



National museums in Cyprus: A Story of Heritage and Conflict

Alexandra Bounia & Theopisti Stylianou-Lambert

Summary

Cyprus, as a former colony with a turbulent history, falls under the category of the “new emerging nation-states” (Aronsson 2011: 47). Museums are employed to construct, reinforce and project specific national narratives. Run exclusively by various ministries and the vertical bureaucratic system of decision-making that entails, these museums project a cultural policy that is unavoidably influenced by political situations. Far from being representative of universal values, the museums on both parts of this divided country focus on their territorial identities and claims. The construction of direct, strong narratives amidst political and cultural conflicts often implies silencing minority voices or voices of opposition to the prevalent narrative.

Archaeology, the discipline that brings a nation closer to its distant roots, is used to support claims on the land. The emphasis that the Greek Cypriot government and other bodies place on archaeology (majority of the museums in South Cyprus) is justified within the discourse of Hellenism and its twin pillars: antiquity and Christianity. On the other hand, the Turkish Cypriot administration places more emphasis on the historical aspect rather than the archaeological one. Its main museums focus on aspects of the Ottoman past of the island – claiming, in this sense, their share of it.

The establishment of museums in Cyprus seems to fall into three main phases: the first one extends from the last quarter of the nineteenth century until 1955; the second refers to the period between 1955 and 1974 and the third to the period after 1974. Each of these phases has its own character, which is defined by the historical events of the period, but also by the cultural preoccupations and influences Cyprus receives during this time, while it retains in the case of the two subsequent phases certain characteristics of the previous periods.

The first phase is characterized by colonial influences along with a strong wish to claim ownership of the local cultural heritage by local agents. The beginning of the interest in cultural heritage has its roots into the colonial appreciation of the Hellenic past of the island. This phase ends with the struggle against British rule starting in 1955. Due to the dominance of archaeology during this phase, the *Cyprus Museum* was chosen as a case study.

The second phase is characterised by the need to commemorate the struggles and suffering of both Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities. This phase starts with the struggle against British rule (1955-59) and ends with the Turkish invasion in 1974. One Greek Cypriot (the *Struggle Museum*) and one Turkish Cypriot museum (the *Canbulat Museum*) are used as case studies for this period.

Finally, the third phase is characterised by the need to preserve and promote a growing sense of national identity. At the same time, Cyprus was looking towards the west for a European future and eventually signed the accession to the EU in 2003. The *State Gallery of Contemporary Art* will help us demonstrate the conflicts between the old and the new.

Summary table, Cyprus

| Name | Inaugurated | Initiated | Actors | Ownership | Type | Values | Temporal reach | Style Location |
|---|-------------|-----------------------|--|--|-------------|--|---------------------------------------|---|
| Cyprus Museum | 1909 | 1882 | British Archaeologists, Greek Cypriot intellectual elite | State, Department of Archaeology | Archaeology | Cyprus Archaeology | Neolithic period to Roman period. | Purpose-built, Neo-Classical building(1909), within city walls, Nicosia, Republic of Cyprus. |
| Struggle Museum | 1962 | 1961 | State, Church, EOKA fighters | Greek-Cypriot Community, Cultural Services | History | Presentation of EOKA struggle (1955-59), commemorative. | 1955-1959 | The Old Archbishopric Palace, new modern wing (2001), Nicosia, Republic of Cyprus. |
| Canbulat Tomb and Museum | 1968 | Unknown (likely 1968) | State | Turkish-Cypriot Community | History | The story of <i>Canbulat</i> , Ottoman conquest of Cyprus. | 16 th -19 th c. | Housed in a bastion of the city's castle, Kyrenia (TRNC). |
| State Gallery of Contemporary Cypriot Art | 1990 | 1962 | State, artists | State, Cultural Services | Art | 20 th c. Cypriot Art | 20 th c. | Existing Neo-Classical mansion (1925), Outside the old city walls, in modern urban area of Nicosia, Republic of Cyprus. |

Note: For a complete list of national Greek Cypriot museums see Appendix 1. For a complete list of “national” Turkish Cypriot museums see Appendix 2.

Introduction

This paper is going to focus on the history of the national museums of Cyprus and in particular on those that have been more active in the creation and negotiation of national values on the island. For the purposes of our discussion, we will use as a starting point, the definition of the national museum as a collection and display “claiming, negotiating, articulating and representing dominant national values, myths and realities” (Aronsson 2011). Museums will be explored as “historic and contemporary processes of institutionalised negotiations of what values will constitute the basis for national communities and for dynamic state formation” (Aronsson 2011). We are going to argue that the history of Cypriot museums can be divided into three main phases from their creation until today and we are going to illustrate these through specific case studies. Each of these phases is related to major restructuring moments in the island’s history and therefore expresses different cultural, social and political needs and understandings. Having said that, these needs and understandings do not cease to exist with the end of each phase. On the contrary, the history of Cypriot museums can be best understood as a layer of different expressions. Even though the division of the history of Cypriot museums into three main phases is an artificial one, it helps us explore how the development of museums is related to issues of identity formation and nation definition in the periods under question.

It is necessary to mention right from the start that the authors of this report have great respect for the actors involved in the creation of all these museums and our approach aims to be as objective and academic as possible, taking into account our own personal affiliation to one of the ethnic communities of the island (the Greek one).

National museums and cultural policy in Cyprus

As a result of independence from British rule, the Republic of Cyprus was established on August 15th, 1960. Less than fifteen years later, the island was divided into two parts since a Turkish military operation (Peace Movement, according to Turkish historians) had, as a result, for the island to be divided until today. 38% of Cyprus was, in 1983, declared an independent state under the name “Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus” (TRNC), which the international community has still not recognised. Negotiations regarding the re-unification of the island have been continuous but unsuccessful ever since. In May 2004, the Republic of Cyprus was admitted to the European Union despite the continued division. This has been the latest act in a long and rather adventurous history for this small island, which has been inhabited since the Neolithic period, almost 11,000 years ago.

This section will provide an overview of the cultural policy of the Republic of Cyprus as well as an overview of its museums. In addition, an overview of the museums in the TRNC will be provided. Even though TRNC does not have the status of a nation-state and therefore a discussion of national museums presents difficulties in strictly speaking technical terms, there are still institutions in this part of the island, which first receive state funding for their operation and second, are considered institutionalised representations of identity. Therefore, they fall within the scope of our research.

The cultural policy of the Republic of Cyprus

According to the Antiquities Law of December 31st 1935 and its Amendments no. 48 of 1964, no. 32 of 1972, no. 92(1) of 1995 and no. 4(1) of 1996, the Republic of Cyprus designates as cultural property all antiquities declared as follows:

Antiquity means any object, whether movable or part of immovable property which is a work of architecture, sculpture, graphic art, painting and any art whatsoever, produced, sculptured, inscribed or painted by human agency, or generally made in Cyprus earlier than the year AD 1850 in any manner and from any material or excavated or drawn from the sea within the territorial waters of Cyprus and includes any such object or part thereof which has a later date been added, reconstructed, readjusted or restored: provided that in the case of such works of ecclesiastical or folk art of the highest archaeological, artistic or historic importance, the year AD 1940, shall be taken into account in place of the year AD 1850. (DGCULT 2004: 34)

The same Law introduced the creation of the Department of Antiquities, which, since the independence of Cyprus in 1960, is under the Ministry of Communications and Works. The Department of Antiquities is responsible for ancient, Byzantine, Medieval and Ottoman culture (DGCULT 2004: 9). Its aim is to protect cultural property as described above, but also “to use ancient monuments and archaeological museums for educational purposes and cultural activities as well as for the stimulation of cultural tourism” (Department of Antiquities, n.d.). More specifically, the Department is responsible for “the management of the archaeological heritage of Cyprus” and in particular for the following:

... systematic and rescue excavations, as well as archaeological surveys; establishment, management and operation of archaeological museums; conservation, restoration, protection and promotion of Ancient Monuments [...], archaeological sites and monuments of architectural heritage.

As far as the museums are concerned, the Department of Antiquities is responsible for the management and running of the Archaeological Museum (Cyprus Museum) in Nicosia and for the district and local Museums. These are national, in the sense of offering protection to the national cultural heritage as described in the relevant legislation above, but also in the sense of being financed by the State. In addition, the Department, during the last few years, contributes to the establishment of private/thematic museums, consulting individuals or other interested bodies and offering its personnel’s expertise (Hadjikosti, 2010).

Other government bodies are also involved in cultural matters in Cyprus. The Ministry of Education, established in 1965, was also given responsibility for culture (later renamed “Ministry of Education and Culture”), whereas the Ministry of Interior is responsible for the protection of architectural heritage (through the Department for Town Planning and Housing) (DGCULT 2004: 9). The efforts of the Cultural Services of the Ministry of Education and Culture are directed towards cultural development and the encouragement of contemporary Cypriot culture: “the creation of cultural awareness and sensibility, promotion of contemporary cultural values, boosting development of contemporary cultural life and assistance to contemporary Cypriot cultural creators.” (DGCULT 2004: 12). In this respect, the Department is also responsible for

purchasing works of art for the State collection and, created the State Gallery of Contemporary Cypriot Art (DGCULT 2004: 22) to house it in 1990; simultaneously, Cultural Services finance the Struggle Museum (DGCULT 2004: 11), a historical museum created in 1960.

In 2004, the year the accession of Cyprus to the European Union took place, the government of the Republic participated in the National Cultural Policy Review programme of the Council of Europe in an attempt to investigate and debate over the aims, models and outcomes of their policies. The two reports (Ministry Report and Experts Report) published in 2004 (see DGCULT 2004 and Gordon 2004 respectively) were followed in 2010 by a new one, approving the creation of a unified authority for culture, in order to address cultural policy issues at a national level in a more coherent way (DGCULT 2010). The establishment of this authority is currently in progress in Cyprus and will unify the management of museums financed by the State irrespective of their collections and themes (Paraskevas 2010). This unified authority for culture will potentially make up a General Secretariat for Culture, which will include a Department of Contemporary Culture and the Department of Antiquities.

The initiative of searching for and complying with the guidelines provided by a European authority illustrates both the interest of the Republic into taking full advantage of the European expertise from the moment it entered the Union – Cyprus has been looking westwards since the nineteenth century, as we will discuss further on – but also into establishing its presence within the European cultural landscape – considered a semantic differential with Turkey and TRNC, and therefore an asset in the political arena as well.

In the field of local government, cultural departments and services have been created in most municipalities of Cyprus, since the 1990s. They develop cultural activities by organising festivals and other events, but also by creating and running museums and other cultural institutions (DGCULT 2004: 9). Cultural activities are also developed by cultural societies, as for example, the Association of Cypriot Studies, which runs the Museum of Folk Art, and the cultural arms of banks, such as the Cultural Foundation of the Bank of Cyprus, the Cultural Centre of the Laiki Bank and the Cultural Department of the Hellenic Bank. Very active in cultural and museum matters are also other foundations, such as the A.G. Leventis Foundation, the Pierides Foundation, the ARTos Foundation, the Pharos Foundation, the Lanitis Foundation, and so on (DGCULT 2004: 9).

Some of those societies and foundations go a long way back in historical terms such as the Association of Cypriot Studies, which was firstly created in 1937, whereas some of the private foundations reflect individual interest in cultural heritage matters that also go a long way back, as for instance, the Pierides Foundation which reflects the family's interest in the cultural affairs of the island since the end of the nineteenth century (Koudounaris 1993; Rystendt 1994).

National Museums of the Republic of Cyprus (Greek Cypriot Museums): an overview

The Department of Antiquities of the Ministry of Communications and Works of the Republic of Cyprus today runs 15 national museums. Ten of those are archaeological, one historical and four ethnographic. Furthermore, the Cultural Services of the Ministry of Education and Culture runs two museums: the Struggle Museum and the State Gallery of Contemporary Cypriot Art. Appendix 1 presents all the museums in the Republic of Cyprus that are fully funded by the government in table format.

Nevertheless, the exact number of museums currently on the island is not yet known. An unofficial and incomplete survey conducted in 1998 by the Leventis Municipal Museum of Nicosia offered the result that there were 51 institutions using the name ‘museum’ in their title in the Republic. Twenty were established and run by local authorities, twenty-five by foundations and other non-profit organisations and six by individuals (DGCULT 2004: 42). Other research undertaken in order for a guidebook to Cypriot museums to be written in 2004, mentions a total of thirty-seven museums, including state-run and non-state ones. Out of those, twelve were archaeological, six Byzantine, four historical, seven ethnographic, five museums of natural history, three art galleries and finally there was the postal museum (Michalopoulos 2004). Despite the differences in numbers between these two research studies, there are two things that are obvious: first, the pre-eminence of archaeological museums (18 in a total of 37), and second that the establishment of non-state museums in Cyprus is thriving (if the state museums are 15, then all the others are non-state, a fact which makes them the majority in both studies). This is a reflection of a very specific emphasis on archaeology on the one hand, and on an interest in almost every community of the island to create its own museum, either in an attempt to safeguard and promote cultural heritage, or in order to promote cultural tourism and therefore to have a developmental impact on the relevant community, on the other hand (for a similar tendency in Greece, see Bounia 2010). As far as the latter issue is concerned, apprehension for the creation of a “wholly unplanned museums pollution” was expressed in the Council of Europe Experts report (Gordon 2004: 43) and it has also led to the realisation of the need for a “national evaluation” of these institutions in order to deal with this issue in a strategically viable way. As a result, the Law 58(1)/2009 “For the Recognition of Private and Local Authorities Museums” was recently introduced, where a set of criteria for evaluating such museums is offered.

Nevertheless, these museums are also reflections of understanding of the national culture, in the sense that they allow individual or local authority agents to present their own views about how ‘Cypriot identity’ has been formed and what it means to belong to it. Interestingly, while state run museums emphasize archaeology, private and municipal museums place their emphasis on ethnography and the church of Cyprus is responsible for Byzantine museums and sites. This is probably an issue to be explored at a further stage of this research.

Cultural heritage and museums in the Turkish Republic of North Cyprus (TRNC): an overview

After 1974, responsibility for the care of cultural heritage in the north part of the island has been an issue of debate between the two communities. The Department of Antiquities of the Republic cannot have access to the archaeological sites, monuments and museums of the northern part, whereas many international organisations and individuals have reported serious amounts of damage and thefts. Looting of important sites and monasteries, relocation of icons and other valuable artefacts, the neglecting and dispersal of museum and private collections are among the cultural ‘crimes’ attributed to the occupation forces. The Republic of Cyprus as well as the Cypriot Greek Orthodox Church has initiated the return of precious historical artefacts that had been offered for sale in auction houses in Europe and the US (Stylianou 1997; Augustinos 1998; Knapp and Antoniadou 1998, Tenekides 1994; Constantinou and Hatay 2010).

In practical terms, and despite the fact that the TRNC is not recognised as a state and therefore does not have legitimate access to international aid, the administration of the north part of the island undertook some works on cultural heritage, such as emergency works in the foundations of the former St. Sophia Cathedral, now the Selimiye Mosque, funded by the UN; responsibility for the care of most of the church monuments fell after the events of 1974 to Evkaf, the Kibris Vakıflar Foundation set up in order to manage religious property already at the beginning of the twentieth century. For the monuments falling within the category of antiquities, the Turkish administration of the northern part created its own Department of Antiquities and Museums in legislation enacted in 1975. The scope of the department is “to protect and manage ancient monuments, museums, artefacts, a number of ancient buildings including old Ottoman and Venetian houses, churches as well as mosques and inns” (TRNC Department of Antiquities and Museums, n.d.).

On the official website of the department, it is declared that “the aim of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus is to preserve and restore not only its own Turkish Cypriot heritage but also that of Greek Cypriot and other civilisations (past and present) within the context of Cypriot art”. To the criticisms of the Greek Cypriot side and the international community for neglecting and/or supporting illegal activities and plundering, TRNC’s Department uses arguments such as “progress has been limited because of inadequate financial resources, shortage of skilled labour and Greek Cypriot embargo, which prevents aid-flow to Northern Cyprus from international organisations such as UNESCO”. And the arguments continue by claiming that illegal “digging” is viewed with “extreme seriousness by the authorities” and that all the important sites are indeed open to the public and efforts are made for the monuments to be restored. Needless to say that antiquities are at the centre of the dispute and questions of what constitutes heritage and whose heritage this is lies at the centre of this debate.

The Department of Antiquities and Museums in Northern Cyprus lists 15 museums on its website as well as an online museum (see Appendix 2). It is interesting to note that this list does not include the District Archaeological Museum of Ammochostos (Famagusta), which was located near the site and is mentioned by the Greek Cypriot authorities as plundered. In addition, similar claims are made by the Greek side for the Cypriot Folk Art Museum and the Shipwreck Museum, both in Kerynia.

In addition to the above, there are two more museums jointly run by the Department of Antiquities and the Military. There is the National Struggle Museum, opened in 1989, to “remember and teach about the struggles undertaken by Turkish Cypriots from 1878 to the present day” (see TRNC Public Relations Department, n.d.). Additionally, a new Museum was established in Kyrenia, entitled Museum of Peace and Freedom, to commemorate Turkish and Turkish Cypriot soldiers who died during the 1974 events. The Museum is dedicated to the memory of Commander Ibrahim Karaoglanoglu. It is complemented with a monument and an open-air display of military vehicles confiscated from the Greek army during the 1974 events.

The Department of Antiquities and Museums of TRNC also mentions an on-line museum – a Museum of Fine Arts, which includes a virtual collection of paintings, sculpture and ceramics, fashion and design, photography, cinema and caricature. Artists are all of Turkish or Turkish Cypriot origins and the current cultural production of this part of the island is promoted through this site.

The history of national museums in Cyprus

The establishment of museums in Cyprus seems to fall into three main phases: the first one extends from the last quarter of the nineteenth century until 1955; the second refers to the period between 1955 and 1974 and the third to the period after 1974. The division is rather schematic and there is a lot of overlapping, but it still provides a useful tool for presentation and analysis of the creation of the national museums on the island. Each of these phases has its own character, which is defined by the historical events of the period, but also by the cultural preoccupations and influences Cyprus received during this time, while it retains, in the case of the two subsequent phases, certain characteristics of the previous periods. Table 2 provides an overview of the historical phases, the political events that marked them, as well as the resulting national priorities. Finally, the selected case study museums for each phase are listed.

Table 2

Museum Historical Phases, Political Events, National Priorities and Case Study Museums

| | Political Events | National Priorities | Case Study Museums |
|--------------------------|--|--|---|
| Phase 1: before 1955 | 1878-1960 British Rule | Presentation and promotion of ancient Hellenic past Reinforcement of Hellenic Identity | 1. Cyprus Museum (archaeological) |
| Phase 2: 1955 - 1974 | 1955 – 1959 Struggle against the British rule 1960 Independence | Commemoration of struggles and establishment of a national narrative and identity | 2. Struggle Museum (documents the struggle against the British rule) 3. The Canbulat Museum (historical/ folk) |
| Phase 3: 1974 - today | 1974 Turkish occupation of almost half of the island 2004 Cyprus joins the EU | Preserving and promoting national identity Looking towards the west and a European future | 4. The State Gallery of Contemporary Cypriot Art |

The first phase is characterized by colonial influences along with a strong wish to claim ownership of the local cultural heritage by local agents. The beginning of the interest in cultural heritage has its roots into the colonial appreciation of the Hellenic past of the island. This phase ends with the start of the struggle against the British in 1955. Due to the dominance of archaeology during this phase, the Cyprus Museum was chosen as a case study.

The second phase is characterised by the need to commemorate the struggles and sufferings of both Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities. This phase starts with the struggle against British rule (1955-59) and ends with the Turkish invasion in 1974. One Greek Cypriot (the Struggle Museum) and one Turkish Cypriot museum (the Canbulat Museum) are used as case studies for this period.

Finally, the third phase is characterised by the need to preserve and promote a growing sense of national identity. At the same time, Cyprus was looking towards the west for a European future and eventually entered the EU in 2004. The State Gallery of Contemporary Art will serve as the case study here and will help us demonstrate the conflicts between the old and the new.

Phase I: National museums before 1955

Brief historical overview

Cyprus is an island with a long and rather adventurous history. It was firstly inhabited in the Neolithic period, approximately 9000 years BC, probably from people of the near East. In the second half of the third millennium BC, the discovery of copper on the island and the subsequent processing and trade of the metal throughout the Eastern Mediterranean attracted new settlers, this time probably from Anatolia. In the fifteenth century BC, Cyprus (then called Alasia or Asy) appears to have come within the sphere of the influence of Egypt. A little later, around 1400 BC, the Mycenaeans settled the island. Around 850 BC, Cyprus began to be peacefully settled by the Phoenicians who remained on the island in peaceful co-existence with the Mycenaeans and the local population until the end of the fourth century BC. Different rulers followed, such as the Assyrians (709 BC onwards), the Egyptians (565-546 BC), and the Persians. Alexander the Great's campaign in Anatolia brought the end of Persian rule; after Alexander's death, Ptolemy, the king of Egypt prevailed another suitor, Antigonos, and his dynasty's influence lasted until the middle of the first century BC. The Roman Empire was followed in AD 300 by the Byzantine, which lasted until 1191, when Richard the Lionheart and his allies conquered the island. Rejection of the new rulers by the inhabitants forced Richard first to sell the island to the Knights Templar and then to offer it to Guy de Lusignan from Jerusalem, whose family produced the rulers of the island until 1489 (Frankish period), when it came under Venetian rule. This lasted until 1575. The Ottomans arrived on the island in 1571 and their rule lasted until 1878, with the ceding of Cyprus to Britain, in return for support in the Russian-Turkish war of 1877-78. The island remained under British Administration until 1960 when the independent state of Cyprus was established.

Cypriot antiquities and identity struggles

Already in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the Ottomans had realised that in order to be able to participate in the modern world, they should "westernise" certain beliefs and practices; among them, the preservation of the material remains of the past. As a result, in 1869 the first Ottoman Museum, the Imperial Museum, was created in Istanbul, while legislation aimed at protecting cultural heritage was also first introduced (Shaw 2003). Of course, the relation of Islam and antiquities is rather complex. In the beginning, Islam did not receive Graeco-Roman history and remains into what we now call "its cultural heritage". On the contrary, it regarded the material remains as spoils and was impressed by their fantastic wealth. The consequence of this is that Islamic governments (the Ottoman Empire among them) never concerned themselves in practice with pre-Islamic antiquities. Even more significant and directly relevant to present concerns is the fact that, as their legislation (Islamic Law) came to be formulated out of religious principles, it did not address itself to questions concerning what we call "antiquities" (Wright 2001: 262). It was only under the European-inspired reformist movement (the Tanzimat, the

Destur), which took place between 1865 and 1875 that the Ottoman government started preparing policies and legislations based on principles other than the religious ones, and therefore an interest in the protection of antiquities was created. However, there was frequently a considerable lapse of time before new policies and legislations were actually promulgated. As a result, the Ottoman Antiquities Law (*Asar-i-Atica*) in Cyprus, although based on concerns which had already a past in the Ottoman understanding and policy was only promulgated in 1874, when major looters/amateurs had already taken from the island large numbers of important antiquities (Balandier 2001). The Ottoman Antiquities Law was issued in March 1874 in French, under the title: “*Reglements sur les antiquités*” (Wright 2001: 265; Stanley-Price 2001: 267-8). Despite the fact that all the provisions that subsequently became canonical in regulating antiquities were there, the only provision that gained prominence was the one that allowed the Government to acquire a one-third part of the finds of any excavation for which a permit was granted. The other two parts were given to the owner of the land and to the excavator (Karageorghis 1985b). This perspective was to influence subsequent legislation and became an issue of debate in the years to come.

On the other hand, the British did have a different perspective on classical heritage. The classical past was considered the “cradle” of European civilization and this belief was widely used to legitimise European colonialism in every respect (see Most 2008). The British administration used this claim in its own colonial activities (Given 1998; Hamilakis 1998, Silberman 1998, van Dommelen 1998, Sant Casia 1998; Leriou 2007). In the case of Cyprus, though, things were a bit more complicated. Greek Cypriots considered the British a great philhellenic power that would liberate them from the “barbaric” Turkish rule and let them unite with Greece (Knapp and Antoniadou 1998: 21). Interestingly, when Sir Garnet Wolseley, the first High Commissioner arrived in Larnaca in 1878 to take over from the Ottomans, he was welcomed by Sophronios, the Archbishop of Kition, who declared: “We accept the change of Government inasmuch as we trust Britain will help Cyprus, as it did with the Ionian islands, to be united with mother Greece, with which it is naturally connected” (cited in Hunt 1990: 265; also see Coldstream 1981, 1982; Tatton-Brown 1982; Peltenburg 1982; Dakin 1981; Karageorghis 1982; Mallinson 2005; Runciman 1982; Hitchens 1997). In the beginning, the British intellectuals who were coming to the island under various capacities highlighted the Greek character of the island as much as possible. Myres (1899), for instance, one of the first people to work at cataloguing the antiquities of the Cyprus Museum, highlighted the “Hellenic” character of the Cypriot past and therefore provided intellectual support to those who believed in the *Enosis* (Union) of Cyprus to Greece. It is this intellectual community, comprised of the British philhellenes/antiquarians/archaeologists and the Greek Cypriot intellectual elite that promoted the creation of our case study museum, the Cyprus Museum, as an undeniable, material expression of the Greek-ness of the island. In other words, the Greek Cypriots used the liberties and ideas of the British, in order to reinforce their Hellenic identity, thus supporting the ever-growing nationalist movement demanding *enosis*. It is in this light that the individual and communal attempts towards the promotion of archaeology of Cyprus should be seen, as for instance, the encouragement that was provided to Swedish archaeologists to excavate, even at the expense of the newly established Antiquities Law of 1905.

The voices that supported an interest in the medieval past of Cyprus were fewer and rather isolated. With the exception of G. Jeffery, a British architect who served as Curator of Monuments (Pilides 2009), and his efforts towards the promotion of the medieval past (also in

line with an interest in the medieval past developed in Europe, and more specifically in France during this period), the local Greek intellectual elite was not interested in that. The medieval past of the island consisted of a number of different rulers, from the Lusignans to the Ottomans, and therefore, did not support the ideal of the *enosis* or Greek-ness of the island. It was only natural then that this particular period was the first to be adopted by the Turkish Cypriot community that supported Jeffery's work in an attempt to claim their own contribution to the island's past (Pilides 2009). The interest in the medieval past from the Greek Cypriot community developed later in the 1920s, in a specific light: that of the Byzantine past and therefore the Christian influence on the island. Taking into account that the relationship with Greek civilisation has been twofold, based on antiquity and the Christian ideals, it was a natural turn on behalf of the Greek Cypriots. This interest in the Byzantine past and subsequently to the "folk" past is in line with a similar interest that had started to develop in mainland Greece from the end of the nineteenth century onwards and in particular in the late 1910s to 1940s (Plantzos and Damaskos 2008; Hadjinikolaou 2003; Azgin and Papadakis 1998). The active agents for this part were, once again, Greek Cypriot intellectuals, either of the clergy or of education and arts (Eliades 2008). Through societies such as the Society of Cypriot Studies, they promoted the connection to the Greek past through a promotion of the Hellenic identity of the island.

Case study museum: The Cyprus Museum

Since this first phase of the history of national museums in Cyprus is dominated by archaeology and the reinforcement of a Hellenic identity, the Cyprus Museum, the largest and oldest archaeological museum in Cyprus, is selected as the case study for this phase.

The date usually given for the foundation of the Cyprus Museum is 1883. In fact, the museum was formally established on June 15th, 1882, as the result of a petition approved by the British High Commissioner of the island, Sir Robert Biddulph (Stanley-Price 2001: 267; Pilides 2009: 63). A Museum Committee was also approved that day (Pilides 2009: 63 and notes 186ff). There are two versions as to whom should be given credit for founding the museum. In one of them, Ohnefalsch-Richter, in 1893, claimed credit for himself in having formed a committee for the foundation of a Cyprus Museum after securing the intervention of Gladstone in England to put pressure on this issue on the then High Commissioner of the island. There may be some truth in this claim, but there is no proof in terms of surviving material. On the contrary, there is substantial evidence in favour of the second version, that Lieutenant H. H. Kitchener should be given credit for the museum. Kitchener was then in Cyprus carrying out his topographical survey of the island. Most probably he was the author of the letter to the Editor of the *Cyprus Herald* of May 10th, 1882. The letter, signed by 'An Archaeologist', put forward some practical suggestions regarding the creation of a Museum of Antiquities in Nicosia. This was not the first time that the idea for the creation of a museum on the island had been raised. Correspondence and editorials published in the *Cyprus Herald* in 1882 referred to the revival of the idea regarding the formation of a Museum of Cypriot Antiquities; and also to previous suggestions of forming local museums in Larnaca and Limassol.

Three weeks after this letter though, a deputation went to see the High Commissioner with a petition to found an Island Museum of Ancient Art. The petition was signed by the Cadi of Cyprus, the Archbishop of Cyprus and the Mufti of Cyprus (i.e. the leaders of the main religious

communities). The reasons given in favour of founding a museum were the positive influence that it would have had on the mind and the cultivation of taste; as an island rich in antiquities, it would help promote the study of history and would attract savants and foreigners to study antiquities. The museum, thus established under the supervision of the Government of Cyprus, would be considered a permanent national institution. The High Commissioner approved the creation, the committee was named and Kitchener was appointed its Curator and Honorary Secretary (Stanley-Price 2001: 267-8). The key role of Kitchener in setting up the museum was recognised by both the Greek and Turkish communities when he left the island in March 1883.

The Museum Committee approved, in a second meeting in December 1882, a budget that included the fitting up of a room. It is confirmed that two of the new Government Office rooms were being used for the deposit of objects assigned to the Museum.

In the beginning, the collections were not organised, so were liable to damage from those using the government offices; furthermore, the collections were not open to the public. There must have been occasional visitors, but the museum was far from meeting its goals. It was five years after its creation that the President of the Museum Committee, High Commissioner Bulwer, intervened to remind the members of their aims. In June 1889, the Committee took a lease on a house at number 7, Victoria Road, within the walled town, in what was then an Armenian quarter. It was to be rented for one year at £21. There was good security, since a caretaker and his wife were to be appointed at £12 p.a. The collections were installed on the two floors of the house, and the plan was published in Myres and Ohnefalsch-Richter's catalogue of the collection prepared in 1899.

In his preface to the catalogue, Sir John Myres criticizes the government for failing to spend any funds on maintaining and properly storing the collection. Storage and cataloguing were quite inadequate. When loans were made from the collection, for instance to the Colonial and Indian Exhibition of 1887 in London, a number of items went missing and never returned.

The museum opened its doors to the public nine years after the initial decision was made, on May 16th, 1891. It was open every Saturday and on certain holidays from 2-6 p.m. (Merrillees 2005: 6). Within a few years however, as the necessary funding and care were lacking, the Museum in Victoria Street was in a dilapidated state, evident in Jeffery's description of 1904 (Pilides 2009: 63).

In the meantime, on April 10, 1901, a circular was issued entitled "Memorial to Her Majesty Queen Victoria" referring to a public meeting held in the Theatre at Nicosia under the presidency of the High Commissioner, which resolved that a museum building should be erected in Nicosia by public subscription as a memorial to Queen Victoria. The museum was to be named after her, as a "worthy home for a collection of the relics of the ancient civilization of the Island" (Pilides 2009, Appendix V.1).

In 1905, under the governorship of Sir Charles King-Hartman, the Legislative Council voted on a new Antiquities Law, similar to that of Greece and Italy. This Antiquities Law of 1905 would govern all aspects of the preservation of monuments, creation of museums, excavations, etc. The main provision of this law is that antiquities are the absolute property of the government and all collectors should furnish lists to the Museum Committee; private owners were prohibited from altering the acknowledged character of ancient monuments without permission of the Museum Committee, and powers were given to the Museum Committee to acquire ancient

monuments and to make grants to private owners for maintaining and preserving ancient monuments (Karageorghis 1985b; 1932 Report, quoted in Pilides 2009: 653). The press of the period discusses in length the new legislation, reports the decision to create the museum (the plan for the architectural design of the new museum to be offered by the Greek government), and makes explicit the relation between the decision regarding the building of the museum and the need for a new legislation to prevent illicit excavations and exports of antiquities.

The new museum building was to be constructed from private subscriptions, after a competition regarding its architectural design. It had to be appropriate and to make it possible for the building to expand in the future. The plans of the National Museum of Athens and the Delphi Museum were requested from the Greek government for study. Different plans were also submitted: Edgar Feneck (Chief Foreman in the Dept. of Public Works and Store) submitted his proposal on August 28th, 1906; Theodore N. Fotiadis offered his plans on November 26th, 1906; Nicolaos Balanos submitted his plans, soon afterwards. A sub-committee examined the three suggestions and reached the conclusion that Feneck's plan was too costly despite its many advantages, Fotiadis' plan, although prettier did not allow for expansion, whereas the plan by Balanos firstly was already built in Athens, and secondly it was supervised by the General Curator of Antiquities in Athens and by the Professor of Archaeology at the University of Athens; furthermore, the committee believed that Balanos' plan "possessed an archaic simplicity, combined with the necessary grandeur of the chambers whose numbers could easily be increased subsequently" (Pilides 2009: 67). The execution of the plan was entrusted to George Jeffery, who was going to come into an understanding with Balanos. After a trip to Athens and collaboration between the two, they agreed that Balanos would kindly supervise the execution of an exact copy of the portico of the small temple of Athena Nike on the Athenian Acropolis to serve as the entrance to the Museum, while Jeffery would supervise the construction of the building in Nicosia (Pilides 2009, Appendix V.1).

The enactment of the Antiquities Law of 1905 and the creation of the Cyprus Museum had to increase the interest in the archaeology of the island as a result. The reports in the newspapers of the period, as well as the minutes of the Museum Committee brought forward a concern for the museum and the monuments. The newspaper reports were particularly important for building up awareness and public respect for monuments, thus condemning looting and export of antiquities. This concern has been intense between 1905 and 1915, but declined after 1915 and until 1925, probably because of WWI and its aftermath (Pilides 2009: 56).

The new building was ready in 1909 and in March the collections were transferred from the Victoria Street building to the new museum. By May of the same year, the portico was also in place. Greek archaeologists, such as P. Kavvadias, G. Soteriadis and members of the Athens Archaeological Society were invited to offer their help to the arrangements of the new museum; while already, in 1908, the position of the curator of the museum had been offered to Menelaos Markides, who was sent to Oxford to study archaeology so that he was up to his role. Markides officially undertook his responsibilities as a curator of the museum upon the completion of his degree in January 1912.

The collections of the Cyprus Museum were greatly augmented by the first large-scale excavations carried out by the Swedish Cyprus Expedition from 1927 to 1931, directed by Professor E. Gjerstad (*Chroniko*, 2009 and Rystedt 1994). The 1905 Antiquities Law restricted all

exports of antiquities from the island. Nevertheless, in March 1926, there was already a concern, expressed in the press that the ban on exports did not make Cyprus an attractive destination for foreign excavators anymore. Museums and archaeological missions from abroad put pressure on the authorities of the island in order to be able to export objects that they had unearthed during their research. The Swedes had sent such a letter to the governor of the island, Ronald Storrs, on October 13th, 1926. Storrs asked the Museum Committee to interpret the 1905 law as broadly as possible in order to be able to encourage the Swedish Expedition. In December 1926, a letter was sent to the Swedes saying “the wishes of the members of the proposed expedition... will receive sympathetic consideration together with as liberal an interpretation as maybe legally permissible of actual and future legislation” (*Chroniko* 2009: 11; also State Archives, Nicosia/983/1913: Red 72-1). As a result, the 1905 law was amended in 1927 and 65% of the findings were exported to Sweden. On the positive side, the expedition had material from all periods to enrich the Cyprus Museum as a result, from the Neolithic to the Roman era; while at the same time it added immeasurably to the archaeology of Cyprus, which began to mature as a discipline.

The expansion of the collections led to further expansion of the museum building. Two side galleries and the eastern towers were added in 1914-16, a lecture theatre and store rooms were added on the north side in 1917-18; further additions were approved and carried out in 1923 through the supervision of Jeffery. Additions have been continuously made in the museum, since further works are recorded for 1935; offices were constructed in 1937 and 1938, while a substantial extension along the north side of the building was constructed between 1959-1961 (Karageorghis 1985b; Pilides 2009: 69-72; Dikaios 1961: xiv).

The Department of Antiquities was created in January 1935 by the enactment of a new Antiquities Law. The first director was J.R. Hilton, succeeded in 1936 by A.H.S. Megaw, an architect who remained in this post until 1960 (Karageorghis 1985b). It was under this law that the Cyprus Museum became fully official/national, in the sense that it became part of the administration and was also financed by the State. The 1935 law also introduced a new era for Cypriot archaeology, since both Cypriot and foreign archaeologists were encouraged to undertake research projects on various parts of the island more actively.

Among the archaeologists involved in this period's work, we should mention Porfyrios Dikaios, who was responsible for the excavations at Khirokitia and other Neolithic sites. He was also the director of the Cyprus Museum and wrote its catalogue in 1947.

The 1935 Antiquities Law remained in force without major amendments in Part IV (Museum and Advisory Bodies) until 1964, four years after the independence of Cyprus from the British, when the law was amended so that museums could be created by the Council of Ministers of the newly established Republic of Cyprus. The Cyprus Museum remained under the control and management of the director.

Phase II: National museums established between 1955 and 1974

Turmoil and commemoration

This was a period of turmoil for the island of Cyprus, but it was also the period when the new Republic of Cyprus was created. Museums were used to serve the ideologies of the period and

each community of the island established its own cultural *foci*, in an attempt to tell their own stories.

The anti-colonial struggle of 1955-1959 led many museums that had been created in the previous period, to close and interrupted social and cultural life in many ways. In contrast to other colonial territories, anti-colonialism in Cyprus did not lead to the demand of self-government and independence; instead, the Greek-Cypriot community aspired to the *Enosis* (Union) of the island with Greece. This was quantified in 1950 when a plebiscite took place that resulted in 96% of the votes being in favour of the union. The lack of any response from the British though, led, in 1955, to an organised anti-colonial uprising, led mainly by George Grivas and his followers who had formed the National Organisation of Cypriot Fighters (known as EOKA) (Hunt 1982: 255-7). Turkish Cypriot nationalism was soon to follow and in 1958, the equivalent organisation was created by Turkish Cypriots, called TMT (Turkish Resistance Organisation). This community was satisfied by the current *status quo* and was opposed to the idea of a union with Greece, which would lead them into an ethnic minority status. Unification with Turkey was their suggested option, or possibly the partitioning of the island between Greece and Turkey. Vital negotiations between the two communities and the British took place in Zurich and resulted in the creation of an independent republic in 1960, where both Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot communities were encouraged to co-exist while two different assemblies were formed: the Greek Cypriot one with 80% of the total population and the Turkish-Cypriot one with 18%. The outcome did not satisfy either of the two, and both continued to pursue their separate objectives.

After 1960, the years that followed saw the increase of funds available for the cultural affairs of the island and the Antiquities Department's needs: excavation, repairs and restoration of ancient monuments, in collaboration mainly with the Church authorities and the Evkaf, were among the activities that were encouraged during this period; the encouragement was most probably part of an effort to ground the new Republic into its cultural past, but also to encourage new economic developments, such as tourism and modernisation.

New premises for museums in various districts were made available: Famagusta, Larnaca, Limassol and Paphos acquired new museum buildings. Site museums were also developed at Episkopi (Kourion House) and Kouklia, whereas a smaller site museum of a didactic character was built in Salamis (Karageorghis 1985b). In 1966, the Dowager Lady Loch, a former resident of Kyrenia, donated to the department a house overlooking the harbour to be used as a museum. She also donated a large collection of objects of folk art. Therefore, the creation of a Folk Art Museum came under way (Department of Antiquities 1966).

Nevertheless, during the first few years of the Republic, between 1963 and 1964, the problems continued with inter-communal conflicts between Greek and Turkish Cypriots (Hunt 1982; Hill 1952). Therefore, apart from the archaeological museums and activities, which were recognised as a cultural standard and supported by the central government, new museums were established during this phase, in order to commemorate exactly this social and political upheaval. These museums started as community attempts; to acquire a more official status as the two communities grew apart.

Since museums are considered to be objective, authentic and credible more than other media (Sandell 2007), they were considered the perfect medium to form and reinforce historical

narratives, explain violence as a necessary form of sacrifice, and construct a sense of national identity and pride for both communities. As in the case of other memorial museums, images of the past were used to legitimize current political ideas (Goulding and Domic 2009). According to Dickinson, Blair and Ott:

...public memory is understood by most, if not all, contemporary scholars as activated by concerns, issues, or anxieties of the present. That is, groups tell their pasts to themselves and others as ways of understanding, valorizing, justifying, excusing, or subverting conditions or beliefs of their current moment (2010: 6)

Similarly, the museums created in this phase choose to “remember” and thus commemorate certain aspects of their history and ignore other aspects according to current political events ((see Toumazis 2010). Both the Greek Cypriot and the Turkish Cypriot communities wanted to commemorate the strength of their feelings of injustice and oppression. The creation of a museum seemed like a material expression of these feelings and a propaganda medium that would allow firstly, to educate contemporary and future generations and secondly, to again make their claims to the land and their history.

The largest Greek Cypriot museum of this kind is the Struggle Museum and will serve as our case study. In the northern part of Nicosia, two other museums, created more or less at the same time, express the other side of the coin. The Museum of Barbarism (called by some more dispassionate voices, Museum of Dr. Nihat Ilhan) was established in 1964 in order to commemorate the atrocities Greek Cypriots committed against the Turkish Cypriot population of the island. Also, the National Struggle Museum (created after 1974) commemorates the Ottoman and Turkish struggles for a presence on the island. Despite the fact that these museums exhibit a similar repertoire of objects and photographs, the messages communicated change according to the context, the museum’s central narrative and the preconceptions of the viewer (Papadakis 1994). Similar images and objects in both Greek and Turkish Cypriot museums seem to serve as a reminder of the suffering and struggles of the people they represent, create symbolic boundaries between “us” and “them”, and become an efficient didactic tool for young school children who did not experience any of the events.

The second case study we chose for this period is the Canbulat museum because it is another example of a museum that becomes a didactic tool for young generations and aims at reinforcing the Turkish Cypriot identity of the island. It started its life as a community museum in 1968 and acquired a more official status after the events of 1974. Without being a memorial museum in the sense that Dr. Nihat Ilhan’s one is, the Canbulat museum explores a part of the historical past of the island that was of particular importance for the Turkish Cypriot community, for the shaping of their identity as our discussion below will argue.

Case study museums: The (National) Struggle Museum and the Canbulat Museum

The first museum of this category to be established was the Struggle Museum (previously known as National Struggle Museum) currently under the Ministry of Education and Culture. The Assembly of the Hellenic Community established the Museum on January 26th, 1961. The Decision, which was published in the newspapers of February 23rd, 1961 reads as follows:

The Assembly of the Hellenic Community decides the establishment of a Museum of the Liberating Struggle of the Cypriot people and authorizes the Selection and Administration Committee to do any necessary action as well as the Financial Committee to inscribe all expenses in the budget of 1961. (Demetriou 2008: 7).

Christodoulos Papachrysostomou, who was a fighter during the EOKA struggle, undertook the direction of the Museum. The Museum was firstly housed in a building donated by Zinon Sozos, another patriot fighter, in 25, Iras Street in Nicosia. The inauguration of the exhibition took place on April 1st, 1962. In 1966, the museum was transferred to the Old Archbishopric Palace where it remained until 1996 (Papadakis 1994; Papachrysostomou 1977; Stylianou and Demetriou 1991). From December 1996 until April 2001, the museum was temporarily housed in a neoclassical building at 7, Kinyra Street. In the meantime, a new wing was added to the previous building and a new exhibition was organised. The new exhibition was inaugurated in April 2001. The cost for the construction of the new building was undertaken by the Ministry of Education and Culture along with the Archbishop of Cyprus, while the A.G. Leventis Foundation financed the museological work undertaken for the new exhibition (Demetriou 2008: 7).

The aim of the museum has been to “keep alive the memory of the struggle for liberation of the Greek Cypriots against the British, which was organised by the National Organization of the Cypriot Fighters (EOKA) from 1955 to 1959”. (Michalopoulos 2004: 37). The museum is simultaneously an archive of the memories regarding the liberation war. It has an active collecting policy and presents the public photographs, documents, personal belongings of the heroes of the liberation war, reconstructed scenes from various heroic incidents and so on.

The Struggle Museum aims to present not the art of a specific historical period of the island, but a political and national historical event. Interestingly, despite the fact that the museum was created in 1961, i.e. during the first year of the Republic and when the Turkish Community of the island was still part of it, the museum does not include the Turkish Cypriot Community in the narrative. On the contrary, in the re-exhibition of 2001, the Turkish Cypriots are represented as “fooled” by the British powers and participating in their atrocities (Papadakis 1994).

The Canbulat Museum (or (D)Janbulat Museum) in Famagusta is also a museum created during this period to express a different historical perspective. It was established in 1968 as an ethnography/commemorative museum by the Turkish Cypriot community (Keshishian 1970). It commemorates the heroic story of Janbulat Bey who bravely fought the Venetians in 1571, when the Ottoman rule of the island was established (Gunnis 1936). The visitor goes through a series of exhibition cases housing various artefacts; to end up in the inner sanctum of the museum where the tomb of Canbulat is located, surrounded by insignia and flags. Apart from the tomb, the museum houses “Turkish purses, bridal dresses, night-gowns and pilgrim’s headscarves from the 19th to the 20th centuries” and then “17th century Turkish china bowls and plates, Venetian 15th century cups and plates, and, further on, Bronze Age ware and artefacts labelled as of Anatolian, Syrian and Egyptian origin” (Scott 2002a: 219). Although the nationalist character of this museum has been debated (Scott 2002a), the variety of artefacts exhibited, along with the lack of interpretation point towards an understanding of the Ottoman past that emphasises the multi-national and multi-cultural roots of the island of Cyprus.

Various interpretations about the establishment of this museum have been offered (Scott 2002a): from the one that presents it as a pragmatic response to a touristic need, to the one that

claims the museum is a statement on Cypriot-ness. In any case, the museum echoes the attempts of Turkish Cypriots to locate themselves on the island and thus legitimise their status as equal inheritors of the past and the present of the land. Canbulat becomes the much-needed Cypriot hero of Ottoman origins, a symbol for Turkish Cypriot identity.

Both the Struggle Museum and the Canbulat Museum aim at projecting a sense of national identity, of struggle and sacrifice and therefore of a rightful claim to the island. Both museums have, as their main aim, to educate future generations and commemorate the past. However, while other similar museums abroad desire to also promote tolerance, the avoidance of future violence and peace (Williams 2007), there seems to be no such attempt with these two museums. The narratives do not include the other side of the coin and a clear separation between “us” and “them” is established. Priority is given to a clear, straightforward nationalistic narrative.

Phase III: National museums in Cyprus after 1974

Ongoing troubles between Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities led to the military junta, then in power in Greece, to attempt a coup to remove president Makarios in 1974. In response, and using their role as a guarantee-power, Turkey invaded and occupied the northern end of the island. The old walled capital, Nicosia, has since been divided in two parts (from Paphos Gate to the west and just north of Famagusta Gate in the east). Around 180,000 Greek Cypriot refugees were resettled in the south, while 71,000 Turkish Cypriots were forced to move to the north and were mostly accommodated in the vacated Greek Cypriot property. Following the Ottoman example, Turkey re-settled 60,000 Turks in the north. UN forces patrol, to this day, the Green Line and the Turkish military continue to occupy the north parts of the island. In 1983, the Turkish administration of the north formalised itself as the “Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus” (TRNC), but as an occupying power is not recognised as such by any State except Turkey, nor by international organisations. Since 2003, an agreement was reached between both sides to open crossing points for people to move between the two parts and some trade was allowed. The access has caused major emotional responses for many, since Greek Cypriots found their former properties occupied by Turkish Cypriots and vice versa, or in some cases, sold to foreign owners; a number of high profile lawsuits is in progress to this day.

The events of 1974 meant serious disruptions in the works of museums and cultural authorities of the island. All archaeological activity stopped at once, sites (like Enkomi, Salamis, Old Famagusta, Kyrenia, Soloi, Vouni Palace) were abandoned, just like churches (as for instance, Antiphonitissa and Kanakaria) and museums. Greek Cypriot specialists from the Department of Antiquities left behind the archaeological museum of Famagusta, the Folk Museum of Kyrenia and the Shipwreck Museum of Kyrenia (which was ready to be inaugurated in the castle of Kyrenia in 1974). The Cyprus Museum, which is only a few hundred meters from the Green line, was evacuated from valuable objects. Some were taken for safety to the southern part of Cyprus; others were shipped to Greece, where they were exhibited in special galleries in the National Museum of Athens until 1979. It was only then that the archaeological and museum work returned to what was going to become normal from then onwards (Karageorghis 1985b).

The third phase in the history of the Cypriot museums started after 1974 that also saw the division of the island into two parts. Each of the two sides developed its own different perspective encouraged by political as well as cultural aims and priorities. At the same time, the

Cyprus Republic aiming for a European future was determined to promote (and create) its own artistic history. After a short overview of the museum scene in the Republic of Cyprus and the TRNC, the case study of the State Gallery of Contemporary Cypriot Art will be used to demonstrate conflicts between the old and the new.

Preserving a national identity while looking towards a European future

The Republic of Cyprus focused on the museums and sites that were still in their care. It continued placing emphasis on archaeology along the lines already described above, and excavations by both Cypriot and international experts were encouraged as well as the exhibition of Cypriot antiquities in museums all over the world (Karageorghis 2004). In addition, a campaign started immediately after 1974 for engaging international professional and cultural bodies, like ICOMOS, ICOM, UNESCO and so on, for the protection of historical monuments that were left in the northern part of the island and therefore beyond the protection of the Department of Antiquities.

In 1982, the Department of Antiquities was reorganised and a new branch was created under D. Christou, assisted by E. Egoumenidou. This new branch started to deal more actively with monuments of folk architecture and folk art, individual houses and compounds of houses that have been declared ancient monuments. As a result, new folk art museums were created: the Hadjigeorgakis Kornesios Mansion was inaugurated in 1987 in Nicosia (Rizopoulou-Egoumenidou 1991; 1993; 1995); the Patsalos Museum of Embroidery and Silversmith in Lefkara opened in 1986; the Katsinioros House and the village of Fikardon started being restored in 1984. In addition, the Museum of Folk Art in Yeroskipou, which had been created in 1978, was re-organised and enlarged (Rizopoulou-Egoumenidou and Phiouri 2008). Thus, the Department of Antiquities was able to make a new contribution towards the preservation of Cypriot cultural property, conserving and presenting for the people of Cyprus relics of their immediate past (Karageorghis 1985b). In 1985, the Medieval Museum of Cyprus opened in the Medieval Castle of Limassol (Karageorghis 1985b) and new more specialised museums opened in different sites [such as in Idalion (2007), Polis-Chrysochou (1998), Maa (1996) and so on] (Bruno 1996; Gazi 1997; Flourentzos 1996). The efforts of the Greek Cypriot side have received many awards (Europa Nostra awards among others) and international acclaim (Scott 2002b).

However, a new country, especially one with European aspirations, found itself in need of defining its own art history. And since this history was initiated and constructed by Greek Cypriots, the narrative seems to be organically evolving from the Greek and Byzantine identity of the island mixed with European art influences. The State Gallery of Contemporary Art, inaugurated in 1990, the same year that Cyprus submitted an application to enter the EU, will serve as our case study for this phase.

In the north, the Turkish administration was not in a position to develop at the same pace, due to lack of recognition as a state. Access to international bodies and financial help was not available and that is also true of professional expertise. It is only after 2003, and because of the border between the two sides of the island being opened, that tourism has started in the northern part of the island and therefore, interest in cultural endeavours has increased.

In terms of the museums of this part, we can divide them into three main categories: the first consists of museums that had been already established before 1974 and the TRNC has

undertaken their management and operation. In this category, we can include the Lapidary Museum (which is the one that Jeffery created in 1928), the Kyrenia Museum of Folk Art, and the Shipwreck Museum in the castle of Kyrenia. If one reviews the material advertising these museums, but also sites, like St. Hilarion Castle and Bellapais Monastery, both important Christian sites that had already been developed as tourist destinations before 1974, he/she cannot miss the emphasis placed on the multi-cultural, multi-ethnic character of the sites.

The second category includes icon museums: these have been established after 1974, in an effort to display respect towards Christian remains and therefore compliance with “religious rights”. The creation of those museums, itself often criticised as “dislocating religious artefacts” as well as for inappropriate conservation, has been a political argument towards the Greek Cypriot accusations of disrespect of their cultural heritage, but also of allowing, if not encouraging, illegal looting and pillaging.

The third category of museums is that of historical/memorial museums referring to particular periods of Ottoman and Turkish history of the island as well as commemorating heroes and personalities involved. Some of those museums already existed before 1974 as expressions of the Turkish Cypriot Community, such as the Dervishes Museum in Nicosia (1963), the Canbulat museum in Famagusta (1968), as well as the Museum of Barbarism (1963); these were all communal initiatives at first, which acquired official status with the change of administration. There have also been new additions to this category: the Museum of National Struggle was created in 1978 on the Turkish side of Nicosia to present a different perspective on recent history; the Dungeon and Museum of Namik Kemal, a nationalist Turkish author, exiled in Cyprus in 1873, was created in 1993 in Famagusta; whereas the Museum of Peace and Freedom commemorating the Turkish losses during the 1974 events was created in 2010 in Kyrenia.

All the different categories and museums seem to share themes echoed in broader debates of a national and political character: the possibility for peaceful co-existence in Cyprus (in some cases denied, in some cases encouraged) versus the inevitability of conflict and tension; notions of “pure” national identity based on a primary reference to a motherland outside the island versus an emphasis on local sources of identity, where heterogeneity becomes a valid model for a nation-state (or for an “imagined community”) (Scott 2002a: 225).

Case study museum: The State Gallery of Contemporary Cypriot Art

The establishment of the State Gallery of Contemporary Cypriot Art can be seen in the light described above: a continuation of Cypriot culture to the present day, reinforcement of national cultural identity, along with an interest in the development of fine arts and cultural tourism. As we will see, the political events in Cyprus as well as the cultural policy of the country influenced the collection and exhibition of the State Gallery of Contemporary Cypriot Art.

According to the State Gallery catalogue “no forms of art were produced during the whole of 19th century other than ecclesiastic and folk art” (Nikita 1998: 11). The Ottoman period is also painted as the “darkest period in the culture of the island” (Nikita 1998: 16). There is evidence that the first attempts to exhibit and promote artistic production were initiated and supported by British officials. The first art exhibition in Cyprus was organized in 1931 by the Department of Lands under the management of its director and with the support of the British governor. This first “art exhibition” included only two Greek Cypriot artists among many British artists. The “art

exhibition” became a yearly affair and by 1939, the number of participating Greek Cypriot artists surpassed that of the British artists (Nikita 1997). Interestingly, Turkish Cypriot artists do not appear to present work in these exhibitions.

Despite the subsequent production and exhibition of works by British, Turkish Cypriot and Armenian artists, only the work of two British and two Turkish Cypriot artists is currently exhibited in the galleries of the State Gallery. An explanation given by one of the main actors in the creation of the State Gallery, Dr. Eleni Nikita, is that those early exhibitions included work by mainly amateur artists and it was only after the 50s that young Cypriot artists started arriving from their studies abroad and exhibiting quality works worth collecting. Nevertheless, the collection and exhibition of works seems to support a historical narrative of a purely Cypriot art, and more specifically of a Greek Cypriot art.

The beginning

The State Gallery of Contemporary Cypriot Art in its present location opened in June 1990. However, the idea for the creation of such a gallery was born as early as 1962.

In 1960, after the independence of the island, two community assemblies were created to serve the needs of the Greek and Turkish communities respectively. In 1962, the Greek Community Assembly created a department called the Department of Cultural Development. This department was responsible for the first cultural policy of the Ministry of Education that has not changed considerably throughout the years. According to Nikita (2009):

The Department of Cultural Development followed a policy focused on the Greek civilization. The main axes of the Department’s cultural policy were the preservation and development of the specificities of the local civilization, the introduction and nurturing of all elements of the modern Greek civilization and those of the ancient Greek civilization, which are directly related to contemporary life and the introduction and assimilation of those elements of modern international civilization which are consistent with the spirit and the traditions of the Greek people, the moral and intellectual content of Greek history and the spirit of Christian religion.

As we will see, this Greek-centred policy unavoidably influenced the collection and exhibition of works in the State Gallery.

One of the first decisions the department took was to start purchasing artworks from emerging Cypriot artists in order to support local art production and galleries as well as to create a core collection for a future state gallery. The first artwork, by Christophoros Savva, was purchased in 1962 and since then, a yearly budget was allocated for the purchase of artworks (Schiza 1997). A more systematic approach towards collecting started around 1970 when the department formed a selection committee for purchasing artworks and started keeping a record of the purchases (Kyriakou 2011).

When the Ministry of Education was established in 1965, more serious thought was given to the creation of a State Gallery. The plan was to create a multi-purpose cultural centre that would include a State Art Gallery, a library and a venue for hosting cultural events. Architect Manfred Lehmbrock completed the impressive architectural plans for such a building in 1974 and its construction was planned for the near future. Unfortunately, the Turkish invasion cancelled any plans for strengthening the cultural infrastructure of the island since survival issues became a

priority (Nikita 2011). Since 1974, the annual budget of Cyprus always includes an amount for the construction of a State Gallery, but no president has taken the decision to proceed with such a plan.

Meanwhile, the artworks were steadily increasing in number but the public (and taxpayers) had no access to them. The works were stored in a small office room in the Ministry of Education. In 1979, the French Cultural Centre in Nicosia, which had its offices at Menadrou str. 1E, was moving and the cultural department saw this as an opportunity to occupy that space. The department decided to move the State Collection in the basement of the building and to create a small temporary exhibition space that would be open to the public. On November 25th 1980, the *State Collection of Contemporary Cypriot Art* was opened for the first time to the public.

From the 86 works exhibited, 56 belonged to the government and 30 were on loan from artists. The selected works were considered the best examples of Cypriot art from the beginning of the twentieth century (State Collection of Contemporary Cypriot Art Catalogue 1980). From the 55 artists represented, two were Turkish Cypriots and one Armenian Cypriot.

An opportunity to move to a larger space arose in the mid 80s when a Cypriot neoclassical mansion dating from 1925 (the house of the family of Michalakis Kouloumbis) became available. Due to the house's small restrictive spaces, this was considered a temporary solution until a proper art gallery could be built. From 1987 to 1990, the mansion (previously "Hotel Majestic") was restored in order to serve as another temporary home for the state collection. On June 28th 1990, the president of the Republic of Cyprus, Georgios Vassiliou, inaugurated the State Gallery of Contemporary Cypriot Art.

Selection of works

At the time of the opening, the gallery owned about 1000 artworks of which 120 were selected for permanent exhibition. The rest of the works remained in storage or were lent out to various governmental offices in Cyprus and abroad. A special committee (consisted of Niki Loizidi and Nicos Hadjinikolaou, professors of history of art in Greece, the Cypriot artists George Kotsonis and Andreas Efesopoulos, who represented the Cyprus Chamber of Fine Arts, Valentinos Charalambous, a specialist in ceramics and ex-professor of the Academy of Fine Arts in Bagdad and Eleni Nikita, art historian and Senior Cultural Officer at the Ministry of Education and Culture) undertook the responsibility of selecting the works of art to be exhibited in the gallery. The aim of the special committee was "to succeed in the most adequate possible presentation of the artistic course of Cyprus from the beginning of the 20th century up to the present day" (Nikita 1998: 11). The criteria for the selection of specific works were artistic merit of the highest degree. As a result, the works selected for exhibition were the works considered as the most representative of the actors and movements of Cypriot art in the twentieth century, up to the 1990s.

Apart from the Greek Cypriot artists, the collection of the State Gallery includes works by British artists who live(d) and work(ed) in Cyprus, like Glyn Hughes and John Corbridge. Turkish Cypriot artists are also represented in the collection, although not adequately in the gallery space. According to personal communication with Giorgos Kyriacou (worked at the Ministry for the period 1969-1976) and Eleni Nikita (worked at the Ministry for the period 1977-2009), the Ministry was actually purchasing works by Turkish Cypriot artists in the 60s and early 70s but

then almost stopped with the events of 1974. When the crossing between north and south opened in 2003, a climate of hope and collaboration was in the air and that resulted in a number of joint exhibitions between Greek and Turkish Cypriot artists. The Ministry of Education and Culture, in the same spirit, purchased some works by Turkish Cypriot artists who exhibited in South Cyprus. However, as the years passed and no solution to the Cyprus problem was apparent, the excitement turned into disappointment and collaborations became less and less. Nevertheless, the collecting of Turkish Cypriot artists (as well as artists belonging to other minorities, such as the Armenians) has not ceased. The visibility problem is expected to be solved with the creation of a new branch of the State Gallery, which will provide larger and more adequate space for the exhibition of works from the post-independence period onwards, including the recent years, when a more active collecting policy has been in place, which includes works of artists from other ethnic groups (Paraskevas 2010).

The special committee responsible for the exhibition considered the structure and character of the interior and style of the neo-classical building and avoided drastic alteration to the building spaces. The small and restricting areas and the absence of large surfaces for exhibiting works excluded from the outset large works, particularly constructions, installations in space and works which use contemporary materials. This is another reason that explains the limited representation of the young generation of artists.

In 1995, the State Gallery closed due to renovations and for the purpose of the renewal and enrichment of its collection. An ad hoc committee was appointed for this purpose. The selection of new works was made according to the same criteria set by the first committee whose main objective was the historical presentation of the course of contemporary Cypriot art and not the personal artistic course of artists (Nikita 1998). During this renovation, more works from the 1960s were added because it was felt that 1960, the independence year, was a crucial turning point in Cypriot art. The State Gallery retains this focus and is currently organized chronologically on three floors.

Art historians in Cyprus see the year 1960 as a year separating two eras:

a) The era that aimed at strengthening national identity and nurturing a fear towards anything foreign.

b) The era where a new generation of artists embraced international trends while rejecting the older local traditions (Danos 2006; Nikita 2009).

Before the country's independence, some artists, such as Diamantis, Kanthos and Paul Georgiou, were consciously trying to project a national identity through their works by emphasizing the natural environment and peasants of Cyprus, as well as current political events (Danos 2006; Nikita 2009). Fittingly, the morphological attention of the works was on ancient, Byzantine and folk art – the three pillars that supported Greek heritage and identity. A key figure in this attempt was the artist Adamantios Diamantis who was also the initiator of the foundation of Cypriot Studies and the first director of the Folk Art Museum in Nicosia (Diamantis 1973).

On the other hand, the new generation of Cypriot artists who were mainly active after independence saw, as their prime objective the synchronization of Cypriot art with international trends and a break with the past but this separation unavoidably created conflict between the old and new generation of artists. Characteristically, Stelios Votsis, a Cypriot artist who claimed that

the foundations of the new Cypriot art were laid in the 60s, when asked what kind of art he and his colleagues were engaged in mentioned

Structural abstraction. Not pop-art. Not because we can't or because we don't have the skills to do it, but as a reaction to the fact that art must have...a fairy-tale, in other words, figures, little donkeys, sunsets, etc. So, the new generation wanted to break the taboos, the shackles of the conventional. (Nikita 2009: 16).

The new Cypriot artists' struggle to become a part of the international avant-garde and break from the representational and often romantic notion of the landscape and its people was successful. Nowadays, most contemporary Cypriot artists follow international trends.

The State Gallery is the home of both generations of artists. The first and second floor features the work of the 'fathers' of Cypriot art who worked before 1960. The second floor allows a dialogue between the older and newer generation while the third floor shows the work of artists working after 1960. As the gallery houses the conflict between the old and new generation of artists, it also houses another conflict: the need to establish and reinforce a strong Greek Cypriot art identity and the desire to move forward towards the future, follow international trends and steer away from nationalism. A look at the temporary exhibition program of the gallery shows that the first ten years of its operation (1990-2000) the gallery aimed at achieving the first need. From 2000-02, some attempts were made to change this but continuous structural and storage problems forced the gallery to stop all temporary exhibitions after 2002.

Temporary Exhibitions

The first temporary exhibition took place in 1994 with a retrospective exhibition of Adamantios Diamantis. His paintings praise the purity of the Cypriot landscape and its people. Following that was retrospective exhibition by Tilemachos Kanthos (1995), a contemporary of Diamantis who was deeply influenced by the events in 1974 and is well known for his vivid woodcuts of suffering and terror. Another artist who is considered to be a "father" of Cypriot art is George Paul Georgiou. Byzantine and folk art influenced him and he was one of the few painters who painted artworks related to the 1955-59 struggle during its occurrence (from opening speech of the exhibition opening). He was given a retrospective exhibition at the State Gallery in 1999.

Apart from the exhibitions highlighting the art of the "fathers" of Cypriot art, the State Gallery featured art from Greece in an effort to strengthen its connection with the motherland and encourage collaborations. The State Gallery hosted the exhibition "A century of Greek Painting – from the liberation till 1930" in 1996, the exhibition "Greek Painting: the thirties" in 1997, and the exhibition "Greek Art – 20th century" in 1999. Characteristically, in 1999, Ms. Elisavet Papazoi, the Greek Minister of Culture met with Mr. Ouranios Ioannides, the Cypriot Minister of Education and Culture and discussed different ways the two countries could collaborate with cultural projects. Ms. Papazoi mentioned that Greece and Cyprus do not need a common vision of culture since "our forefathers already made sure we already have a common vision" (Schiza 1999). In addition to ties to Greek institutions, the State Gallery also formed ties with Russian art institutions. The exhibition "Masterpieces of Russian Icon Painting" in 1989 connected Russia with Cyprus by highlighting their common religion.

The exhibitions between 2000 and 2002 seem to be different in the sense that they focus on modern and contemporary art more than the exhibitions organized in the previous years (see Table 3 for a complete list of temporary exhibitions). However, due to the fact that each time a temporary exhibition was organized, all the works from the temporary collection needed to be stored in less than ideal conditions, the gallery stopped organising temporary exhibitions in 2002. In addition, a report from the office of the Commissioner for Administration (Nicolaou 2003) pointed out serious problems with cataloguing, registering, loaning and storing artworks. Also, problems with insurance and the need for better control of all the procedures were pointed out. A second report by the Ombudsman (2010) pointed out problems with security, loaning management and lack of specialized personnel. Nevertheless, there is an effort on behalf of the Ministry to create better conditions for the artworks and improve procedures: updating of security systems and digital cataloguing is currently under way despite the delays, mainly due to bureaucracy and involvement of various governmental departments. There is also the expectation that specialised personnel and general management issues will be solved with the creation of a new legal entity, the Foundation “Cyprus Museum of Contemporary Art”, whose establishment depends on political decisions and a budget. The Ministry expects considerable progress to be made within 2012 (Paraskevas 2010).

Table 3

Temporary exhibitions organized by the State Gallery

| Date | Exhibition |
|-------------|---|
| 1994 | Retrospective exhibition of Adamantios Diamantis |
| 1995 | Retrospective exhibition of Tilemaxos Kanthos |
| 09-10/1996 | “A century of Greek Painting – from the liberation till 1930” (Organisation: Ministry of Education and Culture, Cultural Services & National Art Gallery of Greece-Alexandros Soutzos Museum) |
| 09-10/1997 | “Greek Painting: the thirties” |
| 02/1998 | “Masterpieces of Russian Icon Painting” |
| 04-05/1999 | Retrospective exhibition of Georgiou Paul Georgiou (Organisation: the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Leventis Foundation) |
| 10-11/1999 | “Greek Art – 20 th century” from the Rhodes Municipal Gallery Collection |
| 06-08/2000 | “From the Chisel to the Electron” (Organisation: Nicosia Arts Centre, the Pierides Gallery, Cultural Services, the cultural services of Laiki Bank and the British Council) |
| 10-11/2001 | “The Russian Avant-Garde” |
| 10/2002 | Retrospective Exhibition of Marios Loizidi (Cypriot artist, lived in Greece) |
| 11-12/2002 | “Opi Zoyni: Imaginary Environments” (Greek artist) |

Source: The archive of the State Gallery

The gallery is currently planning to move its contemporary art collection to a new building, while maintaining its collection predating 1960 in the existing space. In 2005, the works in the storage

space were moved once more at a new building that is being renovated to host Cypriot art after 1960. Unfortunately, this is still considered a temporary solution until a proper State Gallery is built.

Conclusions

Cyprus, as a former colony and with a turbulent history, falls under the category of the “new emerging nation-states” (Aronsson 2011: 47). Museums are employed to construct, reinforce and project specific dominant values and national narratives. Run exclusively by various ministries and the vertical bureaucratic system of decision-making that entails, these museums project a cultural policy that is unavoidably influenced by political situations. Far from being representative of universal values, the museums in both parts of Cyprus focus on their territorial identities and claims. This lack of flexibility does not exist when it comes to private or municipal museums; therefore, these are usually in a better position to offer more balanced and complex narratives.

The fundamental conflicts over the interpretation of history and its presentation in the public sphere echo, in the case of Cyprus, the serious conflicts regarding borders and territorial claims. Archaeology, the discipline that brings a nation closer to its distant roots is used to support claims on the land. The emphasis that the Greek Cypriot government and other bodies place on archaeology (majority of the national museums in South Cyprus) is justified within the discourse of Hellenism and its twin pillars: antiquity and Christianity. These are the national powers invested in the museums of the State, but also in the institutions funded by other bodies, such as the Church and learned societies. The first phase of the history of national museums in Cyprus focuses on archaeology and the promotion of the country’s ancient Hellenic past. Although recent years have seen attempts towards a more balanced presentation of history (see, for instance, the privately run Leventis Municipal Museum of Nicosia), the creation of museums in Cyprus expresses the decision to select and “freeze” moments of the island’s long and turbulent history by placing them into museum settings and thus taking them away from memory and towards official, institutionalized and therefore uncontroversial histories.

The Turkish Cypriot administration places more emphasis on the historical aspect rather than the archaeological one, where there is a disadvantage compared to the Greek Cypriot side. Its main museums focus on aspects of the Ottoman past of the island – claiming, in this sense, their share of it. There is an attempt to justify the separation, by placing emphasis on the impossibility of co-existence between the two communities and the suppression received; simultaneously, and with an eye to the international community and in particular to the European Christian community, both in political and in touristic terms, an effort is made to present an open-minded approach towards the religious “Other”, i.e. the orthodox monuments and the Byzantine cultural heritage. In this sense, the existence of the icon museums itself becomes a political argument and a material proof against allegations that aim to alienate the Turkish Cypriot community from the European community as a political and economic entity.

Cypriot museums bear the difficult task of telling the story of an island from two different angles. On the one hand, there is the Greek Cypriot version focusing on the long-standing Greek presence on the island and the Greek origins of Cypriot civilisation. On the other hand, the Turkish Cypriot version claims their right to be part of an island whose history has been long, heterogeneous and multi-cultural. Unfortunately, these narratives are not usually found in any

one museum. The construction of direct, strong narratives narrated by a state amidst political and cultural conflicts often implies silencing minority voices or voices of opposition to the prevalent narrative. Described as the “silent narrative of public amnesia” (Aronsson 2010:33) this is more apparent in museums that deal directly with conflict such as the case study museums in the second phase presented in this paper. These kinds of national museums become propaganda tools directed towards the young generation (Greek and Turkish Cypriots respectively) since they do not encourage negotiation of history, memory and identity where minorities and opposing choices can be juxtaposed in order to provide a more complex and realistic account of events.

The third phase of the history of national museums is a continuation of the previous two but with a new layer added to it. After 1974, Cyprus is turning to the west for a European future and thus museums such as the State Gallery of Contemporary Art emerge dynamically (at least at first). The State Gallery provides a good example of internal and external conflicts that shape its collection and exhibition program.

In conclusion, museums are entrusted by their creators, either specific individuals or communities, with the double task of building national identity within the communities and of communicating this identity to others, visitors and tourists. However, this is an ongoing narrative, whose ending waits to be seen. And cultural heritage lies at the heart of it.

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Annex table 1, *Greek Cypriot Museums*

| Name | Inaugurated | Initiated | Actors | Ownership | Type | Values | Temporal reach | Style Location |
|--|--------------------|------------------|---|---------------------------|-------------|---|----------------------------------|---|
| Cyprus Museum | 1909 | 1882 | British Archeologists, Greek Cypriot intellectual elite | State (Antiquities Dept.) | Archaeology | Cyprus Archaeology | Neolithic period to Roman period | New, specially-built, Neo-classical building, 1909. Within the city walls, Nicosia. |
| Struggle Museum | 1962 | 1961 | State, Church, EOKA fighters | State (Cultural Services) | History | Presentation of EOKA struggle (1955-59)/ Commemorative. | 1955-1959 | The Old Archbishopric was complemented with a new wing, modern construction, 2001, Nicosia. |
| Paphos District archaeological museum | 1966 | 1936 | State | State (Antiquities Dept.) | Archaeology | Archaeological findings found in the area of Paphos. | Prehistory to Roman | Purpose built; modern building, Paphos |
| Larnaca district archaeological museum | 1969 | 1936 | State | State (Antiquities Dept.) | Archaeology | Archaeological findings found in the area of Larnaca. | Prehistory to Roman | New purpose-built; modern, Larnaca |
| Local archaeological museum of Kourion | 1969 | 1937 | State | State (Antiquities Dept.) | Archaeology | Archaeological findings found in the area of Kourion. | Prehistory to Roman | Building of 1930s (re-use), Kourion |
| Local archaeological museum of Palea Paphos in Kouklia | 1970 | | State | State (Antiquities Dept.) | Archaeology | Archaeological findings found in the area of Kouklia. | Prehistory to Middle Ages | Medieval fortress, Kouklia |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|-------|------|----------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|--|---------------------------------------|--|
| Limassol district archaeological museum | 1975 | 1948 | State | State (Antiquities Dept.) | Archaeology | Archaeological findings found in the area of Limassol. | Prehistory to 19 th cent. | New (1975) purpose-built; modern, Limassol |
| Yeroskipou museum of Folk Art | 1978 | | State | State (Antiquities Dept.) | Ethnography/ Folk art | 19 th and 20 th c. Cypriot folk art | 19 th -20 th c. | 18 th century mansion – house museum, Yeroskipou |
| Katsinioros house in the village of Fikardou | 1984? | | State | State (Antiquities Dept.) | Ethnography/ Folk art | Furniture. Embroideries, costumes, lacework etc. | 19 th -20 th c. | Restored village building, Fikardou |
| The Hatziyorgakis Kornesios Mansion | 1987 | | State | State (Antiquities Dept.) | Ethnography/ Folk Art | Covers the Byzantine, Medieval and Ottoman periods. | 19 th -20 th c. | 18 th century mansion – house museum, Nicosia |
| Limassol medieval museum | 1987? | | State | State (Antiquities Dept.) | History | History of Cyprus from the 3rd c. AD until the 18 th c. | Medieval to 18 th c. | Medieval castle, Limassol |
| Patsalos museum of traditional embroidery and silverwork in Lefkara | 1988 | | State | State (Antiquities Dept.) | Ethnography/ Folk art | Furniture. Embroideries, costumes, lacework etc. | 19 th -20 th c. | Local house – house museum, Lefkara |
| State Gallery of Contemporary Cypriot Art | 1990 | 1962 | State, Artists | State (Cultural Services) | Art | 20 th c. Cypriot Art | 20 th century | Existing neo-classical mansion (dated in 1925). Outside the old city walls, in the modern urban area, Nicosia. |

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|---|------|--|-------|---------------------------|-------------|---|---------------------|---|
| Museum of the Mycenaean Colonisation of Cyprus in Maa | 1996 | | State | State (Antiquities Dept.) | Archaeology | Copies of archaeological artefacts. | Mycenaean | New building; modern, Maa |
| Archaeological museum of Marion-Arsinoe | 1998 | | State | State (Antiquities Dept.) | Archaeology | Archaeological findings found in the ancient city of Marion. | Prehistory to Roman | New purpose-built, neo-classical facade, Marion-Arsinoe |
| Larnaca Fort | | | State | State (Antiquities Dept.) | Archaeology | Archaeological findings from the Byzantine period and 2 photographic exhibitions. | Byzantine period | Castle, Larnaca |
| Local archaeological museum of ancient Idalion | 2007 | | State | State (Antiquities Dept.) | Archaeology | Archaeological findings found in the area of ancient Idalion. | Neolithic to Roman | New building; purpose built; modern, Idalion |

Annex table 2, Turkish Cypriot Museums

| Name | Inaugurated | Initiated | Actors | Ownership | Type | Values | Temporal reach | Style Location |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|-----------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------|--|--|---|
| Canbulat's Bastion and Museum | 1968 | | State | State (Dept. of Ant. & Museums) | History | The story of Canbulat/ the Ottoman conquer of Cyprus | 16 th -19 th c. | Housed in a bastion of the city's castle, Famagusta. |
| Lapidary museum | 1928 | 1903 | George Jeffrey/ State | State (Dept. of Ant. & Museums) | Architecture | Architectural fragments | Antiquity to Ottoman period | Venetian house; in the centre of the old city, Nicosia. |
| Museum of Barbarism | 1963 | 1963 | Turkish Cypriot Community / then TRNC | State (Dept. of Ant. & Museums) | History | A house documenting a murder | 1963 event | House in the middle of the city where the events occurred, Nicosia. |
| Mevlevi Tekke | | | State | State (Dept. of Ant. & Museums) | Ethnography/ Folk art | Folk art | 16 th cent. | 16 th century building, Nicosia. |
| Dervish Pasha Mansion | 1988 | 1978 | State | State (Dept. of Ant. & Museums) | Ethnography | Ottoman artefacts | 19 th -20 th cent. | Mansion in the centre of the old city, Nicosia. |
| Namik Kemal Dungeon and Museum | 1993 | | State | State (Dept. of Ant. & Museums) | History | Celebrates the life of Namik Kemal – a «nationalist» poet and novelist | 19 th cent. | Ottoman building, built on the ruins of a Venetian one, Famagusta. |
| Aghios Ioannis church and Icon museum | After 1974 | | State | State (Dept. of Ant. & Museums) | Culture/ Art | Byzantine icons | Byzantine period | Byzantine church |
| St. Barnabas monastery and museum | After 1974 | | State | State (Dept. of Ant. & Museums) | Archaeology | Cypriot pottery from the Neolithic to the Roman period | Byzantine period | Byzantine monastery |

| | | | | | | | | |
|--|------------|------|--|--|---------------------------------|--|--|---|
| Iskele Icon museum | 1991 | | State | State (Dept. of Ant. & Museums) | Culture/ Art | Byzantine icons | Byzantine period | Church |
| Archangelos church and icon museum | After 1974 | | State | State (Dept. of Ant. & Museums) | Culture/ Art | Byzantine icons | Byzantine period | Church |
| Kyrenia Shipwreck Museum | 1976? | | Started as an initiative of the Republic of Cyprus / then TRNC | State (Dept. of Ant. & Museums) | Archaeology | Houses a hellenistic shipwreck and archaeological findings | Prehistory to Roman period | Castle of the city, Kyrenia |
| Decorative Arts Museum | | 1966 | Started as an initiative of the Republic of Cyprus / then TRNC | State (Dept. of Ant. & Museums) | Ethnography/ Folk art | Cypriot Folk Art | 19 th -20 th cent. | Colonial villa, Kyrenia |
| Cypriot Folk Art Museum | 1974? | | Started as an initiative of the Republic of Cyprus / then TRNC | State (Dept. of Ant. & Museums) | Ethnography/ Folk art | Cypriot Folk Art | | Traditional local house – house museum, Kyrenia |
| Güelyurt Museum of Archaeology and Natural History | | | State | State (Dept. of Ant. & Museums) | Natural history and archaeology | Natural history and archaeology | | Old archbishopric palace, Morphou |
| St. Mamas Church and Icon Museum | After 1974 | | State | State (Dept. of Ant. & Museums) | Culture/ Art | Byzantine icons | | Church |
| National Struggle Museum | 1989 | | State/ Military | State (Dept. of Ant. & Museum/ Military) | History | Covers the years 1878-1974 | 1955-1974 | Purpose-built, modern building, inside a military camp, Nicosia |

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|------------------------------|------|--|--------------------|---|----------|--|--------------|--|
| Museum of Peace and Freedom | 2010 | | State/ Military | State (Dept. of Ant. & Museum/ Military) | History | Commemorates Turkish and Turkish Cypriot soldiers who died in 1974 | 1974 events | Combines an exhibition in a modern building with an open air display and a cemetery; close to where the events took place, Kyrenia |
| Museum of Fine Arts - online | | | State | State (Dept. of Ant. & Museums) | Fine Art | Virtual collection of art | Contemporary | Virtual |