another cultural asset that can quickly dwindle. The question is if the island – as in its older history – can become a melting pot and serve as crossroads between East and West.

What experts can do after is public engagement with cultural heritage. A project that aims to resolve societal issues leads to what the activist archaeologists call engagement (Atalay 2014, 48), to solve some political and social problems through archaeology. Colonization ideas and nationalistic ideologies which support inequalities in culture heritage, e.g. the idea of the superb Greeks or Ottomans who brought civilization are ideologies that have to be questioned and rejected. It is also a new way to create new areas of interest in archaeology as a field of study since scholars from other disciplines would most likely want to get involved after they acknowledge and understand the past, the current situation of cultural heritage as well as its significance. The public has to get more aware through qualitative research, thus questionnaires, rapid assessment procedures, surveys, evaluations, and interviews should be involved. This type of investigation will also help experts to acquire an objective image about the people's opinion, in other words, to "understand present-day's people" (Stottman 2014, 192), giving them a better perception of their heritage.

Fortunately, however, as long as humanity exists, traditions are kept, sometimes even unconsciously. Consider folk customs, including Christian with origins in ancient pagan rites, which are therefore far older than the conflict that continues to exist for the time being. Thus, since archaeology, often politically abused, should also serve to create a cultural identity that all inhabitants of Cyprus will recognize as a common heritage. In addition, political education can overcome indifference and disinterest if it creates a connection between communities and individual personal concerns, but first, the boundary of mutual mistrust and hatred must be broken. Despite all the adversity, art and culture have always been crucial to raising interpersonal relationships and have contributed to improving understanding between nations. One can only hope that (so far still) divided Cyprus, as part of the EU, will find its common historical roots.

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The author declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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democracy against oriental despotism, and it is precisely this conflict often highlighted in the Cyprus conflict. Feldbacher 2011, 32-33.

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