From Exploration to Exploitation

Giovanni Mariti, Domenico Sestini, Antonio Mondaini, and the Early History of Cypriote Archaeology

Luca Bombardieri

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Contents

p. iv.pdf	1
Pagina vuota	3
Benjamin Laker	4
363The Political Implications of COVID-19	4
What Now for Populism?	4
1 3Has It Always Been Extractive Archaeology?	16
2 7The (Re)Discovery of Cyprus Antiquity in the Eighteenth Century	20
3 11Giovanni Mariti Between Erudition and Observation	24
3.1 A Rocket	26
3.2 The Mosques, Suddenly	28
3.3 In the Field	30
3.4 A Discovery, a Donation	33
4 29The Cousin and the Ghostwriter: Domenico Sestini and Antonio Mondaini in Cypr.	42
4.1 Domenico Sestini from Florence to Basra to Larnaka in Cyprus	42
4.2 Antonio Mondaini in the Shadow of an Anagram	46
5 47Archaeology in the Largest Realm: A Prelude to Exploiting Potential	60
51Appendix	64
97Bibliography	110

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3

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Luca Bombardieri

Abstract

The earliest history of Cypriot archaeology is a horizon still largely dominated by the interests of antiquarianism and the history of collecting, but it undoubtedly constitutes a fundamental chapter in understanding many of the phenomena and current connotations of archaeology in Cyprus through the twentieth century. In fact, the extractivist model of nineteenth and twentieth-century archaeology in Cyprus stimulates a paradigm, explicit in practice, involving foreign expeditions to the island. This stimulus is not unrelated to feeding the logic behind illegal and clandestine digging, which takes the form of a parallel channel of supply for private collecting on the island and beyond, in the vast supposedly post- or de-colonial Western universe.
From this perspective, this book analyses a particular moment of transition that constitutes the genuine genesis of European interest in the Antiquity of Cyprus. A moment in which the evidence takes the tangible form of archaeological objects, losing the more ethereal form of scholarly references. We may investigate this gradual change through the practice of three Italian travellers/pseudoarchaeologists who stayed on the island at the end of the eighteenth century. Through their stories, we will try to observe the island's antiquities as they emerged to their attention, what form they might take and what practices they might produce. Attention, forms, and practices that our travellers passed on to those who followed them in the following two centuries.

Keywords History of archaeology. Exctractive archaeology. Cyprus. Antiquarianism. Decolonial studies. Eighteenth century travel memoirs.

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Table of Contents

1 Has It Always Been Extractive Archaeology? 3

2 The (Re)Discovery of Cyprus Antiquity in the Eighteenth Century 7

3 Giovanni Mariti Between Erudition and Observation 11

4 The Cousin and the Ghostwriter: Domenico Sestini and Antonio Mondaini in Cyprus 29

5 Archaeology in the Largest Realm: A Prelude to Exploiting Potential 47

Appendix 51

Bibliography 97

From Exploration to Exploitation

Giovanni Mariti, Domenico Sestini, Antonio Mondaini, and the Early History of Cypriote Archaeology

1 Has It Always Been Extractive Archaeology?

Originally used to describe the removal of natural resources particularly for export with minimal processing, 'Extractivism' is the economic model common throughout the Global South (Warnecke-Berger, Ickler 2023), but also appear as an appropriate model to outline patterns of archaeological activities in Cyprus in the second half of nineteenth century and in the transition to the twentieth. The exploitation of antiquities on the island, mainly driven by ideological and economic interests of Western museums and collectors, marked up a radical change in the approach to the ancient history of Cyprus.

Extractive archaeology by its nature triggers processes of competition among different actors at different levels and activates mechanism of accumulation, in a chain where like local diggers supply collectors with antiquities, collectors supply museums with antiquities. In this model the 'collection' becomes the reference unit for a broad phenomenon which virtually has no limit, firmly based on the supply and demand balance. This is capitalism, simply!

Dimensions of collecting and dimensions of collections were dramatically increasing when Luigi Palma di Cesnola arrived in Cyprus as Consul of the United States to the Ottoman Sublime Porta in 1865, side by side with his colleagues in diplomacy and potential pseudo archaeologists, George Colonna Ceccaldi, Dominic Colnaghi, Luis and Charles de Maricourt.[1] Both the processes of competition and accu-

1 Masson 1993; Yon 2011, 42; Bonato, Emery 2010; Bombardieri 2015.

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mulation mentioned above are well visible in the ongoing formation of collection of antiquities since the first years of their exploration (and exploitation) of the island.

Bounia and colleagues recently analysed the contested perceptions of archaeology in modern Cyprus (Stylianou-Lambert, Bounia 2016; Bounia, Nikolaou, Stylianou-Lambert 2021; see also Knapp, Antoniadou 1998), identifying three main actors interacting on common ground, but with only incidentally concomitant ideological perspectives (and interests). The three actors in the field are Cypriots/local diggers, Cypriot intellectuals/antiquities dealers, and colonial rulers/foreign archaeologists, collectors and museums.

While the former appear functional to the action of the latter, providing services and information that constitute the premise of the extractive initiatives in the field, the Cypriot intellectuals/antiquities dealers are credited with the desire to look at the island's antiquities as a basic element in the construction of national identities. To these are owed instances of cultural protectionism and the initiative to create and support institutions of protection and promotion that still exist today on the island.

Members of the Greek-speaking *élite* increasingly acquired a significant financial and cultural weight in Cyprus, thus becoming the most powerful part of the Ottoman merchant class. This growing financial strength could not be translated into equivalent political prerogatives. Thus, in this direction, the intellectual movement of the so-called 'Neo-Hellenic Enlightenment' played a major role in the expansion and the expression of the Greek national ideology (Patiniotis 2015; Papageorgiou 1997, 56; Tabaki 2003). Early proclaims and political initiatives aiming at the unification of Cyprus and Greece emerge with the onslaught of the Greek Revolution and the creation of the modern Greek State and the first President of Greece, Ioannis Kapodistrias, called for the union of Cyprus with Greece already in 1828 (Papageorgiou 1997, 56-7). These aspirations remained at a peak during the last years of Ottoman occupation and became the predominant political issue during the entire colonial period.

Following Rüsen's theory on historical consciousness, it might be argued that Cypriot intellectuals/antiquities dealers appear using the past by a traditional mean of identification (Rüsen 2014, 72; see also Bonacchi 2022, 140-6). This way, the past is interpreted for the sake of understanding the present, but even more clearly as a tool for anticipating a desired future. Thus, this interest does not appear neutral or autonomous; on the contrary, it is welded in turn with political and cultural instances that again call into question the action of foreign actors on the island.

With the handover of Cyprus from Ottoman authority under British rule in 1878, Greek Cypriot intellectuals began to use the growing Western interest in the Classical Past as a strong political

tool in the strategy of asserting the island's Hellenic identity (Michael 2005, 24-56; see also Hamilakis, Yalouri 1996) and its long-standing aspirations for *enosis* with Greece. This produced two apparently divergent needs. The first is the need to promote local collections and establish museums on the island where archaeological objects may be exhibited, emphasising this link with Greece and 'educate' the Cypriot audience. In 1882, the Cyprus Museum – Greek in its architecture – with marble imported from Greece for the construction of the entrance *pronaos*, was promoted on the strong initiative of the Greek Cypriot intellectual *élite* (Stanley-Price 2001; Merrillees 2005; Stylianou-Lambert, Bounia 2016, 69-72).[2] The second parallel need is to encourage foreign expeditions to the island, stimulating the acquisition of collections of Cypriot antiquities by major Western museums, to keep European interest in Cyprus' classical past and Hellenism alive.

The community of Turkish Cypriot intellectuals is also confronted with a similar need and the necessity of constructing the identity of the island, using antiquity as a foundation to justify political demands and cultural claims. The past chosen by this community is, by contrast, the medieval past, linked to the Lusignan dynasty. Likewise the Cyprus Museum and with similar accents, the Musée Lapidaire was founded in Nicosia in 1928 (Bounia, Nikolaou, Stylianou-Lambert 2021, 120; Stylianou-Lambert, Bounia 2016, 69-72).

In parallel, colonial rulers/foreign archaeologists, western collectors and museums developed their extractivist standard in this scenario, with increasing negative effects on the potential of archaeological research (Given 2024). With the events that have shaped the current connotation of archaeology in Cyprus through the twentieth century, it must be noted that the practice and perception of the actors in the field is very similar to that described and proclaimed as early as the nineteenth century. The extractivist model stimulated a paradigm, explicit in practice, involving foreign expeditions to the island. This stimulus has not been unrelated to feeding the logic behind illegal and clandestine digging, which take the form of a parallel channel of supply for private collecting on the island and beyond, in the vast supposedly post- or de-colonial phenomenon.[3] As Stylianou-Lambert and Bounia stigmatised, "the first interest in the antiquities

2 Interestingly, among the founding members of the Cyprus Museum was Demetrios Pierides, whose collection of antiquities is the earliest core of Pierides family antiquities gallery, currently exhibited in the nation's oldest private museum, the Pierides Museum in Larnaka. Ideological issues have been described behind Demetrios Pierides' legacy and collecting activity in these terms: "he would collect ancient artefacts, thereby preventing their illegal export to Europe and America" (Koudanaris 2002, 1).

3 See a general overview of practices and networks of illicit traffic of cultural goods in Brodie, Yates 2019; as to the specific case for Cyprus see Given 1998; Alphas 2017 and Pilides, McCarthy 2014.

of Cyprus came from looters and treasure-hunters" (Stylianou-Lambert, Bounia 2016, 72), and rather than being just the original sin, this phenomenon requires an evidence-based active engagement.

This is a dynamic picture that still needs in-depth reflection, especially in the search for the deepest roots of this set of interrelated phenomena. The earliest history of Cypriot archaeology in the eighteenth century is a horizon still largely dominated by the interests of antiquarianism and the history of collecting, but it undoubtedly constitutes a fundamental chapter in understanding many of the phenomena we have briefly outlined here.

In this perspective, the following pages are devoted to the analysis of a particular moment of transition that constitutes the genuine genesis of European interest in the Antiquity of Cyprus. A moment in which the evidence takes the tangible form of archaeological objects, losing the more ethereal form of scholarly references. We may investigate this gradual change through the practice of three Italian travellers who stayed on the island at the end of the eighteenth century. Through their stories, we will try to observe the island's antiquities as they emerged to their attention, what form they might take and what practices they might produce. Attention, forms, and practices that our travellers passed on to those who followed them in the following two centuries.

2 The (Re)Discovery of Cyprus Antiquity in the Eighteenth Century

A small community of western Europeans settled in Larnaka already in the first years of Ottoman rule on the island, and then gradually grew and organised itself.[1] A milestone in this process is marked by the establishment of stable diplomatic headquarters with the essential aim of supporting Western commercial interests in the trade routes to the Levant. The establishment of diplomatic missions in Cyprus is achieved through the development of a bilateral mechanism linked to the so-called capitular regime. On the basis of the capitulations and subsequent confirmation treaties between the Sublime Porta and other states, foreigners residing in the territory of the empire, and thus also in Cyprus, were subject to the laws of their respective countries (Van den Boogert 2005; Stavrides 2009); although in the Ottoman law the capitular regime was understood as a form of domestic law, the stipulation of capitulations had the result of granting members of non-Muslim communities a *de facto* semi-autonomy regarding their status (Stavrides 2009, 103-4). A capitular agreement between the Ottoman Empire and France dates to 1535, with similar characters a capitulation was made with Great Britain in 1580 and in the following decades the first official diplomatic posts were established in Cyprus; in 1636 Richard Glover, attaché of the British consulate in Aleppo was sent to the new seat in Larnaka, in 1661 Roger

1 Luke 1969; Pouradier Duteil-Loizidou 1991; Severis 2000; Gilet 2005.

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Fowkes was appointed the first French consul in Cyprus (Luke 1969, 88; Pouradier Duteil-Loizidou 1991; Severis 2007, 20).

The framework of capitular agreements and the birth of diplomatic representations clearly constituted the legal perimeter and logistical footholds of a comfort zone within which European economic and commercial interests in the eastern Mediterranean were to develop. The special emphasis on trade routes to East by Jean-Baptiste Colbert initiative soon appears as an alternative to the new transoceanic expansionistic policy of Spain and Portugal.[2] In this perspective, a prominent role was played by the multinational Company of the Levant, which officially established itself in Cyprus from 1636 and throughout the eighteenth century was to remain the fundamental pivot of the trade routes crossing the island (Laidlaw 2010).

The initial need to cultivate European ways and lifestyles in appearances gradually dissipated into assimilation with the island's Greek-speaking *élite*; an indication of the desire to curb this phenomenon is the ordinance promulgated in 1726 instructing French residents in the Levant to wear western clothes, teach their children the French language and – more generally – observe French customs (Severis 2007, 21; Hadjikyriakos 2009; Pouradier Duteil-Loizidou 2012). In fact, however, marriages between westerners and members of Larnaka's wealthy Greek-speaking society were rare, most westerners in the city spoke Greek and, in addition to their mother tongue, adopted the common French-Italian *lingua franca* widely used throughout the eastern Mediterranean.[3]

Merchant, diplomat, traveller, ethnographer, archaeologist *ante litteram*, these definitions represent an indefinite spectrum and constitute a continuum between *otium* and *negotium* for most of the community of Western Europeans living in Larnaka during the eighteenth century.

In this variable-profile community we list three Tuscan travellers to whom we owe the first circumstantial archaeological reports from the island of Cyprus to Italy. Prolific 'reporters', explicit or unwitting protagonists, Antonio Mondaini, Giovanni Mariti and Domenico Sestini stayed on the island during the second half of the eighteenth century and recounted the island's antiquities with personal eyes and different personalities (Pasta 2021; Bombardieri 2013; 2021a).

2 Ames 1996; Dormois 2004; on Jean-Baptiste Colbert and Cyprus cf. also Depping 1855, 580 and Clément 1873, 104.

3 As Mariti (1769, 334) notes "a European who wishes to marry informs his consul, who offers no objection if the man be a merchant or able to maintain a wife, and the woman is a European or the *protégée* of a Christian Power. It is expressly forbidden to a European to marry an Ottoman subject. In that case, the consul could not help him, and would withdraw his protection from both the man and the woman". On the specific regulations and customary behaviours related to weddings see in detail Dakhlia 2016; Hadjikyriakos 2021; Trentin 2019.

The wealth and variety of information that we can glean from their travel accounts is already recognised by contemporaries and still significantly enriches our knowledge of the island in its most varied and disparate aspects, from political chronicle, botany and agriculture, geography and linguistics to ethnography and folklore, archaeology, and antiquarianism.

The spread of archaeological findings on the island is nothing new. Apart from the sporadic finds of coins from Kition (Cizio) by the Florentine merchant Alessandro Rinuccini and the inscriptions transcribed in Cyprus by Ciriaco di Ancona in the mid-fifteenth century, all of which are now scattered and are difficult to attribute (Rinuccini [1474] 1993, 133-4; Calvelli 2009, 33-4, 58-69), during the last phase of Venetian rule, antiquarian interests had already taken on the appearance of a widespread phenomenon in Cyprus. In this period, numerous travel accounts document the exploration of archaeological sites with the explicit intention of recovering ancient remains, which quickly became popular *souvenirs* for pilgrims and, on a larger scale, antiquarian fetishes to be recognised as valuable in the process of ideological legitimisation of the Serenissima's aristocracy (Calvelli 2009, 332-3). Although Cyprus was a privileged source of antiquities to supply the Venetian antiquities market, it remains uncertain to reconstruct the arrival of individual artefacts in Italy during this period.

The only two documentable and conceivable cases are linked to the activities of Giovanni Maria Bembo, captain of Famagusta between 1546 and 1548, and his successor and later lieutenant of the island Giovanni Renier. Bembo is linked by the chronicles to the legend of the so-called *Sepolcro di Venere*, which was placed in Famagusta at his behest (Guazzo 1553); he himself is later attributed with the arrival in Venice of a sarcophagus lid, now part of the Museo Correr collections.[4] More certain appear to be the news, this time supported by contemporary sources, concerning the shipment of the famous *Sarcofago delle Amazzoni*, found in Soli, sent to Venice by Ranier in 1558 and, after a late long journey, today part of the Kunsthistorisches Museum collections in Vienna (Fleischer et al. 1998, 7-9; Calvelli 2009, 154-5).

With the passage of the island under the aegis of the Sublime Porta and during the following two centuries, despite the changed framework of balances and relations with the West, there was no reversal in the activity of rediscovering the island's antiquity, both in terms of scholarly reconstruction and field exploration and exploitation.

4 Scrinzi 1899-1900; Hermary 1985; 2015, 202-3; Calvelli 2012, 34.

3 Giovanni Mariti Between Erudition and Observation

Summary 3.1 A Rocket. – 3.2 The Mosques, Suddenly. – 3.3 In the Field. – 3.4 A Discovery, a Donation.

Within the framework of the increased interest in antiquities on the island in the eighteenth century, a prominent role, as mentioned, is certainly played by Antonio Mondaini, Giovanni Mariti and Domenico Sestini.

Wider is the wealth of information gleaned from the work of Mariti on Cyprus, which in the years following his return to Italy became a constant point of reference for his work and life experience **[fig. 1]** (Bombardieri 2013; 2019; Pasta 2021). Having landed in Cyprus in 1760, Mariti initially went on to Acri in Palestine, where he spent the next two years as a procurator and commercial agent for the English company Wasson. He then moved back to the island, settling in the city of Larnaca in the retinue of the English consul Timothy Turner, who also held the post of vice-consul of the Grand Duke of Tuscany at the time. His particularly favourable relations with Consul Turner soon enabled Mariti to take up the post of chancellor of the consulate, replacing Antonio Mondaini from Livorno, as we will mention below in greater details.

It is precisely to the Levantine years that almost all of Mariti's publishing activity can be referred, both his historic books and travel

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Figure 1
Portrait of Giovanni Mariti. Litografia Ridolfi-Gozzini. Fondo Mariti. Courtesy of Archivio Storico dell'Università di Bologna

chronicles (*Viaggi per l'isola di Cipro e per la Soria e Palestina fatti dall'anno 1760 al 1768, Istoria della guerra accesa nella Soria l'anno 1771 by the arms of Aly-Bey of Egypt, Istoria della guerra della SoE ria proseguita fino alla fine di Aly-Bey of Egypt, Memorie istoriche di Monaco de' Corbizzi fiorentino Patriarca di Gerusalemme, Cronologia de' Re Latini di Gerusalemme, Dissertazione istorico-critica sull'antica città di Citium, Istoria di Faccardino Grand-Emir dei Drusi, Memorie istoriche del Popolo degli Assassini e del Vecchio della Montagna loro capo e signore*), and the scientific essays (*Del Vino di Cipro, Della Robbia)*.

Despite the different intentions, it is worth noting that naturalistic and scientific observations are an important part of the travel writings, just as the historic and scientific essays are rich in colourful notes. It is in this balance that the cultured popularisation and flowing style that made Mariti's work so popular at the time is outlined, making his books famous in Italy and throughout Western Europe.[1]

1 On the peculiar case for the French version of Mariti's *Viaggi* see Pasta 2021, 25-9.

In fact, the suggestiveness of his writings precisely derives from the perception of his normality. Mariti is not a great traveller, court envoy, nor a devout pilgrim. He is a man of culture, a member of the Accademia Etrusca di Cortona, of the Accademia dei Georgofili, but not a scholar by profession, like his cousin Domenico Sestini, as mentioned below. Mariti has wide-ranging interests and a curious and attentive gaze to which we owe the ability to see what escapes the eyes of the traveller, conditioned by rapidity and occasionality, and even more what escapes the eyes of the pilgrim, accustomed to reading the Holy Land in the light of religious stereotypes. On a narrower and more immediate horizon, Mariti's writings can be framed in the reforming climate of Pietro Leopoldo, in line with the Grand Duke's progressive commitment, as is best shown by the scientific treatises that evidently aim to convey to an uneducated public technical notion useful for optimising agricultural and industrial production (Venturi 1998, 106-7).

In a broader context, the fortune of Mariti's work is also indirectly determined by Europe's expansionist policies in the East and its sights on the declining and disintegrating Ottoman Empire. It is well known, in fact, the effort made by European chancelleries in those years to commission, or promote, travel works that could provide detailed information on the topography of still largely unexplored places, but also information on traditions, customs and cults, and of course on local institutions and political balances (Pasta 2008; 2021).

A few pages devoted to individual episodes of his travels give a particular measure of the richness of themes and normality of approach that are worth illustrating.

3.1 A Rocket

Under the heading 'Giovanni Mariti ethnographer', for instance, we may list descriptions that shine with acute attention but also with sympathy, in some cases perhaps empathy, aroused in him by chance encounters with the inhabitants of the villages visited.

Women, for example, who hardly ever appear in pilgrimage reports and, when they do, resemble evanescent figures, ghosts that the pilgrims' fantasies or fears tend to relegate to the background, finally appear in Mariti's account. And this appearance, which has nothing striking about it and again has all the appearance of a flat description, is even more important if we consider the disdain for Oriental women that transpires in the commonplace of the decades to follow. A negative image poised between the exotic fantasies of Montesquieu's *Lettres Persanes* and the rigid image of segregation, stirred up by Lamartine who speaks of the "females of the barbarians" (Lamartine [1835] 2000, 317) and above all by François-René de Chateaubriand,

who again fifty years later in his *Itinéraire de Paris à Jérusalem et de Jérusalem à Paris* gives us a similar portrait:

> These beautiful statues are often draped in rags; the air of misery, dirt and suffering debases such pure forms; a copper-coloured complexion hides the regularity of the features; in a word, to see these women as I have just painted them, one must see them from afar, be content with the whole and not go into detail. (Chateaubriand [1811] 1969, 1011-12)

Mariti has the opposite attitude, and his portraits do not entirely correspond to the later stereotype of male despotism: instead, they are described as combative women, like the women of Bethlehem who help the men prepare their weapons, or like the Bedouin women, heirs to a great medical tradition. Lacking doctors among the Arabs, the use of medicine remained only in women, and therefore the sick resorted to them; they knew the virtues of many herbs and applied them with much profit (Mariti 1770, 14).

An episode that takes place near Jaffa in Palestine, features a French friend of Mariti, a real person, but also a character who here takes on the guise of the average Westerner, the figure who in Mariti's eyes cannot understand and therefore cannot adapt. In this case the Frenchman is lured into a trap by a small group of women who, all naked, bathe at a spring. Mariti observes the idyllic scene from the top of the hill and the young Frenchman as he decides to take advantage of the opportunity to find so many women gathered, without men in tow, who at first seem to welcome him, and here is the description of what follows in the words of Mariti:

> As soon as they thought they had him in their midst, they closed in on him in a circle, and when he was inside, they jumped on him, some scratching him, some punching him. Good for him that he did not lose heart and therefore managed to escape from their hands, but they accompanied him for a long time by throwing stones at him, the blows of which did not all go to the vote. (282)

What it is quite sadly noted about status and conditions of women in the Levant ("Pure le Donne in Levante provano in generalmente non so che di schiavitù") is explained by Mariti through Montesquieu's words:

> in warm climates, women are nubile at eight, nine or ten years of age, so childhood and marriage almost always go hand in hand. They are old by the time they are twenty, so reason never goes hand in hand with beauty. (Mariti 1769, 112)

But, such an explanation is only part of Mariti's picture. In his view Cypriote women get some extra attitude, a power in lightness that seems to always give them a second chance beyond physical beauty. They are smart and wise ("le donne sono generalmente di bell'occhio, ma di brutte fattezze, e poche se ne trovano di rara bellezza"); they live long and stay alive ("vivono molto, e spesso si rimaritano essendo già bisnonne"), and the reason is that they are able to enjoy, even in troubles ("tutti i Greci amano i sollazzi, ma i Cipriotti all'eccesso; nè si perdono d'animo per quanto sieno tiranneggiati dal Governo") (Mariti 1769, 109).

Again, the prolonged stay in the countries he visited, and the freshness of his gaze gave Mariti the opportunity to get to know, the taste for description far removed from the stereotypes to which the traveller is subject. Firstly, the biblical stereotype that was the main filter and would remain so throughout the following century until reappearing unexpectedly again at the turn of the twentieth century, in the pages of Matilde Serao, who at the discount of her sensibility indulges on several occasions in portraits of stiffened figures, who almost give the impression of acting out unconscious sacred scenes.

> Ah, one must see them, when they go down to Jerusalem, with the jars of oil on their hips, or with the basket of fruit, walking rhythmically, with their veil thrown up from their beret, in statuesque folds, with their little feet barely touching the ground! They watch and pass by, quietly proud, and yet humble: and in the afternoon, having greeted the Holy Sepulchre, having finished their work with prayer, they return, in groups of four or five, to their gracious country. They do not sing, they do not speak, their beautiful mouths are silent and proud. (Serao [1899] 2005, 142-3)

Here are the women described by Matilde Serao, like the plaster characters of a nativity scene, the same images that photographers still produced and reproduced in the first half of the twentieth century. Few human subjects, posed to recreate the biblical atmosphere (even biblical scenes or episodes, such as the women at the well) **[fig. 2]** or, shot from a distance, to provide a living yardstick or to give a touch of life to a monument or a landscape. Once again, it is the Holy Land that prevails over the Levant (Rostagno 2009, 108). For Giovanni Mariti, this is not the key, nothing overrides the normality of his simple observation. Even when his gaze encounters art, history and, indeed, archaeology.

Figure 2 The iconography of women at the well between the sacred and the profane. Left: Cypriot women at the well, as illustrated by Antonio Mondaini (adapted from Namindio 2007, 331). Right: woman figure (Sofie) at the well clad in richly embroidered costume. Bethlehem on the background (photo dated 23 September 1938). Photos adapted from G. Eric and Edith Matson Photograph Collection. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. https://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/matpc/

3.2 The Mosques, Suddenly

Giovanni Mariti also turns, with new attention, to Islamic monumental architecture. This different assessment of the great Islamic architectural complexes marks a break with an established norm that denied the very existence of an art and architecture that had evidently left ample evidence throughout the Levant.

In sixteenth- and seventeenth-century sources, it is customary to describe the impressive remains of Christian sacred buildings, mentioning churches transformed into mosques, but never describing them. Jean de Thevenot proceeds to a substantial purge, but even earlier and more forcefully so does Francesco Alcarotti, who in his 1596 Journey to the Holy Land even goes so far as to candidly deny it, stating that "there are no factories of any ornament, except churches and other houses made by Christians" (de Thevenot 1665; Alcarotti 1596, 171).

In this vein, Mariti shows a different approach too, as the case for the sacred complex of the Haram al-Sharif in Jerusalem demonstrates. This imposing architectural complex stretches over a large open area that is described as the Temple esplanade, or the Temple of Solomon, without further specification. Christians had no access to that area, and therefore anyone who wanted to describe the build-

ings had to describe them from an elevated place that allowed a view. Nevertheless, even descriptions of this kind and with this view were not common until Mariti's time and would not be the norm among later travellers. The description of the "wonderful Islamic Mosque", on the other hand, occupies many pages of *Viaggi* (Mariti 1770, 94-9), which Mariti dedicates not only to historical investigation but also, thanks to the help of a Muslim collaborator, to the description of the interior set-up and furnishings which, as a Christian, he had not been able to observe in person.

Mariti is therefore aware of this sort of conspiracy of silence perpetrated against Islamic architecture and art, as is evident from the clear stance he takes on the attribution of the monumental cistern in Ramallah, the so-called St Helena Cistern.

> Outside the town of Rama about half a mile one sees a stupendous vaulted cistern supported by twenty-four arches. This work I think could be the work of the Saracens, and I do not know how to attribute it to St Helena as some would have it, much less to the time of the Latin Christians. I do not know why the Saracens have not hitherto been attributed many of the great factories of Palestine. Perhaps under the name, they believed themselves incapable of conceiving them, but they did not lack, according to their taste, genius for majestic buildings. (Mariti 1787a, 41)

Half a century later, it is still René de Chateaubriand who argues with Mariti and himself about the foundation of this building, the construction of which he continues to attribute to Constantine's mother (Chateaubriand [1811] 1969, 975), as does Giulio Ferrario who, while acknowledging the weight of belief in the attribution of the complex to St Helena, does not go so far as to propose any different hypothesis.

> Near Rama is a cistern said to be the work of Constantine's mother. [...] If one were to believe local traditions, St Helena would have erected all the monuments of Palestine, which cannot be combined with the advanced age of this princess when she made the Pilgrimage to Jerusalem. But it is certain from the unanimous testimonies of Eusebius, St Jerome and all ecclesiastical historians that Helena contributed greatly to the restoration of the holy places. (Ferrario 1831, 22)

Both were of course destined to be contradicted by developments in research, probably too late for it to carry any weight beyond the confines of the historical and archaeological debate.

In this perspective, the pages devoted to Islamic art and architecture on the island of Cyprus should also be read. Giovanni Mariti visits and carefully describes the mosques that arose from the archi-

VIAGGI
PER
L'ISOLA DI CIPRO
E PER
LA SORIA E PALESTINA
FATTI
DA GIOVANNI MARITI
FIORENTINO
DALL' ANNO MDCCLX
AL MDCCLXVIII
TOMO I

MDCCLXIX

Figure 3
Frontispiece
of the *Viaggi*, Tomo I,
with the sketch map of ancient Kition
(from Mariti 1769)

tectural reworking of monumental Gothic complexes dating back to the time of the French Lusignan rule. An architectural phenomenon that is also historically important, to which Mariti is a close witness. In precise detail, he describes the church and sacred area of St Sophia in Nicosia and in Famagusta the church of St Nicholas, built in the early fourteenth century at the behest of the Genoese governor of the city and transformed into a mosque in 1571 with the construction of the minaret in place of one of the side towers on the façade.

The most interesting archaeological pages remain, however, those of the archaeologist Mariti in the field, where one can once again read valuable notes and colourful observations, tuned to the double register of improvisation, on the one hand, and careful participation, on the other.

3.3 In the Field

Like most westerners on the island, Mariti resides in Larnaka, the seat of major diplomatic representations and the centre of international trade on the island. During the years of his stay, the area where the ancient settlement was extending, now below the modern city of Larnaka and which regular urban excavations would only reveal two centuries later to correspond to the city of Kition, was outside the in-

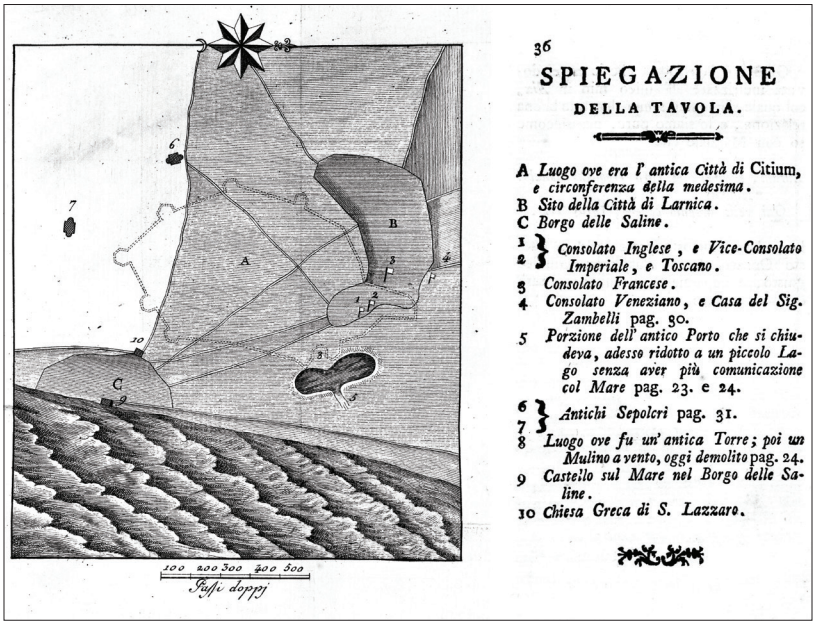

Figure 4 The area of modern Larnaka and ancient Citium with location of specific spots mentioned in the Dissertazione. Captions for the Illustration: A. Ancient Citium and its borders; B. The city of Larnaka; C. Borgo delle Saline. 1, 2. Residence of the British Consul, Residence of Imperial and Tuscan Vice-Consul; 3. Residence of the French Consul; 4. Residence of the Venetian Consul and house of Mr. Zambelli; 5. Portion of the ancient closed harbour, currently a small lake with no access to the sea; 6, 7. Ancient burials; 8. Location of an ancient tower, then transformed in a windmill, actually in ruins; 9. Castle on the sea in the Borgo delle Saline; 10. Saint Lazarus church). Offset map (from Mariti 1787). Courtesy of Biblioteca Centrale Nazionale di Firenze

habited areas and constituted an accessible site for supplying building material to be re-used in construction (Nicolaou 1976; Yon 2011).

Mariti's interest does not run out with erudite reconstruction, and the historian's distance is shortened by chance through first-hand participation and translated into practice in the field. Mariti does not actively promote excavations, but invents himself capable of convincing reports for the Ottoman authorities, providing us in his *Viaggi* and then in his *Dissertazione* with a first archaeological map **[figs 3-4]**, decidedly more punctual than the only previous one produced in 1743 by Pococke, with the location of the emergencies he witnessed and which he describes in detail (Bombardieri 2013, 596-9):

> In the time of my stay in Cyprus, and more precisely in 1766, many Sarcophagi were found to the north of Larnica, and in an elevated place. These were of a kind of very soft marble, and capable of containing a lying corpse, but without inscriptions, and in some

> there were several heads with small terracotta pots filled with tiny bones, which looked like birds.
>
> The land where these were discovered belonged to Signor Zambelli, a Venetian shopkeeper, and the bricklayers came across it when they were laying the foundations of a house, which the said Signor Zambelli had built there.
>
> The Turks claimed that he had disturbed the repose of the dead Muslims, but once it was shown that the human bodies were not arranged there according to their ritual, and that they belonged to very ancient times, everything was calmed down with a few gifts.
>
> Two other repositories, or rather burial chambers, can still be observed outside the enclosure of the ancient wall and moat of Citium. Each one is formed of large, huge stones joined together, which must have been transported there from some hills about ten miles away. The same friend of mine, in order to confirm that Larnica was a burial ground, says that he came down to see many such tombs, among which he esteems remarkable 'one found under the house of a certain Yianni the Watchmaker Cypriot, consisting of a large vaulted chamber supported by two arches, in which were two deposits with a few bones inside, some of which exceeded the ordinary stature of the largest men of our times'. He adds that in the garden of the House of the Three Cypresses' four sepulchral chambers of various sizes had been discovered at the time when the French shopkeeper Monsieur Hermitte lived there, built on the same model as the above-mentioned ones, and others had been found in those surroundings. (Mariti 1787b, 13-14)
>
> As far as Citium itself is concerned, where and how it appears to us, the foundations of many old structures have been found out and, during all the years I stayed in Cyprus, they continued to be unravelled, most of them being large squared dressed stones, then used for the foundations of other buildings currently being constructed across nearby Larnica.
>
> Also, the antiquities found make it certain that a city was placed there. Moreover, having returned in 1783 from his journeys before continuing to travel abroad, Mr. Abbot Sestini, my cousin, who also visited Cyprus, assured me that new ancient evidence had been traced back, and especially some Roman inscriptions, which he is going to publish in his book. He is also of the constant feeling that the ruins of Citium should be sought there and not elsewhere. (22-23)

A few decades before Mariti, the Russian monk Basil Gregorevich Barski, who stayed in Cyprus on several occasions between 1726 and 1736, gives numerous details of the different neighbourhoods

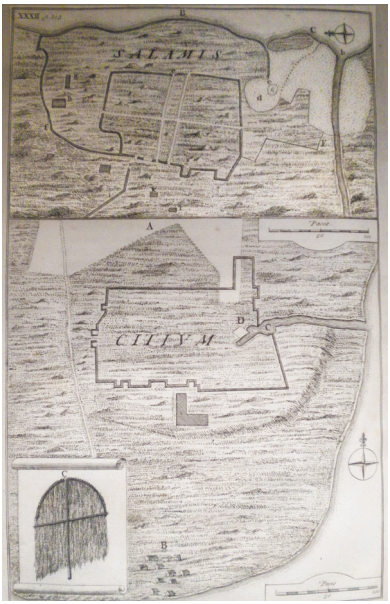

Figure 5 Sketch maps of ancient Kition and ancient Salamis (adapted from Pococke 1743, Pl. XXXII)

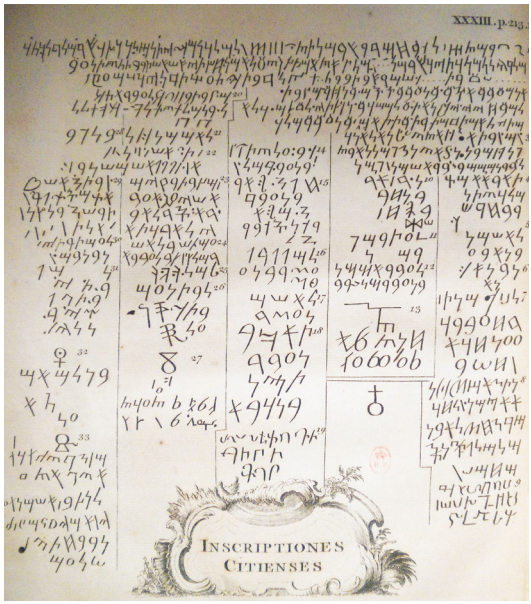

Figure 6 Inscriptions from ancient Kition. Citienses Inscriptiones (adapted from Pococke 1743, Pl. XXXIII)

that had developed in Larnaca, indicating their names: 'La Scala', the 'Castro' and 'old Larnaca'. In the schematic drawing of the city he illustrates, the toponym 'Bamboula', site of ancient Kition is also indicated, without, however, mentioning any evident, emerging, or visible archaeological remains (Severis 1999, 9-19; Yon 2011, 34).

It is plausible that the Russian monk was not interested in this evidence, since the fortifications of ancient Kition were visible at the time and clearly identified by the toponym 'Citium' in the map of Larnaca made by Richard Pococke and published in his *Description of the East* in 1743 **[fig. 5]** (Pococke 1743, Pl. XXXII; Bombardieri 2013, 597 fig. 7).

Pococke is certainly the first witness not only of visible remains, but also of accidental archaeological discoveries, the result of securing material for new building operations. It is worth to mention that he himself copied 33 Phoenician inscriptions inscribed on stone foundation blocks without being able to interpret them, twenty years before Abbot Barthélémy interpreted this writing thanks to the Maltese bilingual **[fig. 6]** (Pococke 1743, 212, Pl. XXXIII; Barthélémy 1764). Likewise, Pococke also pays special attention to the burial chambers that came to light during excavation works:

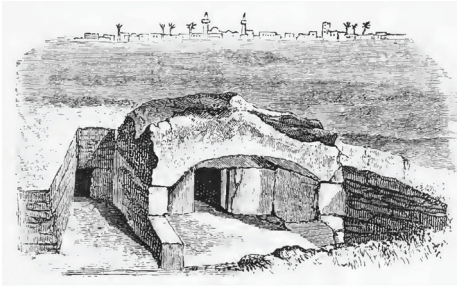

Figure 7
Chamber tomb described and located by Mariti in the Phaneromeni vicinity, as later appeared to Luigi Palma di Cesnola (1877, 49) (top) and in *The Illustrated London News* (Suppl. *Illustrated London News*, 5 October 1878, 325) (bottom)

> They have discovered a great number of ancient sepulchers in and about the city of Larnaca; I saw some built of hewn stone; in one of them I observed the stones were laid long the top like large beams, and others laid over them like a floor; there is another which ends at top in an angle, and both are of excellent workmanship and finished in the most perfect manner. (Pococke 1743, 213)

Similarly, Drummond admires "the well-dressed stones of a prodigious size" (1754, 153) in the area later referred to by Carsten Niebuhr as "Ayia Phaneromeni" (Niebuhr 1766, fig. 6; see also Niebuhr 1837, 20-33, Pl. III). This area probably corresponds to a part of the southern necropolis and one of the underground chambers described by these travellers in the eighteenth century, of which we have ample evidence in later modern sources **[fig. 7]** (Nicolaou 1976, 162; see in particular Palma di Cesnola 1877, 49; Unger, Kotschy 1865, 527), is today transformed into a place of worship and can still be seen below the modern church of 'Panayia Phaneromeni', thanks to the conservation work of the Cyprus Department of Antiquities (Gunnis 1936, 108; Nicolaou 1976, 160; Yon 2011, 35). In particular, the description given by Mariti plausibly corresponds to two chamber tombs of the Cypro-Archaic period, both located in his 1787 map with the indication "ancient sepulchres". One of these is

certainly the chamber tomb of 'Phaneromeni' mentioned above and the other is probably to be located not far from it in the 'Sotiros' district.[2]

In more general terms, the archaeological observations published by Mariti, as well as the reports by Pococke and Niebuhr, who visited Larnaca in 1766,[3] were referred to until recent years, recognising a certain documentary value, however difficult to contextualise, even in the context of the systematic archaeological investigations uninterruptedly conducted in the area of ancient Kition.[4]

3.4 A Discovery, a Donation

Within the framework of the archaeological observations conducted by Mariti, all of which are intertwined with the authority of the ancients and the moderns, in the common endeavour to prove the true location of ancient Kition, the narration of a single episode that occurred in 1767 seems to prove particularly significant (Bombardieri 2019).

This is a casual discovery narrated by Mariti in very similar terms, both in the *Viaggi*:

> I myself, in the year 1767, came upon an excavation that was being carried out for the purpose of extracting stones, among which the workers found a head of white marble, representing Antoninus Caracalla, and many Greek medals of the Roman Empire, Septimius Severus, Antoninus Caracalla, Julia Domna, with the Greek inscription, and on the reverse side the Temple of Pafo with the legend ΚΟΙΝΟΝ ΚΥΠΡΩΝ, and some with Caracalla on one side, and Geta on the opposite side; and in addition to these, medals of Claudius Caesar Augustus with Latin inscription, and on the reverse a laurel wreath, in the middle of which is written ΚΟΙΝΟΝ ΚΥΠΡΩΝ. The mentioned head passed into the hand of Mr. Timothy Turner,

2 The first one corresponds to Nicolaou no. 55 (Nicolaou 1976, 200), which is virtually on the route to the southern section of the city walls of Kition; the second one, more uncertainly identified, may correspond to Evangelis tomb Nicolaou no. 25 (182-3).

3 Carsten Niebuhr, the traveller-land surveyor, visited Cyprus during the Danish expedition to Egypt and Arabia. His visit to Cyprus is of particular significance for the plan of the ancient city of Kition which he prepared during his stay on the island, and which was published by Giovanni Mariti in his *Viaggi* and in his later *Dissertazione* (Mariti 1769; 1787). Mariti personally met Niebuhr in the island, they visited the emerging evidence of ancient Kition during Niebuhr's visit to Larnaca in July 1766. A letter of Niebuhr dated back to 1772 is kept in the Fondo Mariti, with a note handwritten by Mariti: "Conte Niebuhr. Celebre viaggiatore danese, e celebre specialmente nella Geograe fia. Questi fu da me conosciuto nel Monte Carmelo e poi in Cipro. Nei miei Libri ho avuto più volte luogo di parlare di egli".

4 Nicolaou 1976; Karageorghis 1974-2004; Yon 2006, 15-49; 2011, 35-7; Caubet, Fourrier, Yon 2015, 13.

> who was then consul of H.M. Britannica, who then sent it to England, and some of the medals remain with me. (Mariti 1769, 55-6)

and in the *Dissertazione*:

> As for the total and final destruction of it [Citium scil.], it must not have happened before the year 210 AD, as can be seen from some medals found in its ruins, I can also add a number of them found later belonging to Septimius, Antoninus Caracalla, and Julia Domna with the Greek inscription, and on the reverse side the Temple of Paphos with the legend ΚΟΙΝΟΝ ΚΥΠΡΩΝ, other coins with the head of Caracalla on one side, and that of Geta on the other. In addition to these, earlier medals were also found, belonging to Claudius Caesar Augustus with the Latin inscription, and on the reverse a laurel wreath, in the middle of which one can similarly read ΚΟΙΝΟΝ ΚΥΠΡΩΝ.
>
> A head representing Antoninus Caracalla was also found there during excavations in 1767, and I was present when it was unearthed. Next to it were also found many of the above-mentioned medals, which together with the head passed into the hands of Mr. Timothy Turner, British Consul in Cyprus, who then sent the said head to England.
>
> He generously distributed the medals among his friends in Cyprus, and not a few he favoured myself, so that on my return to Tuscany I also made a new distribution, and especially to the Museum of the famous Etruscan Academy in Cortona. (Mariti 1787b, 28-30)

A strong new element is evidently present in this episode, in which the activity of the participating observer is transformed into that of the collector. In this new and unprecedented guise, Mariti becomes the intermediary of a lot of archaeological materials that later constitute, to all intents and purposes, the first documented acquisitions of Cypriot antiquities in Italy.

The comparison between the two passages in the *Viaggi* and in the *Dissertazione* in which the same episode is described appears decisive and allows us to verify that, if the intent remains the same and so are the circumstances and terms in which the episode is described, the mention of the "new distribution" and donation to the Museum of the famous Accademia Etrusca in Cortona is absent in the *Viaggi*, this is reported in the later *Dissertazione*.

Luigi Tondo also refers to this episode, arguing that Sestini had the opportunity to see, at his elder cousin's house, that souvenir from the Levant (Tondo 1990, 55); based on Sestini's interest and well-known expertise as a numismatist, one would be inclined to include him in the number of the unspecified Italian recipients of the mentioned "distribution" of Cypriot coins from Mariti's collection.

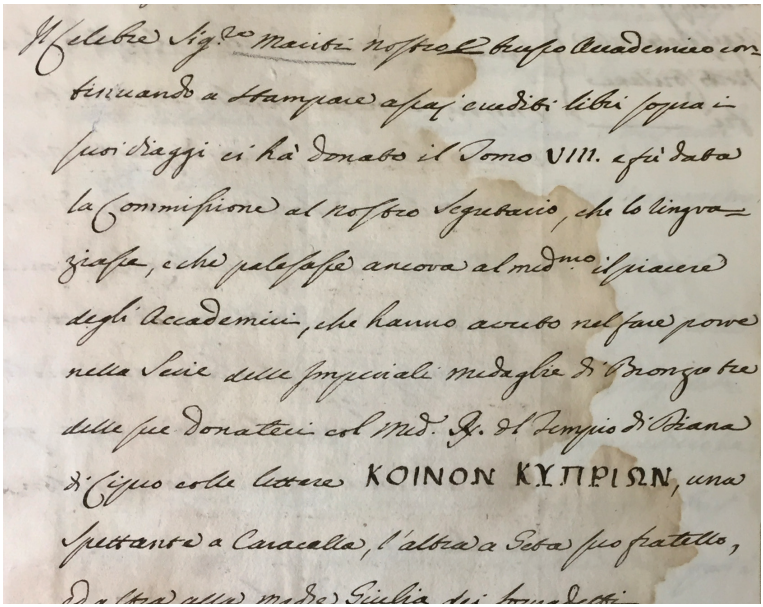

Figure 8 Accademia Etrusca di Cortona. Record of Academic meeting dated back to 12 August 1766 with mention of the participation of Giovanni Mariti and his donation to the Accademia Etrusca (BCAE, MS 449, 62-3). Courtesy of Biblioteca del Comune e dell'Accademia Etrusca, Cortona

Thus, considering the period between Mariti's return to Italy, the publication of the first Volume of his *Viaggi* (1769) and the subsequent publication of the *Dissertazione* (1787), we can ascertain that the donation to the Accademia Etrusca di Cortona took place between the beginning of 1770s and mid-1780s.

We find precise confirmation of this in the minutes of the meetings of the Accademia Etrusca, and more precisely in the minutes of 12 August 1776 **[fig. 8]**, where we read:

> The celebrated Signor Mariti, our Etruscan academic, who keeps on publishing many erudite books on his travels, has donated to us his volume VIII. And the commission was given to our Secretary, who thanked him, and also to show him the pleasure of the Academicians, who have had in placing in the Series of Imperial Bronze Medals three of his donations with the same reverse of the temple of Diana of Cyprus with the letters ΚΟΙΝΟΝ ΚΥΠΡΩΝ, one belonging to Caracalla, the other to Geta his brother, and the other to the mother Julia of the above-mentioned.

The brief accounts in the minutes of the academic meeting, unlike the more extensive notes prepared for the *Notti Coritane*, are nevertheless of particular importance. In our case, the minutes are decisive in establishing the date of the donation (12 August 1776) and its nature (three coins of Caracalla, Geta and Julia Domna). If we exclude the misunderstanding whereby the editor of the academic report mentions the temple of "Diana" instead of the temple of Aphrodite in Paphos (already mentioned in the *Viaggi* and the *Dissertazione*), the record confirms the congruence and details of the episode as reported by Mariti. The episode of the discovery and the events of the donation are thus clarified.

It is not easy to reconstruct the subsequent traces of this first donation and the three coins that came from Larnaca to Cortona. The two historical inventories of the Museum, currently housed in the Library of the Accademia and drawn up in 1783 and 1838 respectively (the latter records, in later notes, the changes up to 1869; paper codes nos. 467-9), do not offer certain data regarding the identification of this group of coins. It is known, in fact, that already by the end of the eighteenth century, the active policy of acquisitions by the Accademia Etrusca had also involved small collections of Egyptian material, which arrived in Cortona through donations from private collectors mediated by the brothers Marcello, Ridolfino and Filippo Venuti, antiquarians and founders of the Accademia in Cortona (Bruschetti et al. 1988, 7-9; Bettelli, Di Paolo 2004, 65; Gialluca 2011). The first inventory of 1783 provide us with a detailed list of the objects kept in the Museum, including the coins and medals collection; the summary description given, however, does not always allow a certain correspondence with the existing specimens to be established (Pancrazzi, Ronzitti-Orsolini 1974, 5). The subsequent complete inventory, updated up to 1869, does not give a description but records the coins and medals contained in the *plutei*, i.e. in the display cases in the Sala delle Adunanze dei Signori Accademici (Lords of the Academicians' Meeting Room) (paper code no. 469, folio 90). From this inventory, which allows us to ascertain the increased size of the numismatic collection of the Accademia Etrusca, it is not possible to directly trace the presence of the Cypriot series. It is worth to mention, however, that in an intermediate document drawn up in 1802 and containing "the inventory of everything owned by our Accademia Etrusca" (paper code no. 470), mention is made of the presumably recent sale of "44 bronze pieces in Medallions and other". Unfortunately, there is no other information on this episode, and it is therefore impossible to establish on what occasion and which coins were sold by the Accademia.

The subsequent rearrangement by Pediani, the first systematic cataloguing by Neppi Modona in 1927, and the complete publication of the *Corpus* by Pancrazzi and Ronzitti Orsolini in 1974, however,

Figure 9 Roman bronze coin of the Emperor Geta (MAEC inv. 99801). Courtesy of Museo dell'Accademia Etrusca di Cortona

revealed that the Cortona numismatic collection includes at least one survivor of Mariti's Cypriot donation.

Among the coins preserved in Cortona and issued under the emperors Septimius Severus, Caracalla and Geta, mentioned by Mariti in his descriptions of the 'medals' found in Larnaca in 1767, is a bronze coin of Cypriot provincial issue **[fig. 9]**.

The coin bears on the obverse the representation of the laureate head of Emperor Geta facing to the right, surmounted by the legend AYTO KAIC [Π CEΠ]TIMIOC ΓETAC. On the reverse is a conventional representation of the façade of the Temple of Aphrodite in Paphos, surmounted by KOINON [KYΠPIΩ]N (federation of Cypriots) (Pancrazzi, Ronzitti-Orsolini 1974, 216, Table XXI: 866).

It is well known that the indication *Koinon Kyprion* refers to a Cypriot religious institution responsible for the organisation of sacred ceremonies in honour of Aphrodite and, at the same time, the reference for the circulation of bronze coins on the island, at least from the time of Emperor Claudius. In the period of the Flavian dynasty and the Severan dynasty, the reference to this federation is associated with the depiction of Zeus of Salamis or alternatively with the depiction of the temple of Aphrodite in Paphos, in which the central *betyl* depicting the aniconic figure of the Goddess can be seen (Amandry 2015, 2). The coinage of this series referring to the emperor Geta is distinguished by two variants on the obverse, in which either the emperor's bare torso carrying a spear or, as for the Cortona coin, the emperor's laureate head turned to the right can be depicted (Parks 2004, 26; Amandry 2009, 2-3).

There is no doubt, therefore, that the Cortona coin was intended for circulation in Cyprus.

The publication of *Nummi veteres anecdoti* by the Austrian Josephus Hilarius von Eckhel in 1775 testifies that at least one coin of Cypriot provenance had already become part of the Medagliere Mediceo in Florence (Tondo 1990, 42), before the "new distribution" by Mariti.

If we accept that the coin of Geta came from Larnaca to Cortona with the small numismatic lot donated by Mariti in August 1776, we can at this point place it alongside the already well-known collection of Cypriot antiquities in the Museo dell'Accademia Etrusca, formed later thanks to the donation of Monsignor Guido Corbelli, Apostolic Delegate for Arabia and Egypt under the pontificate of Leo XIII (Bettelli, Di Paolo 2004; Bombardieri 2011, 26; 2019). The small collection of the six Cypriot vases is made up of materials found in Egypt, from funerary contexts mainly dating to the Late Bronze Age, part of the extensive collection of antiquities that Monsignor Corbelli brought to Cortona in three successive expeditions between 1891 and 1896, and which included objects purchased on the antiquities market in Alexandria, mainly from el-Kab and Thebes (Schiaparelli 1893, 317-38; Della Cella 1900, 3; Guidotti, Rosati 1986, 75-8).

4 The Cousin and the Ghostwriter: Domenico Sestini and Antonio Mondaini in Cyprus

Summary 4.1 Domenico Sestini from Florence to Basra to Larnaka in Cyprus. – 4.2 Antonio Mondaini: in the Shadow of an Anagram.

4.1 Domenico Sestini from Florence to Basra to Larnaka in Cyprus

Less organic than Mariti's reconstruction, the narration of his cousin Domenico Sestini remains closer to the form of a diary **[fig. 10]**. The gaze of the naturalist and the numismatist leads to a narrative dense with details but far from the broader overviews of Mariti.

In 1777, Sestini began the long series of his travels towards the Near East, the fruit of his personal initiatives, but also favoured by the relationships of Mariti, and supported by powerful patrons, like Sir Robert Ainslie, the British ambassador to the Sublime Porte, whose large medals and coins collection was fully studied by Sestini. Ainslie also financed Sesitni expedition to Basra, destined to flow into his richest accounts yet: the *Viaggio da Costantinopoli a Bassora* e *Viaggio di ritorno da Bassora a Costantinopoli fatto dall'abate Domenico Sestini accademico fiorentino* (Sestini 1786; 1788).

Between 1774 and 1777, Sestini had lived in Catania, where Ignazio Paterno Castello, Prince of Biscari, had entrusted him with the study of his naturalistic and antiquarian museum. The resulting

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Figure 10
Portrait of Domenico Sestini
(adapted from Luppi 1890, 482)

Descrizione, skilfully edited by Mariti, appeared in 1776 and then re-published in Livorno in 1787, with the aim to enhancing the patron's fame and presenting his collections in the panorama of European antiquarianism. Sestini had almost certainly been addressed to the illustrious patron by Mariti, who had established a lasting bond with him until the death of the gentleman from Catania, attested by dense correspondence and exchanges of antiquarian and naturalistic discussions (Salmeri 2001; Pasta 2021, 33).

From 1777 to 1792, Sestini travelled extensively through Asia Minor, Mesopotamia, the Aegean and the Balkan Peninsula, and gives extensive reports of these journeys (9 volumes of Letters published [Florence-Livorno] from 1779 to 1785 and 5 volumes of *Viaggi* from 1786 to 1815 [Florence-Livorno]).

In the last years of his life, he left the East and for a few years lived in Germany, where he devoted himself mainly to numismatic studies, illustrating various public and private collections. In 1810 in Paris and, after a brief stay in Florence as librarian to Grand Duchess Elisa Baciocchi, he moved to Hungary to illustrate the Hedervarian Museum. His fame as an antiquarian expert in ancient numismatics led the Grand Duke of Tuscany Ferdinand III to appoint him professor at the University of Pisa.

Constructed as a reportage in near real time, the *Viaggi* can rely on an extensive scholarly apparatus based on Strabo, Curtius Rufus, Arrian and Pliny, and the Arab geographer and historian Abū'lfidā. The focus of Sestini's archaeological interest is on the collection of

Greek and Roman inscriptions, but above all on the hunt for coins and medals, the catalogue of which he intended to publish.

However, the secular outlook we have detected in the account of Islamic monuments in the Holy Land by Mariti has interesting parallels in the observations Sestini leaves us in his *Viaggi*. Perhaps more than in Mariti, the erudite information on places, monuments and spaces of worship is extensive, sometimes with references to the biblical past, or the indication of local lemmas and toponyms, usually translated and clarified. The inclination for illustrative anecdote and participatory enthusiasm is less evident than in his cousin's narrative. But the perspective remains secular, immune to the sense of cultural superiority of many contemporary observers, and indeed even more clearly interwoven with anti-ecclesiastical cues than the one we recognise in Mariti.

Personal events may have influenced the strength of this polemical verve. Sestini was, in fact, a clergyman without a vocation; he had studied at the Scolopi School in Florence and because of the education he received, he retained an invincible repugnance, which complemented a bitter polemical attitude towards monks, religious orders and the Roman Curia. The polemical rants against nuns and friars, as well as the acknowledgement of his own 'restlessness', return frequently in the correspondence, even to the point of forcing him to admit his reputation as unscrupulous in matters of religion, certainly more exposed on this front than his cousin (Pasta 2021, 51).

Together with the Venetian merchant Salesio Rizzini, Mariti's correspondent and friend, a tired and somewhat disappointed Sestini disembarks in Cyprus at the end of January 1782, to quickly leave the island for Alexandria. The short stay did not involve any inspections and was complementary to the first volume of his cousin's *Viaggi*. In Famagusta "I find nothing but dismantled houses and churches, with almost no inhabitants. It is a horror to see a city so destroyed" (Sestini 1788, 132). Semi-abandoned is the fortress, poorly defended during the Turkish siege of 1570. The decline of the kingdom accentuated the negative picture of Mariti. But drought and the invasion of locusts have aggravated a context in which "the Turk is always the oppressor, and the Greek is timid, and even treacherous, according to the usual of all islanders" (Sestini 1788, 141). As expected, the clergy, accomplices of the Turks and holders of benefices, churches, and chapels, do not escape criticism, where the polemic takes on distinctly juridic tones (Pasta 2021, 65). Not even the proclaimed beauty of the girls of Cyprus convinces him, the description he leaves us on 27 January is decidedly caustic and unsolicited:

> The next day, being Sunday, all the people of the Suburbs went to the Church, I speak of the Greeks. I had occasion to admire the women passed by, and who were dressed vaguely with a certain

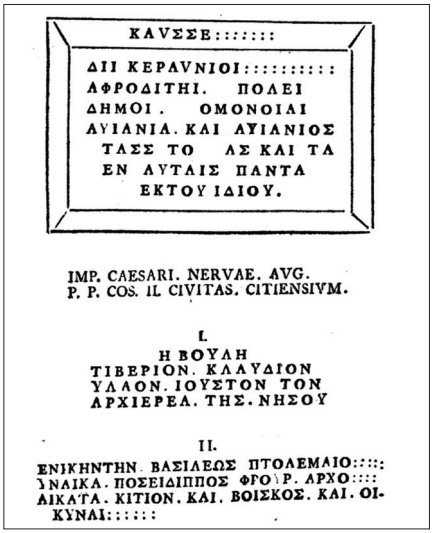
> scarlet piece on, but did not observe there those Cypriot beauties so much praised; one must remember that Venus was only one.[1]

Larnaca, however, allows the meeting with European merchants, from which the list of trading houses and the outline of trade are derived. And above all, the visit to the vestiges of ancient Kition with the British consul, Michel de Vezin; on the basis of Mariti's description, Sestini undertook to confirm his cousin's observations and intuitions and, also as a complement to the affirmed veracity of the reconstruction, he collected three Roman inscriptions in Greek and a Latin dedication to the Emperor Nerva, purchased for Ainslie. As reported by Mariti himself, Sestini provided a description of these with a translation **[fig. 11]** (Masson 1986; Calvelli 2008):

> One day when we were walking with Mr. Consul De Vezin to see the site of the ancient Citium, now called Kitèo, and which lies between Larnica and the Borgo delle Saline, we observed many walls of old factories of the same, which were being excavated for material, and in these excavations a beautiful white marble base was found, consecrated to Jupiter Ceraunius and Venus Aphrodite, with the following inscription, which was bought by the said Consul. (Sestini 1788, 142-3)

> On the seashore there is a village bearing the same name as the Borgo of the Saline, where there are several warehouses belonging to the European merchants of Larnica, as well as several rustic houses of Greeks and Turks, and it was in a house of a Greek that I found the following Latin inscription. Here is a demonstration of the City of Citti in dedicating some statue, or other, to Emperor Nerva, bearing the year 96 of Christ. Now this inscription is found at Mr. Cav. Ainslie, British Amb. at the Ottoman Gate, for whom I purchased it; as is another that Mr. De Vezin found, being carved in a black schist, dedicated by the Senate to Tiberius Claudius, Ilaus Justus Governor of the Island. Next to the same one is another Inscription, commemorating another Governor of Citium. (143-4)

1 Sestini 1788, 131. Sestini's misogyny appears here clearly expressed in line with the standard of previous travellers to Cyprus, who contributed to deepen the gap between the imagined woman of the Myth and the real woman. Drummond's descriptions of female characters with a denser puritan accent seems to have mixed up misogyny with his sexual frustration: "The Greek women are by some thought beautiful, though they do not please my taste: but all agree that they inherit the libertinium of their ancestors. Money will purchase the last favour from any individual; for, not withstanding the natural heat of their constitution, they are shamefully mercenary; and some of the husbands so indifferent about the chastity of their wives" (Drummond 1754, 143-4). See also Severis 1999, 20-6.


ΚΑΥΣΣΕ:::::::

ΔΙΙ ΚΕΡΑΥΝΙΟΙ::::::::::
ΑΦΡΟΔΙΤΗΙ. ΠΟΛΕΙ
ΔΗΜΟΙ. ΟΜΟΝΟΙΑΙ
ΑΥΙΑΝΙΑ. ΚΑΙ ΑΥΙΑΝΙΟΣ
ΤΑΣΣ ΤΟ ΑΣ ΚΑΙ ΤΑ
ΕΝ ΑΥΤΑΙΣ ΠΑΝΤΑ
ΕΚΤΟΥ ΙΔΙΟΥ.

IMP. CAESARI. NERVAE. AVG.
P. P. COS. II. CIVITAS. CITIENSIVM.

I.
Η ΒΟΥΛΗ
ΤΙΒΕΡΙΟΝ. ΚΛΑΥΔΙΟΝ
ΥΛΑΟΝ. ΙΟΥΣΤΟΝ ΤΟΝ
ΑΡΧΙΕΡΕΑ. ΤΗΣ. ΝΗΣΟΥ

II.
ΕΝΙΚΗΝΤΗΝ. ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΠΤΟΛΕΜΑΙΟ::::
ΥΝΑΙΚΑ. ΠΟΣΕΙΔΙΠΠΟΣ ΦΓΟΥΡ. ΑΡΧΟ::::
ΔΙΚΑΤΑ. ΚΙΤΙΟΝ. ΚΑΙ. ΒΟΙΣΚΟΣ. ΚΑΙ. ΟΙ-
ΚΥΝΑΙ::::::

Figure 11
Ancient inscriptions transcribed by Domenico Sestini at Kition (from Sestini 1788, 142-4). Courtesy of Biblioteca Centrale Nazionale di Firenze

Beyond the Latin and Greek inscriptions that are also illustrated in the book, Sestini mentions diabase/volcanic rock tools (*macini* and *pile*, i.e. grinding tools) re-used as building materials for the construction of stone masonries.

> What then increased my pleasure was to find wandering here and there pieces of porous lava, or cellulose lava, and others of fixed lava, which I supposed came from some extinct volcano on the island, and perhaps from the imminent mountain, called Santa Croce. Furthermore, pieces can be observed used in the external walls of the houses, and several millstones and pestles are found, which naturally must have been transported from some volcanic part of the island. Limestone mostly forms the complex of most of the mountains on this island; and those of Carpasso appear all white due to being of this formation; which always makes me assure that such matter could be the matrix of Volcanoes, as I have already mentioned. (Sestini 1788, 143)

Observing that there is no evidence for volcanic rock in the geological formation of the Larnaca surroundings, Sestini argues that the lithic material for these tools may have been supplied from distant procurement area. Interestingly, the observation of archaeological everyday use tools and the raw material they have been manufactured from, anticipates approaches of recent archaeological trends (Bombardieri 2010, 5-15; 2023). In the case for Sestini, this is the result of the cross-interest for naturalistic and antiquarian evidence, but also the evidence for a new dimension of archaeological field observation.

4.2 Antonio Mondaini: In the Shadow of an Anagram

We have very fragmentary documentary information about Antonio Mondaini. His name and his activities on the island can be traced essentially through four groups of documents:

a. Cypriot archive documents attesting to Mondaini's presence and activity on the island;
b. Mentions of Antonio Mondaini within the works of Giovanni Mariti and Domenico Sestini;
c. Mariti-Mondaini epistolary;
d. Works published under pseudonyms or anonymous works that we can attribute to Mondaini.

In the group A of the Cypriot documents, two appears particularly significant in determining the span of Mondaini's stay on the island.

The first document to refer to is the register of the Latin church in Larnaka. On 31 January 1762, it is recorded the wedding celebration of Antonio Mondaini and Thomasine Barthélemy, identified as "domini Juannis Provensalis de la Città, et dominae Mariae Picard eius coniugis filia legitima"; among the witnesses, Giovanni Mariti is listed first, along with the merchant Stefano Saraf and his wife Elisabetta Saraf **[fig. 12]**.[2]

The second document is the register of trade between Cyprus and Great Britain in the period between 1777 and 1781 (Pouradier Duteil-Loizidou 1991). In this document, Antonio Mondaini appears as a "Tuscan merchant" and he is referred to as one of the two major exporters of products (foodstuffs, wine and textiles) to England, in close collaboration with the British vice-consul John Boddington. The export activity and collaboration involving the two, however, ended in 1777, as the document clearly indicates:

> s(ieu)r Boddington alors consul d'Angleterre et s(ieu)r Mondaini neg(otian)t Toscan tous deux retires dans l'année suivante, et celles des années 1778 et des suivantes sont du s(ieu)r Michel de Vezin negociant et consul actuel. (Pouradier Duteil-Loizidou 1991, Table X)

2 A copy of the document excerpted from the *Liber Matrimoniorum III a die 12 Aprilis 1733 usque ad diem 17 julii 1879* of the Latin Church of Santa Maria delle Grazie in Larnaka is now kept in the archives of the Costas&Rita Severis Foundation - CVAR in Nicosia. The document appears in the recent comprehensive edition of the *Register of Parish Weddings of Santa Maria delle Grazie* (Trentin 2019, 50). It is also documented that Thomasine died in Cyprus on 8 October 1769 and Mondaini, after a few years of widowhood, remarried Anne Mulet on 28 August 1771; the latter also died a few years later, on 3 August 1776, also on the island. For this information, see Trentin 2016, 164, 181; 2019, 50, 66-7; Bombardieri 2021a.

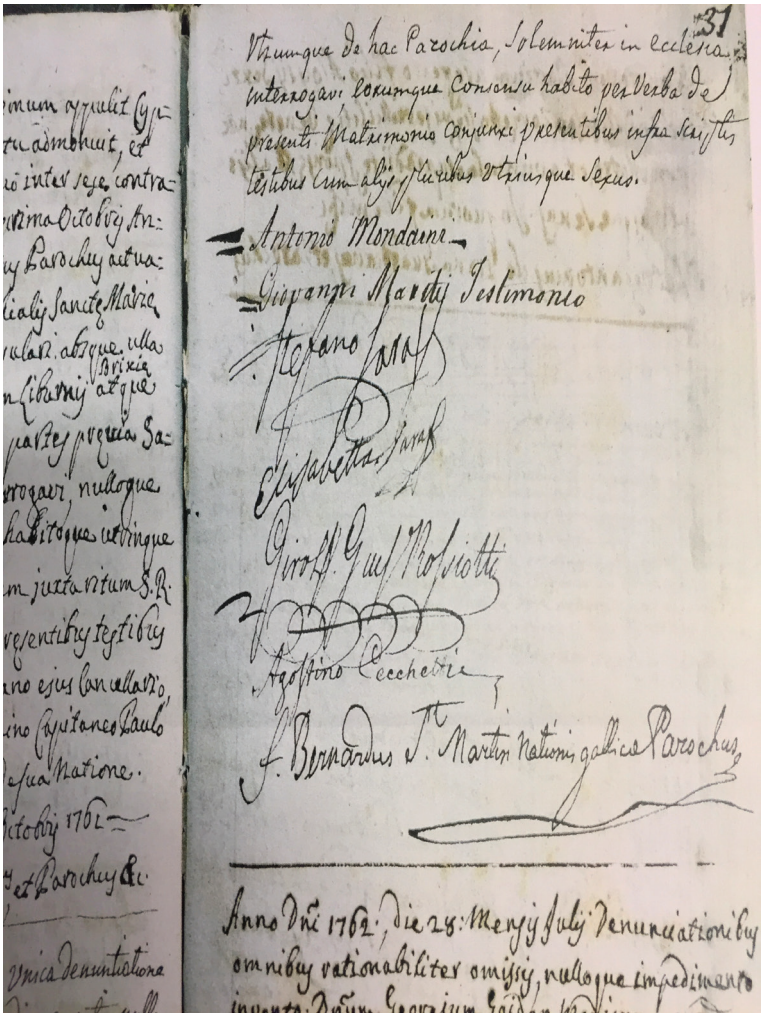


Figure 12 Record of the wedding of Antonio Mondaini and Thomasine Barthélemy (31 January 1762). Among the witnesses, Giovanni Mariti is listed first (adapted from *Liber Matrimoniorum III a die 12 Aprilis 1733 usque ad diem 17 julii 1879, Latin Church of Santa Maria delle Grazie in Larnaka*)

Beyond fixing chronological references to Antonio Mondaini's stay in Cyprus, these documents suggest the perimeter of his mercantile and intermediary activities, also in relation to the privileged relationship he had with Giovanni Mariti. We know that Giovanni Mariti was appointed chancellor of the kingdom of Tuscany in Cyprus, under the auspices of the British consulate, as early as 1760, jus upon his arrival on the island (Bombardieri 2019, 23). Tuscany had no official

diplomatic representation on the island prior to Mariti and it is easy to assume that its commercial interests were protected on the island by an intermediary figure recognised, albeit unofficially, by the other representations and within the framework of the balances and interests of the *Compagnia del Levante*. As Rita Severis argued, it is entirely plausible that Antonio Mondaini was this figure who, acting in the shadows, preceded Mariti in his official diplomatic functions (Severis 2007, 36). Mondaini was already active on the island and many years later was recognised as an intermediary on a par with the British vice-consul, as our second document testifies. Mondaini would therefore have been able to present Mariti to the British consul Timothy Turner as early as 1760. This is also the reconstruction proposed by Emilio De Tipaldo, who describes the genesis of the assignment given to Mariti as follows:

> Timoteo Turner, Consul for the Government of Great Britain, was at that time residing on the aforesaid island, and at the same time performing the functions of Vice-Consul for the Emperor, the Grand Duke of Tuscany, and the Dutch Republic. Mariti was known to this magistrate, and having found him to be full of scientific and literary enlightenment, as well as endowed with an uncommon delicacy of manners, he formed an intrinsic friendship with our Giovanni in such a way that after Antonio Mondaini of Leghorn had left Cyprus, he had him appointed chancellor of that consulate, a position he held to the entire satisfaction of the powers to which he belonged, and of his principal. (De Tipaldo 1834-45, 331)

Mondaini's common origin and positive predisposition towards Mariti is confirmed by our first document, in which the latter appears as wedding witness; in this privileged relationship, it must be acknowledged that Mondaini was in a position to provide Mariti with support and, above all, information of all kinds on the island. This information was in principle necessary for his assignment and would later prove fundamental in populating the works that would guarantee him fame and notoriety far beyond the island (Pasta 2008; 2021; Bombardieri 2019, 236).

The other three groups of documents we referred to at the outset become, therefore, of primary importance for understanding Mondaini's value as a source for Mariti and, at the same time, reconstructing the development of the interactions between the two through the decades.

Interestingly, there is no direct mention of Antonio Mondaini in the earliest Mariti's works. The volume (Tomo I) dedicated to the island within his *Viaggi* (Mariti 1769) contributed greatly to Mariti's fortunes and brought him a vast echo in Italy and throughout Europe. Mondaini appears explicitly later in one of Giovanni Mariti's

historical works, *Istoria della guerra accesa nella Soria l'anno 1771 dall'armi di Aly-Bey dell'Egitto* (Mariti 1772a);[3] in the preface to this work, Mariti explicitly acknowledges Mondaini's role, where we read:

> I have lately come across a history of the war waged in Syria last year 1771 by the arms of Aly-bey of Egypt. I have reason to believe that it was written in Cyprus by Signor Antonio Mondaini, our Tuscan, a person of my particular acquaintance, an exact writer, dispassionate and a lover of truth. (Mariti 1772a, 14)

In this case, Giovanni Mariti – the lover of truth – acknowledged Mondaini's authorship of the work, but then published it under his own name in Florence in 1772, with a dedication to the wealthy merchant Stefano Saraf, already mentioned above.

In similar terms, in his scientific essay *Della Robbia. Sua coltivazione e suoi usi* published in Florence in 1776 again mentions the authorship of Antonio Mondaini:

> I will reproduce in full a Memoir on the Cultivation of Madder according to the method practised in Cyprus, written by Mr Antonio Mondaini (our Tuscan on that island) Corresponding Member of this Reale Accademia de Georgofili. This Memoir has recently been removed from its Original by him, and this is the first time that it has been made available to the public. (Mariti 1776, IX-X)

Greatly interesting to investigate is Mariti's use of Mondaini's collected material (and even more the use of his already formed works); one would be inclined to regard this use as appropriation, were it not for the mention of Mondaini's authorship being so explicit. What then is the degree of reciprocity, if any? Is it a matter of Mondaini's own desire to convey his own writings through the name of his most famous friend? Or, on the contrary, is it a matter of Mariti's desire or need to swallow up the material made available by his friend to follow up his own production?

It is of course not possible to clarify one way or the other definitively and, likely, both drives played a role in the development of the relationship between the two over the years, as we shall see.

In this context, a notable contribution is provided by the Mariti-Mondaini epistolary, which is today preserved in the Fondo Mariti at the University of Bologna. The Fund was acquired in antiquarianism by Luigi Dal Pane and was recently included in the Archivio Storico. The 99 letters of Antonio Mondaini kept in the Fondo Mariti in Bologna traces back to a long period of correspondence between

3 On the episode and Mariti's work see also Rossi 1943.

1760 and 1791. Many of the missives are of an occasional nature and clearly indicate the close relationship of exchange between the two, unfortunately only documented in one direction by Mondaini's letters, as copies of the letters sent by Mariti to his friend are missing.

Some of the letters from the years of the publication of the two works mentioned above are particularly interesting in clarifying the questions we have attempted to enumerate.

One dated 26 March 1775 reads:

> I note with pleasure that you have taken it upon yourself to present my Description dedicated to de la Robbia to the famous Accademia dei Georgofili. I wish it to have been appreciated

and even further down in the same letter:

> I also send you the description of the snake, which you will find in the continuation of the same letter, and separately from this I send you that of the asp and that of the tarantula of Cyprus. If I can make you a copy of that of the chameleon, I will see to it that you receive it together, so that from this concern of mine, I flatter myself that you will see in my mind all the inclination to serve and please you. Already you have made it clear to me that you are in doubt as to whether I might have in mind to form a history and that for this reason you hold my notations in regard. The ease with which I give you all that little that you depart from me must make you persuaded to the contrary. Believing me capable of jealousy for your writings wrongly condemns a lack of friendship.

We may infer that Mondaini's willingness to provide the material that is insistently requested by Mariti is genuine, although the hint of Mariti's doubt and Mondaini's jealousy do not seem entirely functional for a deliberate and planned exchange.

In the following years, the picture changes significantly. The mentions of Mondaini in Mariti's works from explicit and laudatory become implicit, the friend from an overt source becomes a figure in the background to be referred to generically ("un viaggiator toscano", "un amico di Aix", as mentioned below in a greater detail) or even a reference to be refuted.

The latter is the case of the mentioned pamphlet by Mariti *Dissertazione istorico-critica sull'antica città di Citium* (Mariti 1787b). To better frame its character, it is worth recalling the occasional nature of the *Dissertazione*, wrote as a public response to a letter received from an unidentified "friend from Aix", who had doubted the hypothesis of the location of ancient Kition, already put forward by Mariti in his *Viaggi* (Mariti 1769, 51-7). It is evident that the friend to whom Mariti addresses the *Dissertazione* is indeed Antonio Mondaini, who on his

return from Cyprus we know had moved to Provence, the region from which his wife's family came (Severis 2007, 37; Bombardieri 2019, 237).

We quote here the opening section of the *Dissertazione*, in which we read Mariti's change of pace in his relationship to his friend and source:

> When in Volume I Chapter III of my *Viaggi*, I described the ancient city of Citium, which I placed near the present city of Larnica or Arnaca, which, indeed, occupies part of the foundations of its ancient walls, as much as on the observations made by Sir Niebuhr, one of those travellers who had been sent to Arabia by Frederick V, King of Denmark, and with whom, during his stay in Cyprus in 1766, I had been there more than once to examine the matter more closely, for I had been looking at the ruins for five years. I also added that my opinion was not new, since I had come across an exact Manuscript containing the description of the things of Cyprus by Ascanio Savorniano, a Venetian gentleman, from which it was clear that he also placed the ancient Citium there. To corroborate my opinion, I wrote that Strabo, and Ptolemy placed Citium between the City of Amathus, now Old Limassol, and the Dades promontory, now called cape Pila.
>
> This opinion of the true situation of Citium, after eighteen years I have written it, has now awakened in me the criticism of a Friend of mine, a man of merit, and whom I esteem, and who has also sojourned for several years in Cyprus. He tells me from Aix in Provence that it seemed strange to him that after so many other Geographers, Historians and Travellers, I should take away from the village of Citti the inveterate idea that the ancient city of Citium was placed there. I might doubt that his predilection for the said Village (a delightful and vague holiday resort of some wealthy Greek families, and a place of recreation also for the European inhabitants of Larnica) arose from those pleasant and delightful entertainments, which often and not only passed there between the Conqueror of India and the Goddess of the Island.
>
> He endeavoured to attack me more with sarcasm than reason, concluding that I should rectify my error, that I should not adapt myself to the sentiment of Cavalier Niebuhr, and moreover that I should not undertake to support him. I myself, who have made it a rule never to be heated or spoil my blood by literary disputes, return as a gift to my Opponent all that he has written to me, and even thank him for having given me the opportunity to spend a few hours among the scholarly papers, reducing to a Historical Dissertazione the reply that I should make to him, with which I will even try to validate what I have already written about Citium. Therefore, I will take up the fuller narrative here, and then establish that the situation of that city was precisely where it was said to be, i.e. near the present city of Larnica. (Mariti 1787b, 5-7)

It is worth mentioning here that field observations would prove to be essential and Giovanni Mariti's reconstruction of Kition's location entirely well-founded (Bombardieri 2013, 594-8), as confirmed by the urban excavations conducted in Larnaka by the Department of Antiquities of Cyprus and the French Archaeological Mission in recent decades.[4] But this is not the space to acknowledge Mariti's merit in the 'prehistory' of archaeological research in the Larnaka area (Nicolaou 1976; Yon 2011, 36-8), as much as to attempt to sketch Mondaini's role as a source, in this case to refute.

The devaluation of Mondaini's argument passes through a very sarcastic attack in tones that seem to us to be slightly sly. Mariti does not hesitate to tell us that Mondaini's proposed localisation of Kition with the modern village of Citti is motivated by the fact that he spent his time in that village amusing himself with women (i.e. the Goddess of the island) and wine (i.e. Dionysus, the Conqueror of India). With a small variation, then, the revisitation of the standard 'Bacchus, Tobacco and Venus', which definitely sounds disqualifying and unnecessary to refute Mondaini's argument.

Additionally, what we can glean from the letters sent by Mondaini to Mariti about Kition and its location seem to suggest a very different tone of exchange and does not suggest that Mariti was "attacked more with sarcasm than with reasons".

In a letter dated back to 26 March 1775, Mondaini writes to Mariti:

> But returning to the subject, I tell you that in order to show you my willingness to pay due gratitude to your friendship, I have been labouring for the last month and have made a sacrifice of all the evenings that are ordinarily devoted to the company. I began to speak about the third chapter of the mentioned book of yours and I found myself engaged in refuting your opinion and that of Mr. Niebhur in which you claim that Citium is located where Larnaca is at present and I am now sending you a letter of mine dated Friday 31 December in which you will observe what I have found to tell you about this matter. I hope that you will agree with me and that you will be grateful for my effort if, in the reprint of your book, you will refer to my opinion or put my letter in full. I leave you at liberty to do as you please.

And again, in a letter dated back to 9 July 1777 we read:

> In truth I am surprised that you did not receive my second letter containing my observations on the third chapter of your travels in Cyprus, one dated 26 March 1775, and with Swedish Captain Fosterg, at the same time I sent you the Description of the Chameleon, with

4 Karageorghis 1974-2004; 1976; Yon 2006; Caubet et al. 2015; Cannavò et al. 2018.

> a cavatello full of muscatella grapes from Cyprus, which you asked me for. Of all these things I have never received any reply from you, after having asked you several times, and so our correspondence has suffered a gap from that time until now; I am sorry that it has all gone up in smoke and principally my letter concerning the observations on the third chapter of your said travels, which cost me a great deal of effort to prove to you that ancient Citium was never the present city of Larnaca, as Mr. Niebuhr thought.

The letter of 31 December to which Mondaini refers is unfortunately not preserved among the 99 in the Fondo Mariti in Bologna; we must, however, assume that it arrived at its destination and that it contained what was quoted at the beginning of the *Dissertazione* ("that I reconsider my error, that I do not adapt myself to Cavalier Niebuhr's sentiment, and furthermore that I do not undertake to support him"). However, Mariti did not reply to Mondaini on the subject on any occasion between March 1775 and July 1777, nor did he transcribe the letter as Mondaini asked him to.

Although he had no difficulty in publishing Mondaini's two essays first and in full in 1772 (*Istoria della Guerra accesa in Soria*) and 1776 (*Della Robbia*), he does not now consider publishing the letter about Citium's location but feels compelled to refute it by indirectly calling it into question in the *Dissertazione*, without explicitly attributing it to Mondaini.

Something seems cracked and this is not the only evidence about. Information that clarifies the development of the relationship between Mondaini and Mariti from the 1780s onwards can be gathered from a manuscript that appeared in 2003 and then fully published by Rita Severis (Namindio 2007). The manuscript, which runs to over 300 pages and is dated 1785, contains fourteen letters, interspersed with some verse and accompanied by four watercolour illustrations and a schematic ink drawing.[5] The author, who uses the pseudonym Namindiù (also read Namindio), indicates that the manuscript is intended for publication in La Manon in Provence (Severis 2007, 21).

This indication supports the possibility that the addressee of the *Dissertazione* and the author of the manuscript are the same person, leaving little doubt as to the identification between Antonio Mondaini and Namindiu/Namindio, as Rita Severis first suggested (Severis 2007, 33-7).

A definitive confirmation of Mondaini's choice to use the anagram of his name to sign his works comes to us from one of the letters

5 Interestingly, one out of the five illustrations, the only one in the text, schematically depicts a chameleon. This reptile attracted specific attention by numerous contemporary travellers (e.g. Drummond 1754, 245) **[fig. 13]**.

imaginati gl' Antichi, passo a descrivervi
qual sia la sua figura e la sua
Costruzione.
Questo è un piccolo animale chiamato
dai Latini Chamæleon, nasce nella Siria,
nell' Arabia, in alcuni luoghi dell' Egitto
e nell' Isola di Cipro. la sua figura è
conforme al presente disegno, il quale
hò stimato a proposito di tracciarvi,
perche non credo che si trovi nel Regno dei quadrupedi
nessun altro animaletto consimile a lui, pel
potervelo proporre in paragone. Una
testa straordinaria, in proporzione del

Figure 13
The Cypriot chameleon illustrated by Antonio Mondaini (adapted from Namindiu 2007, 304)

addressed to Mariti and preserved in Bologna. It is a letter sent from La Manon in Provence and dated 10 May 1788 in which we read:

> I tell you again that in order not to expose myself openly in battle with the critics, I have taken from my name of Mondaini a pure anagram that gives me that of Namindio. I make use of this in my work, either to avoid the assaults of the censors, or to be in a state to be able to repel them by keeping myself under cover.

Such a choice was already clear to other correspondents, as attested by a letter sent in 1786 from La Manon to Marco Lastri,[6] where Mondaini reveals his literary pseudonym and mentions his manuscript containing the Cypriot letters, presumably the same ones now edited by Rita Severis.
However, Mariti was certainly already aware at least as early as 1785 of Mondaini's desire to publish his works under a pseudonym-anagram and without the intermediary of his friend and his fame. In the preliminary letter to the reader that opens the manuscript containing the fourteen letters from Cipro Mondaini in fact writes as follows:

6 Firenze, Biblioteca Moreniana, Manoscritti Frullani 40, Lettere a M. Lastri, II. Here Mondaini specifically refers to his letters "spettanti alla storia di Cipro" (Pasta 2021, 22, fn. 41). The erudite Marco Lastri was active in Florence as Academic of Georgofili and Academic of the Crusca; numerous letters by Marco Lastri ranging from 1782 to 1798 are kept in the Fondo Mariti in Bologna.

> I have written these letters of mine as a mere pastime, and to reduce to memory all the observations, which I had made during my stay on the famous island of Cyprus. I addressed them to a friend of mine in Tuscany, from whom they were asked for with great solicitude. He had a plan to have them printed, but I opposed his gracious dispositions, because he had already concluded to accompany them with a French translation, and in these two idioms to have them printed in Aix; the object, however, did not obtain any execution, because the revolution of France was opposed by forcing me to leave it. (Namindio 2007, 42)

Despite Mondaini's explicit request, however, one of Namindio's fourteen letters appears to have been published by the publisher Carlo Giorgi in Livorno immediately in 1786.[7] In the Livorno edition, it appears titled: *Lettera di un viaggiatore toscano scritta da Cipro a un accademico etrusco* (Mondaini 1786). This is the fourth letter of the manuscript edited by Rita Severis, describing a trip to the Limassol region, which is reproduced in full with an additional short introduction.

As further proof that the publication was promoted by Mariti, it suffices to recall that the publisher of the *Lettera* was the same one with whom the *Dissertazione* was to be published the following year

7 A copy of the *Lettera* is now kept in the University Library in Genoa (inv. coll. misc. A.7.11). On the last page of the copy kept in Genoa a few lines have been handwritten: "Tutto è imposture! Fuor che Natura. Felici coloro che credano a un solo Dio Essenza Spirituale, studiano sul Gran Libro della Natura che sta aperto a tutti; e Glorificano sempre l'infinito Creatore, e non si confondano con santi e madonne, favole e chimere, inventate dalla malizia degli uomini per signoriggiare il mondo, e godersi i beni della terra a danno de' sciocchi. Dio solo è il mio Re, e la Coscienza il mio Sacerdote: ciò mi basta. Molini" (Everything is imposture! Beyond Nature. Happy those who believe in a single God Spiritual Essence, study in the Great Book of Nature that is open to all; and always glorify the infinite Creator, and do not confuse themselves with fables and chimeras, invented by the malice of men to rule the world, and enjoy the goods of the earth to the detriment of fools. God alone is my King, Conscience my Priest: that is enough for me. Molini). Presumably, the author of this note could be Giuseppe Molini, who was a bookseller in Florence, a general partner of the publisher Gaetano Cambiagi; Molini's bookshop was first located in Piazza del Duomo (circa 1770) and then (from early 1780s) on the Lungarno Archibusieri and would be inherited by his son who was noted for his trade in manuscripts, incunabula and ancient and contemporary editions in Italy and, through triangulations with his brothers, in Paris and London. We know that the *Della Robbia* volume had appeared with Cambiagi in 1776 and certainly this publisher and the Florentine bookseller Molini were both in contact with Mariti. As an alternative, the author of these lines may have been also Giuseppe's brother Giovanni Claudio, who moved to Paris in 1763, where he apprenticed with André-François Le Breton and then set up on his own from 1766, publishing in French and Italian, including the complete works of Vittorio Alfieri in 1803 and Beccaria's *Dei delitti e delle pene*. See Greco 1990; Rusu 2018; Bombardieri 2021a.

The opening motto "Tutto è impostura! Fuor che natura" appears inspired to Rousseau's celebrated concept of realising the natural self, specially focused upon his education theories elaborated in the *Émile* (see e.g. Scott 2021). In this background the *Lettera* includes a clear Rousseauian episode, when Mondaini encounters a Cypriot priest in the countryside between Kolossi and Erimi. See below in a greater detail.

and that he prefaced the publication of the *Lettera* with a note stating: "This letter that is now coming to light was not long since received from Cyprus by a friend of mine, who graciously communicated and donated it to me".

If compared with the same itinerary offered by Mariti in his *Viaggi*,[8] Mondaini's journey is differently approached. Four major sections may be outlined along an itinerary which appears much more oriented to human relationships and encounters than to the description of places.

In a broader perspective, the *Lettera* appears inspired to a studied variety of subjects and registers. Edutainment (education and entertainment) is the one of the key Horatian-based concepts in the eighteenth century aesthetics, and its basic principle is just the variety, as a necessary tool to escape tedium and attract the reader.

While Mariti give us a succinct list of first- and second-hand macro-evidence collected, Mondaini adopts a micronarrative for in-depth descriptions of any of the episodes he reports, with a greater variability in themes and tones. The first section is dedicated to a wedding party in Limassol, where Mondaini takes part as special guest. Here the romantic stereotypes widely selected for the bride Sophia is mixed up with the opposite register adopted for the description of the funny accident occurred to the Papas that involved the whole audience, including the participant observer Mondaini. Rapid changes in tone, style and forms may be observed, with prose and verses alternated.

In the following sections, one may pass through the register of philosophical exemplum offered by the rural priest who personifies the radical comeback to primitive laws of nature, to the detailed description of a folk music festival in Episkopi, which Mondaini provide us with an array of information of popular feasting performances of this community.

The archaeological account is limited to the last section, where Mondaini mentions ancient sources and his first-hand observations over the ancient Kourion, attesting the evidence of scanty ruins and archaeological materials on site ("this was the place where the city of Curi was located; one can still see several marble columns belonging to this city scattered around, along with further evidence of its ruins"). Interestingly, such evidence appears to produce a deep sense of impotence to Mondaini ("If one could do diligent research with impunity, one would find many rare vestiges underground, which would give a more extensive intelligence of her merit. The ignorant Turk does not allow this, and I must consequently remain here without telling you about it") (Mondaini 1786, 28). It is worth recalling

8 The itinerary Limassol-Paphos with stop in *Piscopia* (modern Episkopi), *Colosso* (modern Kolossi) and record of the ancient site of Kourion is reported in Chapter XVII of the *Viaggi* (Mariti 1769). Cf. Appendix below.

that, a century later, the same evidence (and site) produced to Luigi Palma di Cesnola the opposite feeling and offered the perfect background to build up the fiction of his "Kourion Treasure" (Bombardieri 2015, 78-80; Bombardieri forthcoming).

Turning back to the events of its diffusion, we do not know whether Mondaini learned of the publication of the *Lettera* and in what form; in any case, we know that his choice to publish under an anagram-pseudonym was confirmed in the following years. Although the collection of the fourteen Cypriot Letters never saw the light of day in print, the following decade saw the publication at Archangelo Sartori in Ancona of firstly *La vita di Epicteto filosofo: considerata da Namindio* (1797) and then the *Favole, aneddoti e novelle composte da Namindio* (1798). While still Domenico Sestini wrote:

> The illustration of various places on the Island of Cyprus is due to two Tuscan subjects who have for many years sojourned in this kingdom, and one is Mr. Giovanni Mariti Fiorentino my friend, and cousin, and the other is Mr. Antonio Mondaini Livornese, from whom we expect many interesting news, and observations, promising to publish them. (Sestini 1788, 131)

In the following decade, Mariti's interests, like those of Mondaini, moved further and further away from the Cyprus *focus* and, with the same progressive parabola, the epistolary relationship between the two also became less intense and meaningful.

The evidence discussed above, which we can only consider fragmentary and inconclusive, lead us to glimpse a line of development unfolding over decades. A path through which the relationship between the two unfolds in the light of their vivid and personal interest in Cyprus and in the shadow of their respective (and equally personal) ambitions and weaknesses.

In an early phase of this relationship, until at least 1770, Mondaini is certainly Mariti's main source from whom he gathers the information conveyed in the writing of his *Viaggi*. The immediate fame of this work, which was later translated and circulated throughout Europe (Pasta 2021, 25-9), guaranteed Mariti a personal and literary visibility that was probably translated into vanity, on the one hand, and, on the other, into an eagerness to respond to the expectations of an academic and political audience from which Mariti expected recognition. The information on Cyprus becomes essential at this point and Mondaini's role of paramount importance.

In the second phase, between 1770 and 1775-76, Mariti published Mondaini's works in agreement with him; presumably, Mondaini saw his friend's fame as a vehicle to spread his own writings. The attribution of works from this phase is made difficult precisely by this

source-author dichotomy, which is moreover made explicit in Mondaini's letters preserved in the Fondo Mariti.

In the third phase, between 1775 and at least 1785-87, the balance of dichotomy and apparent common intents breaks down. The spark we can document is represented by Mondaini's distancing himself from the 'general agreement' about the location of ancient Kition. It is like to say that the source rebels, then. And Mariti's reaction appears to our eyes to be totally unhinged, perhaps precisely because it calls into question the two drives that for Mariti were constitutive of the relationship from the beginning: his vanity and the need to meet expectations. Mariti reacts with silence, not following up Mondaini's letter of 1775, and then with open polemic, writing and publishing his *Dissertazione*. From this moment on, Mondaini is no longer mentioned explicitly, but referred to polemically.

In the fourth phase, from at least 1785 onwards, the distance becomes a rift and Mondaini decides to present himself to his friend as an autonomous author. Mondaini is no longer the source for Mariti's work, but a new autonomous Namindio, an author-anagram: the opposite of what he had been up to this point, the reverse of Mondaini. This novelty on the scene appears not acceptable to Mariti, who responds to estrangement with estrangement. Conclusive in this sense is the publication of one of the Cypriot letters that Mariti had received with the explicit instruction not to publish. The programme of publication in France with translation and under the new pseudonym-anagram made Mariti realise clearly that the picture had changed. And the reaction, again unhinged in our eyes, is to publish the letter in the name of an anonymous Tuscan traveller: anonymous *versus* pseudonymous.

5 Archaeology in the Largest Realm: A Prelude to Exploiting Potential

Presenting the large eastern island to the western reader meant proposing itineraries, describing its fauna and flora, ports and markets, designing routes enriched with anecdotes. But it also meant questioning the relationship between present and past, between present-day Cypriots and classical Greece. Hints of mythology and ancient cults, starting with that to Venus, appear in the *Viaggi* by Mariti spread throughout the island. But we find ourselves in a very different atmosphere from the rise of European philhellenism and, only a few years later, the 'Greek dream' by Gabriel de Choiseul-Gouffier, the future French ambassador to Constantinople and author of *Voyage pittoresque en Grece* (de Choiseul-Gouffier 1782; Pasta 2021, 20-1). The same emerging philhellenism that, one century later, becomes a political tool in the strategy of asserting the island's Hellenic identity and its aspirations for *enosis* with Greece, as mentioned above.

Mariti's more succinct pages contain no appeals to liberate Greece and assess with resigned detachment the hiatus that divides today's Cypriot Greeks from their illustrious ancestors. As the counter-song to pro-Hellenism, the negative judgement of the Turkish administration and its nefarious effects on the culture, economy and very life of Cypriot communities remains a lens through which to make a resigned assessment in Mariti, more polemical in Sestini ("the Turk is always the oppressor and the Greek is timid, and also uninformed, according to the standard of all islanders") and, finally, more heart-

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felt in Mondaini's words ("One may hardly detect good sentiments still surviving among some of them, and a shadow of that vivacity, which was typical of the Greek peoples") (Sestini 1788, 141; Mondaini 1786, 7).

The evidence that most constitutes novelty and represents a turning point in the relationship with the island's antiquity is certainly the shift from erudition to participatory observation. This change does not only imply access to sources of a different nature (literary, historical, but also 'archaeological'), but – and this is more relevant – it implies the vivification of Cyprus' past, thanks to antiquities that now take on an extra dimension, that of tangible evidence. Not just second-hand mentions, but first-hand observations based on objects and, above all, contexts. The discovery of the context, as is the case with Mariti's archaeological expertise in Larnaca, allows placing at the same level the personal direct record alongside that of ancient geographers, historiographers, mythographers. The vivification of antiquity with new sources, objects and actors is certainly the positive aspect of a medal that contains a negative one in the extraction and exploitation of these objects.

The possibility of observing today the survivor of an archaeological donation as remote as Mariti's to the Accademia Etrusca di Cortona, as well as the possibility of tracing its route and landing backwards, represent a fascinating acquisition. But, more significantly in this episode is its paradigm of a transformation (Bombardieri 2019). From the cocoon of the traveller and the scholar the archaeologist and the collector emerge together. The former closed in observation or in the roiling of disputes, the latter ready to take a broader and vainer flight. It is interesting that, while the collector's vanity takes shape in the guise of Mariti, on the other hand, we can observe those who seem to shy away from vanity, as is the case with Mondaini, and go through their time without clamour, hiding in some hold instead of on the bridge of fame.

Albeit with different perspectives and *modus vivendi*, the shift from erudition to archaeology is evident in the profile of European travellers staying in Cyprus during the eighteenth century. With the passing of the years and the passage of travellers, a different approach and an equally varied perception of the antiquity of the island and its memory emerges. The Russian monk Barski in the 1730s neither mentions nor notes anything, although he was faced with the remains of the urban fortification of ancient Kition in all their monumental evidence, for instance. None of this enters his gaze, does not catch his attention, and is not recorded in his narrative. A few years later, Pococke's viewpoint is different (Pococke 1743). He even transcribes and publishes a series of ancient epigraphs that he cannot understand, for the sole reason of his obvious interest in passing on a trace of antiquity. His interest is thus eminently driven by a sense of wonder and

fascination for a past as mysterious and indecipherable as the inscriptions he transcribes. In Pococke's account, observations on the erudite reconstruction of the island's antiquity prevail, which is, after all, but a stage in the journey to the East, a chapter in a broader narrative. The English traveller's annotations, however, remain largely the result of a "distant observation", which claims to be objective and which, perhaps for this reason, never overflows into first-person participation. An embankment and a boundary are set without any possibility of compromise between the observer and the object.

This boundary seems to be crossed with ease and even unprejudiced tranquillity by Sestini, and, above all, by Mariti only a few years later. The care with which Mariti reconstructs and reweaves the fabric of Cyprus' earliest history is measured both in the heatedness of his *Dissertazione*, born and consumed by the polemical spark of a scholarly dispute, but above all is recorded in his personal participation. A major reason for the success among the readers of his travel accounts, this first-person participation provides Mariti's account with an additional involvement and truthfulness and is the effect of the warmth of his 'up-close gaze'. This different gaze transforms the island's ancient traces – even those not seen by Barski and distantly observed by Pococke – into novelties, the evidence into archaeological discoveries. His participation thus takes the form of expertise, and the emphasis increasingly shifts to the novelty of the discovery. Within his narrative, from the *Viaggi* account to the *Dissertazione*, the increasing importance of archaeological discovery, and even more so of the direct testimony that can be provided, becomes clearer and clearer. In this sense, the 'archaeological expertise', the 'site inspection' with Niebuhr in 1766 and – above all – the episode of discovery and donation in 1767-76 are illustrative, suggesting a step further in a new direction. The head of the statue of the emperor Caracalla and the coins that Mariti says he saw unearthed "then passing into the hands" of the British consul Timothy Turner and from this hand to his own, constitute a lot, a small private collection of exploited antiquities that is formed on the island. The same can be said of the Greek and Latin epigraphs collected by Sestini fifteen years later, one of which through Sestini himself "is found at Mr. Cav. Ainslie, British Amb. at the Ottoman Sublime Porta" (Sestini 1788, 144). This archetype soon became common use and part of the broad and well-known phenomenon of diplomatic collecting, which already seemed to be a habit in Cyprus at the end of the eighteenth century, as witnessed by the French consul Benoît Astier, a collector of coins (Yon 2011, 38; Gilet 2005) and which would obviously have famous champions in the following century, as observed at the beginning (Goring 1988; Marangou 2000; Bombardieri 2015). The same short span in which Mariti's small Cypriot collection was formed and donated marks the gradual opening of new horizons in 'diachronic' collecting

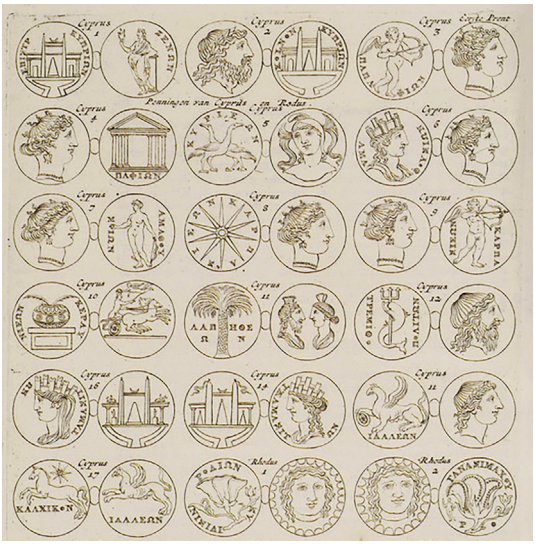

Figure 14
Imagined medals elaborated by Olfar Dapper (1688, 288, Pl. IV). The imagined Kourion coin described by Antonio Mondaini is illustrated on the second row from the top

of Oriental antiquities in Italy, as witnessed for instance by Cardinal Stefano Borgia's collection in Rome (Langella 1999; Di Paolo 2012, 22-4). In this sensible time of changes, Mondaini seems to stand a step backwards. He also refers to medals (coins) describing ancient Kourion in his *Lettera* (Mondaini 1786, 28). But, while Mariti observe, collect and donate his lot of real Roman coins from Kition, Mondaini shape his description of the Kourion's coinage around second-hand (unverified) information, i.e. the imagined medals elaborated by Olfar Dapper a century before **[fig. 14]** (Dapper 1688, 288, Pl. IV).

Mariti, an archetypal collector, is already a typical collector and clearly expresses his subtle vanity as an inherent characteristic of the collector of artefacts. Vanity seeps from his proclaimed generosity, equal only to that of his friend and consul ("[of the coins] on my return to Tuscany I also made a new distribution") (Mariti 1787b, 30) and is definitively realised by promoting the donation to the Accademia Etrusca di Cortona in 1776.

As expected, the increasing dimensions of collections through time reflect a parallel gradual increase in the dimensions of collectors' vanity and appetite for exploitation. While a century before Mariti formed his collection through a generous donation, in the paradigmatic case for Luigi Palma di Cesnola (Bombardieri 2015; 2021b), the emphasis on his archaeological discoveries becomes a narrative of his fight against the rest of world, including potential colleagues, critics and someway the destiny itself! A fight with a well-deserved final reward: the archaeological treasure. In other words, extractive archaeology has found its cradle and the space for its development.

Appendix

The appendix contains the English translation of the full text of the two short works referred to in the previous pages:

- Mariti, G. (1787). *Dissertazione istorico-critica sull'antica città di Citium nell'isola di Cipro e sulla vera topografia della medesima*. Livorno.

- Mondaini, A. (1786). *Lettera di un viaggiator toscano scritta da Cipro a un accademico etrusco*. Livorno.

In addition, this Appendix provides the reader with a short Anthology of selected texts from G. Mariti, *Viaggi per l'isola di Cipro e per la Soria e Palestina fatti da Giovanni Mariti accademico fiorentino dall'anno MDCCLX al MDCCLXVIII*, Tomo I, Firenze 1769. Specifically, extracts from Chapter III, dedicated to ancient *Citium* and from Chapter XVII, in which Mariti covers the itinerary marked by the Mondaini *Lettera* are included in the Appendix.

The original footnotes of Mariti's *Dissertazione* and Mondaini's *Lettera* appear followed by (*) in italics in the text, in order to distinguish them from my comments. Selected passages of Greek authors quoted in the original texts by Mariti have been normalised to current editions; identified typographical errors and/or authorial eventual misunderstandings have been emended. The original Greek pas-

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sages have been reported here in footnote as appear in the original text by Mariti for the sake of information. Abbreviated references after Oxford Classical Dictionary (2012), 4th edition (`https://www.oxfordreference.com/`).

Original Italian editions of the mentioned works by Giovanni Mariti are available in open access from several online sources, including Google Books. A copy of the *Lettera* by Antonio Mondaini is kept in the Biblioteca Universitaria, Università di Genova (inv. coll. misc. A.7.11).

Giovanni Mariti,
Dissertazione on the Ancient City of Citium on the Island of Cyprus and Its True Topography

Livorno, Appresso Carlo Giorgi, with Approval,
1787

To the most erudite and learned man, Signor Lodovico Coltellini[1] in the noble science of Antiquarian profound and illustrious.
This booklet as a token of friendship and esteem
To his friend
Giovanni Mariti

When in Volume I Chapter III of my *Viaggi*, I described the ancient city of Citium, which I placed near the present city of Larnica or Arnaca, which, indeed, occupies part of the foundations of its ancient walls, as much as on the observations made by Sir Niebuhr, one of those travellers who had been sent to Arabia by Frederick V, King of Denmark, and with whom, during his stay in Cyprus in 1766, I had been there more than once to examine the matter more closely, for I had been looking at the ruins for five years.[2] I also added that my opinion was not new, since I had come across an exact Manuscript containing the description of the things of Cyprus by Ascanio Savorniano, a Venetian gentleman, from which it was clear that he also placed the ancient Citium there.[3] To corroborate my opinion, I wrote that Strabo, and Ptolemy placed Citium between the city of Amathus, now Old Limassol, and the Dades promontory, now called cape Pila.[4]

1 The erudite Lodovico Coltellini is key to the initial antiquarian interests for Etruscan Civilisation, especially in Cortona and Bolsena region. An intense exchange with Mariti is attested by the 30 years long correspondence (565 letters ranging from 1778 to 1808) by Coltellini still survived in the Fondo Mariti in Bologna. The special relation with Coltellini undoubtedly influenced the donation process of Cypriot coins to the Accademia Etrusca in Cortona by Mariti in 1776. A common close relations circle may be also evidenced by the coincidence in the publication of this *Dissertazione* by Mariti and the *Lettera al Sig. Abate Domenico Sestini*, with a comment over an Etruscan bas relief, published by Coltellini the same year 1787 (Coltellini 1787).

2 Carsten Niebuhr visited Cyprus during the Danish expedition to Egypt and Arabia. The plan of the ancient city of Kition which he prepared during his stay on the island was published by Giovanni Mariti as an offset illustration in the *Dissertazione*. Mariti personally met Niebuhr during his visit to Larnaca in July 1766. Another schematic plan of ancient Citium appears on the frontispiece of the *Viaggi* (Mariti 1769).

3 Mariti is here referring to the manuscript *Descrittione delle cose di Cipro* by Ascanio Savorgnano, who was sent to Cyprus by the Venetian Senate in 1562 to write a report on the political and social condition in Cyprus. See below in a greater detail.

4 Ptol. *Geog.* 5.13.2, l. 12. Further references by Mariti are detailed below. An updated overview on historical sources about Limassol in Nicolaou-Konnari, Schabel 2015; the location of Dades promontory corresponding to cape Pila appears confirmed by the survey of historical cartography available, e.g. Graves, Stokes 1878. For detailed reference see Navari 2003.

This opinion of the true situation of Citium, after eighteen years I have written it, has now awakened in me the criticism of a friend of mine, a man of merit, and whom I esteem, and who has also sojourned for several years in Cyprus. He tells me from Aix en Provence[5] that it seemed strange to him that after so many other Geographers, Historians and Travellers, I should take away from the village of Citti the inveterate idea that the ancient city of Citium was placed there. I might doubt that his predilection for the said village (a delightful and vague holiday resort of some wealthy Greek families, and a place of recreation also for the European inhabitants of Larnica) arose from those pleasant and delightful entertainments he often passed there between the Conqueror of India[6] and the Goddess of the Island.[7]

He endeavoured to attack me more with sarcasm than reason, concluding that I should rectify my error, that I should not adapt myself to the sentiment of Cavalier Niebuhr, and moreover that I should not undertake to support him. I myself, who have made it a rule never to be heated or spoil my blood by literary disputes, return as a gift to my opponent all that he has written to me, and even thank him for having given me the opportunity to spend a few hours among the scholarly papers, reducing to a Historical *dissertazione* the reply that I should make to him, with which I will even try to validate what I have already written about Citium. Therefore, I will take up the fuller narrative here, and then establish that the situation of that city was precisely where it was said to be, i.e. near the present city of Larnica.

5 Antonio Mondaini moved from Cyprus to Aix-en-Provence between 1776 and 1777 and here establishes a fortunate business in the household owned by his wife's family at Manon (Pasta 2021, 22). Manon en Provence is the place mentioned in the manuscript he composed under the pseudonym Namindiù in 1785 (Severis 2007). See above for additional information.

6 This explicit reference to Greek God Dionysus is based upon literary episodes set in India. According to this widely diffused and variated evidence, Dionysus invaded India long before Alexander the Great was born, he conquered the lands, founded cities, and established laws. Dionysus' relation to India increased in significance after Alexander the Great's visit in 327 BCE to a city which the Greeks called Nysa, located between the Cophenii River and the Indus River (Strabo *Geography* 15.1). According to Arrian of Nicomedia (Arr. *Anab.* 5.2) the Nysaeans are not an Indian race, but part of those who came with Dionysus to India. Nysa is known as Dionysus' birthplace; Zeus saved his son by sewing him up in his thigh and keeping him there until he reached maturity. Hence, it is said that he was born twice after which he was entrusted to the care of certain nymphs on Mount Nysa. Nonnus of Panopolis (Nonnus *Dion*. 13) also refers that Dionysus is ordered by Zeus to prepare for war against the impious natives of India. In an expedition against the Indians, Dionysus is said to have tampered with enemies by giving them wine so as to divert their thoughts from war preparations to dancing. These, and other Bacchic orgies were employed in the system of warfare, and thus India and various parts of the world were 'conquered' by Dionysus. On this largely explored topic see Daniélou 1982, Sindha 2018-19; Stoneman 2019.

7 This clear reference to Aphrodite, the Goddess of love may be mirrored by the previous one to Dionysos, the God of wine to describe a pleasant place where Mondaini might have spent his time.

What Cavalier Niebuhr said or what is about to say about this concern is not known to me. But let us come to our subject.

CITIUM is believed to be in the number of the most ancient Cities known in the History. It seems that this city was the first inhabited place on the island of Cyprus, and that from the island it took its name, just as the island itself had taken its name of Chetima, or Cetima from Cetim, one of the four sons of Yavan (Javan), formerly the son of Yafet (Japheth), and consequently, the great-grandson of Noah. Truly, the four sons of Yavan, as we also have learned from the Holy Bible, divided among them the Islands and the Sea Shores of the Mediterranean Sea; thus, the Interpreters explain what we read in Genesis.

> *Filii autem Yavan: Elisa, et Tharsis, Cethim, et Dodanim. Ab his divisae sunt Insulae gentium in regioni bus suis, unusquisque secundum linguam suam, et familias suas in nationibus suis.*[8]

> And these were Javan's sons, Elisa, Tharsis, Cetthim and Dodanim; 5 who divided up the islands of the Gentiles, region by region. Each of these became separate nations, distinct in speech and in blood.[9]

Cetim was the one who probably landed first on the island of Cyprus, since it is presumable that it derived from him its original name of Cetima, or Chetima. Taken from its name the Hebrews then called the other islands Chetim, and many maritime places too.[10] The city was later called Citium by the Greeks, remaining close to the name Chetim, but note what we read about in Flavius Josephus.

> Χέθιμος δὲ Χέθιμα τὴν νῆσον ἔσχε, Κύπρος αὕτη νῦν καλεῖται, καὶ ἀπ' αὐτῆς νῆσοί τε πᾶσαι καὶ τὰ πλείω τῶν παρὰ θάλατταν Χέθη ὑπὸ Ἑβραίων ὀνομάζεται· μάρτυς δέ μου τῷ λόγῳ μία τῶν ἐν Κύπρῳ πόλεων ἰσχύσασα τὴν προσηγορίαν φυλάξαι· Κίτιον γὰρ ὑπὸ τῶν ἐξελληνισάντων αὐτὴν καλεῖται μηδ' οὕτως διαφυγοῦσα τοῦ Χεθίμου τὸ ὄνομα.

> *Chetimus vero, Chetima Insulam tenuit. Cyrpus ea nunc vocatur. Et a bea omnes Insulae, ac maritima loca plura, ab Ebraeis Chetim dicuntur. Eius vero, quod dico, testis mihi una urbium, quae in Cypro,*

8 Original reference in the 1787 edition is: "Cap X. ver. 4 et 5".

9 Gen. 10,4-5. Transl. by Knox Bible (1949).

10 Phoenician records name Kittim as Kt, or Kty, who settled on island of Cyprus (Steele 2013, 173; Scolnic, Davis 2015). Biblical reference to ships from Kittim may be also recorded by Balaam "But ships shall come from Kittim and shall afflict Asshur and Eber; and he also shall perish forever" (Num 24,24). Isaiah also mentions ships coming to Tyre from Kittim, which is translated Cyprus (Is 23,1-12). Jeremiah and Ezekiel also refer to the coasts of Kittim, also translated Cyprus (Jer 2,10; Ezek 27,6).

> *ac tueri nomen potuit: Citium enim vocatur, ab his, qui in linguam Graecam transtulerunt: nec sic quidem Chetimi nomen refugiens.*[11]

> Cethimus possessed the island Cethima: it is now called Cyprus; and from that it is that all islands, and the greatest part of the sea-coasts, are named Cethim by the Hebrews: and one city there is in Cyprus that has been able to preserve its denomination; it has been called Citius by those who use the language of the Greeks, and has not, by the use of that dialect, escaped the name of Cethim.[12]

Accordingly, if we were to believe that Cetim himself, son of Yavan, was the builder of the city of Citium, it would be difficult to argue for such an opinion, but it has been held; at the most, we may agree that he was the first to establish a foundation there, which then seems to have been renewed by a colony of Phoenicians.[13]

> *Citiensis, ex Cypri urbe Graecanica, quam Phoenices incolebant.*[14]

> [Zeno] was a native of Citium in Cyprus, a Greek city which had received Phoenician settlers.[15]

and Cicero.

> *Scis enim Citieos, clientes tuos, e Phoenica profectos.*[16]

> For you are aware that your clients of Citium originally came from Phoenicia.[17]

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11 Original text in the 1787 edition is: "Χετιμος δὲ Χετιμα τὴν νῆσον ἔσχε. Κύπρος αὕτη νυν καλεῖταὶ καὶ ἄπ ἀυτῆς νῆσοὶ τε πᾶσαι καὶ τὰ πλείω τῶν παρὰ θαλασσαν Χετίμ υπὸ Ε΄βραίων ὀνομάζεταὶ μάρτυς δέμου τοῦ λόγου, μία τόν ἐν Κύπρω πολεων, ἰσχυσασα τὴν προσηγορίαν φυλάξαὶ. Κὶτιον γὰρ υπὸ τοῦ εξελληνισὰντων αυτην καλεῖται μηδ' οὔπῳ διαφυγοῦσα τοῦ Χετὶμου τὸ ὄνομα". Original reference in the 1787 edition is: "Joseph. Antiqu. Jud. Lib. I. Chap. XI".

12 Joseph. *AJ* 1.128. Transl. by A.M. William Whiston 1895.

13 While no kingdom of Kition is securely attested before the V century BC, it has been hypothesised that Kition might be identified with the kingdom of Qarthadasht ('New City' in Phoenician) listed on the prism of the Assyrian king Esarhaddon (Yon 1997, 11; 2004, 19-22). Since the beginning of the VIII century BC, the material culture of Kition appears profoundly influenced by a "Phoenicisation" process (Satraki 2012; Iacovou 2018).

14 Original reference in the 1787 edition is: "D. Laer. In vita Zenonis Citiensis. Lib. VII".

15 Diog. Laert. *Vitae Philosophorum* VII.1. Transl. by R.D. Hicks (1972)

16 Original text in the 1787 edition is: "*Citiaeos, clientes tuos, e Phoenicia profectos*". Original reference in the 1787 edition is: "De Fin. Lib. IV".

17 Cic. *Fin.* IV.20. Transl. by H. Harris Rackham (1931).

We may presume that the Phoenicians moved there when the king of Tyre Belus built that city, and Lapithos,[18] as we know from Alexander Ephesius.[19]

The city of Citium, according to Strabo, was home to the philosopher Zeno, Prince, or Head of the Stoics, Thucydides also mentions this evidence.

> Κίτιον: Κίτιον πόλις Κύπρου, ὅθεν ἦν Ζήνων ὁ Κιτιεύς, φιλόσοφος. *Citium urbs Cypri: e qua erat Zenon Citiensis Philosophus.*[20]

> Kition, city of Cyprus, where Zeno the philosopher came from.[21]

A further Zeno from Citium is known, but this one was a Rhetorician, and perhaps also a Poet. Apollodorus from Citium is also referred to by Pliny as a physician.

> *Et contra viscum quoque dari Apollodori duo iubent: sed Citeus, semen ex aqua tritum; Tarantinus, succum.*[22]

> Both the physicians with the name of Apollodorus prescribe radishes to be given for mistletoe poisoning; but Apollodorus of Citium recommends the pounded seed in water, he of Tarentum the juice.[23]

From this same city also came Apollonius Physician, mentioned by Strabo as such when he described Citium.

> ἐντεῦθέν ἐστι Ζήνων τε ὁ τῆς στωικῆς αἱρέσεως ἀρχηγέτης καὶ Ἀπολλώνιος ἰατρός.

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18 Belus appears as a legendary king of Tyre said by Virgil to have been the father of Dido of Carthage, Pygmalion of Tyre (Verg. *Aen.* 1.729). The name appears corresponding to a standard late rendering of the Akkadian Bel and Northwest Semitic Baʿal (both meaning 'Lord') as a theonym, personal name, or title. The possible original name may have been *MTN-BʿL* (*Matan-Baʿal*, 'Gift of the Lord'), then transformed into Belus as a hypocorism. As to the reference to a Phoenician foundation, it may be likely derived from Nonnus of Panopolis (Nonnus, *Dion.* 13.432-3). Lapethos is called a Phoenician city by [Skylax] 103 (Müller 1855, 78). It has been suggested that Lapethos derives from a pre-Greek TN, given its divergent representation in Greek and Phoenician; but the correspondence of Gk. θ/Phoen. š is now known to be normal (Lipiński 2004, 62).

19 * *According to others, Lapithus was built by the Spartans, and Strabo. A Loconibus condita, et Praxandro Lib. XIV. But Scilace himself says it was a Phoenician colony,* Ληπιθος Φοινικων.

20 Original text in the 1787 edition is: "Κίτιον, πολις Κύπρου ὅθεν ἦν Ζηνων ὁ Κιτιεὸς, ο φιλοσοφος". Original reference in the 1787 edition is: "Schol. Thucydides. Lib. I".

21 Scholia in Thucydidem (*scholia vetera et recentiora*). 1.112 (3).

22 Original reference in the 1787 edition is erroneous: "Lib. XX. Chap. IV".

23 Plin. *HN* 20.13.25. Transl. by W.H.S Jones (1951).

Inde est Zeno Stoicae Sectea Princeps, et Apollonius Medicus.[24]

and here were born both Zeno, the original founder of the Stoic sect, and Apollonius, a physician.[25]

Cyril mentions Isigonus of Citium.[26]

Isigonus Cittiensis in Rhodo Insula Taurum dicit sermonis nostri non fuisse expertem.[27]

Isigonus from Citium argues that the bull on the Island of Rhodes was not an expert of our language.[28]

This one authored more books than the incredible Απίζων, referred to by Sotion.

Fons est Potniis iuxta Thebas, e quo postquam equi biberint in furorem aguntur: ut tradit Isogonus libro secundo Incredibilium.[29]

There is a spring in Potniai around Thebes whose waters cause horses that drink from it to go mad, as Isigonos records in the second book of Unbelievable Things.[30]

Perseus was born in Citium too, as he is mentioned by Diogenes Laertius in the life of Zeno, as he was one of his most brilliant students.

24 Original text in the 1787 edition is: "Εντεδθέν ἰστι Ζηνων τε ὁ τῆς στωικῆς αἱρέσεως Α᾽ρχηγέτης καὶ Απολλώνιος, ιατρος". Original reference in the 1787 edition is: "Lib. XIV".

25 Strabo *Geography* 14.6.3. Transl. by H.C. Hamilton, W. Falconer (1903).

26 The mention of Isogonus of Citium along with both the following references to Cyril and Sotion is most probably derived from the *Glossarium Greco-Barbaricum* collected by the Dutch erudite Johannes van Meurs, whose complete works were made available by Giovanni Lami and published in Florence (van Meurs 1744). Lami appears among the Marit's correspondents in the Fondo Mariti in Bologna and Mariti himself makes an explicit reference to the Florentine edition of van Meurs' book in the *Dissertazione* (see below). Both the passages quoted appear identically listed in the third volume of van Meurs (1744, 675-6).

27 Original reference in the 1787 edition is: "*Contra Iulianum* Lib. III".

28 Cyril. *Adv. Iul.* 3.22. Original Greek translated into Latin by van Meurs is: "Καὶ μὴν καὶ Ἰσίγονος ὁ Κιττιεὺς ἐν Ρόδῳ τῇ νήσῳ τὸν τοῦ Διὸς ταῦρόν φησιν οὐκ ἀμοιρῆσαι λόγου τοῦ καθ᾽ ἡμᾶς".

29 Original reference in the 1787 edition is: "Lib. De Flum".

30 Original Greek translated into Latin by van Meurs is: "Κρήνη ἐν Ποτνίαις περὶ Θήβας, ἐξ ἧς οἱ ἵπποι πίνοντες μαίνονται, ὡς ἱστορεῖ Ἰσίγονος ἐν δευτέρῳ Ἀπίστων". Transl. by R.J. Greene (1959).

> *Zenonis vero Discipuli, multi quidem. Sed clari, Persaeus, Demetri filius, Cittiensis.*[31]

> Of the many disciples of Zeno the following are the most famous: Persaeus, son of Demetrius, of Citium.[32]

Athenaeus also recalls it.

> *Quamvis Persaeo Cittiensi in commentariis convivialibus clamante, ac dicente, de rebus Venereis inter epulas mentionem facendam.*[33]

> although Persaeus of Citium, in his Recollections of Banquets, says loudly It is a very consistent subject of conversation at drinking-parties for men to talk of amatory matters.[34]

As for the history of the city of Citium, once the capital of the island of Cyprus, it is certain that it had to suffer all those to which the island itself was subjected to. One of the most significant events is the conquest by Amasi King of Egypt, who reigned in the Eighteenth Dynasty;[35] Amasi took it from the Assyrians and then destroyed it.

It is recounted by various ancient sources, but even if we ponder the ancient accounts better, one might perhaps conjecture that when Amasis took Citium and subjugated the island of Cyprus, the Cypriots were a free and independent people, and that they governed themselves.

Aprie King of Egypt,[36] called otherwise by Jeremiah Vafre, as attested by Diodorus[37] that he had defeated in naval combat both the Cypriots and the Phoenicians; probably they were confederates, but he does not remember under what rule they were then. And Aprie, satisfied in having defeated them, returned to Egypt.[38]

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31 Original reference in the 1787 edition is: "Lib. VII".

32 Diog. Laert. *Vitae Philosophorum* VII.1.36. Transl. by R.D. Hicks (1972).

33 Original reference in the 1787 edition is: "Lib. XIII".

34 Ath. *Deipn.* 13.86. Transl. by C.D. Yonge (1854).

35 Amasi here might correspond to Ahmose II, who reigned in the Twenty Sixth Dinasty (570-26 BC), rather than to Ahmose I, Pharaon and founder of the Eighteenth Dinasty (mid-XVI Cent. BC). Most of our information about Ahmose II is derived from Hdt. 2.161, with scarce archaeological evidence about his reign.

36 Apries (Ancient Greek: Ἀπρίης) is the name by which Hdt. 2.161, Diodorus Siculus (1. 68) and Athenaeus (*Deipn.* 13.10.23) designate Wahibre Haaibre of Egypt, the fourth pharaoh (counting from Psamtik I) of the Twenty Sixth Dynasty (589 BC-570 BC), predecessor of Ahomse II mentioned above.

37 Diodorus Siculus (1.68). Original reference in the 1787 edition is: "Lib. I. Art 21".

38 * *Aprie King of Egypt reigned twenty-five years. He began his reign in 595 B.C.*

The usurper Amasi then ascended the throne of Egypt and subjugated the island of Cyprus and Citium suffered the same fate; and Amasi performed great sacrifices to the Gods[39] without there being any mention of whom that island was subject to, and without any presence of the Assyrians on that island, so that one may be confirmed in believing that the Cypriots were not then subject to the empire of any monarch.

We seem to be confirmed in this hypothesis by Herodotus,[40] who argues that Amasis was the first who subjected the Cypriots and made them tributaries. He also says that, as Amasis made them suffer a tyrannical government, they voluntarily submitted to the Persians at the time of Cambyses, son of Cyrus. Thus, it cannot be said that after the death of Amasis they were subject to the Assyrians since their monarchy was ended by Cyrus himself. So, it appears that Citium was taken from the Cypriots when their government was free and independent and not subject to the Assyrians.[41]

Cimon the Athenian son of Miltiades in the year III of Olympiad LXXXII, i.e. in 450 B.C. defeated the Persians in Cyprus with a mighty fleet and took away their maritime empire. In the following year he purchased most of Cyprus, conquered Citium, and died there.

> *Post neque ita multo in Cyprum cum ducentis navibus imperator missus, cum eius maiorem patrem insulae devicisset, in morbum implicitus, in oppido Citio est mortuus.*[42]

39 **Amasi King of Egypt reigned for forty-four years. He began to reign in 570 B.C.*

40 Hdt. 2.161. Original reference in the 1787 edition is erroneous: "Lib. III".

41 The complex dossier of relations between ancient Kition and the Assyria must include the key evidence of the Royal Stele erected in this city by the Assyrian king Sargon II in 707 BC. This basalt stone bears the royal portrait of Sargon II and a long cuneiform Akkadian inscription with the mention of the Cypriote vassal cities. According to Robert Merrillees (2016), the stele was found out in 1844 to the south-western section of the circuit city wall, and it was originally erected close to one of city gates. This is the westernmost Assyrian royal Stele and we may presume that it was originally intended to mark the extreme edge of the existing world in Assyrian terms. When the stele was erected, Phoenician still dominated Cyprus, although the Assyrians were now showing more interest in the island (Radner 2010). Gradually, the role of Tyre diminished, Assyrians began to establish direct contacts and the Cypriote élites increasingly began to incorporate Assyrian elements, in the figurative art and eventually in the social behaviours. These may also include ways of preparing and consuming food (Bombardieri 2017a). The widespread diffusion of exclusive objects can reveal an interesting phenomenon of adoption and assimilation of Assyrian elements in peripheral and foreign elites, such as the Cypriote élite.

42 Original text in the 1787 edition is: "*Post neque ita multo in Cyprum cum ducentes navibus imperator missus, cum ejus majorem patrem Insulae devicisset, in morbum implicitus, in oppido Citio est mortuus*". Original reference in the 1787 edition is: "Corn. Nep. in Cimone".

> Afterwards, but not much later, being sent as commander-in-chief to Cyprus with two hundred ships, after conquering the greater part of the island he was taken ill and died in the town of Citium.[43]

Diodorus also clearly tells us about the expulsion of Citium by Cimon.

> *Cimon vero, cum in Cyprum appulisset, maris potens, Citium quidem expugnavit.*[44]

> Cimon, when he arrived in Cyprus and was master of the sea, reduced by siege Citium.[45]

Plutarch argues that Cimon died of illness in the siege or, as others would state, from a wound received while fighting there.

> *Decessit in obsidione Citii, ut plerique referunt, ex morbo, alii volunt ex vulnere, quod confligens cum Barbaris accepit.*[46]

> He died while besieging Citium, of sickness, as most say. But some say it was of a wound which he got while fighting the Barbarians.[47]

The last king of Citium presented his sword to Alexander the Great and with it he defeated Darius, and Plutarch says that it was of admirable temper and lightness.[48]

Cyprus was once divided into nine kingdoms.

> *Quondam IX Regnorum fedem.*[49]

> In former times it was the seat of nine kingdoms.[50]

43 Nep. *Cim*. 3.4. Transl. by J.C. Rolfe (1929).

44 Original reference in the 1787 edition is: "Lib. XII".

45 Diod. Sic. *Library of History* 12.3.3. Transl. by C.H. Oldfather (1954).

46 Original reference in the 1787 edition is: "In vita Cim".

47 Plut. *Cim*. 19.1. Transl. by B. Perrin (1914).

48 Plut. *Alex*. 32.9, where is mentioned: "He had a sword, too, of astonishing temper and lightness, a gift from the king of the Citieans". Transl. by B. Perrin (1914). Original reference in the 1787 edition is: "Plut. In vit. Alex".

49 Original reference in 1787 edition is erroneous: "Plin. Lib. V. Ch. 31".

50 Plin. *HN* 5.35. Transl. by K.F.T. Mayhoff (1906).

The city of Citium was the capital of one of them. This is sufficient for our purpose since there is no need to go back over those nine kingdoms on an island that can barely form one.[51]

As for its total and final destruction, it must not have happened before the year 210 AD, as can be seen from some medals found in its ruins, I can also add a number of them found later belonging to Septimius, Antoninus Caracalla, and Julia Domna with the Greek inscription, and on the reverse side the Temple of Paphos with the legend ΚΟΙΝΟΝ ΚΥΠΡΩΝ,[52] other coins with the head of Caracalla on one side, and that of Geta on the other. In addition to these, earlier medals were also found, belonging to Claudius Caesar Augustus with the Latin inscription, and on the reverse a laurel wreath, in the middle of which one can similarly read ΚΟΙΝΟΝ ΚΥΠΡΩΝ.

A head representing Antoninus Caracalla was also found there during excavations in 1767, and I was present when it was unearthed. Next to it were also found many of the above-mentioned medals, which together with the head passed into the hands of Mr. Timothy Turner, British Consul in Cyprus, who then sent this same head to England.[53]

He generously distributed the medals among his friends in Cyprus, and not a few he favoured myself, so that on my return to Tuscany I also made a new distribution, and especially to the Museum of the famous Etruscan Academy in Cortona.[54]

51 The reference to ancient sources transfers to Mariti's argument the memory of a peculiar fragmentation of Iron Age Cyprus polities. Records of Cypriot city kingdoms are elusive and mutable. Seven on the stele of Sargon (707 BC), Cypriot kings were ten to be listed on the prism of Esarhaddon (673-72 BC). Within a generation, with three new kingdoms appeared over the political scenario in a few years. Among the listed kingdoms by Esarhaddon, six are easily identifiable (*Idalion*, *Chytroi*, *Paphos*, *Kourion*, *Tamassos* and *Ledra*); two are probable (*Soloi* and *Salamis*), two remains uncertain (*Qarthadasht* and *Nuria*) (Fourrier 2021, 109).

52 *Koinon Kyprion* constitutes the reference for the circulation of bronze coins on the island under the Roman rule, from the emperor Claudius. In the period of the Flavian dynasty and the Severan dynasty, the reference to this federation is associated with the depiction of Zeus of Salamis or alternatively with the representation of the temple of Aphrodite in Paphos, with the central *betyl* depicting the aniconic figure of the Goddess (Parks 2004; Amandry 2015).

53 Mariti met the English consul Timothy Turner, to whom he had been recommended by his friend Antonio Mondaini in Larnaca. Turner represented not only Great Britain in Cyprus, but also Tuscany and Holland, and he appointed Mariti vice-consul of the Tuscan consulate. All the 13 letters received from Timoty Turner kept in the Fondo Mariti in Bologna are dated back to 1766, a year before the discovery reported here. It is worth to mention that similar episodes may have frequently happened, as attested by the visit of Carsten Niebuhr in July 1766 and confirmed by Mariti at the beginning of the *Dissertazione* ("I had been looking at the ruins for five years").

54 The actual donation of antiquities to the Accademia Etrusca at Cortona was finalised in August 1776 and consisted of three roman coins of Caracalla, Geta and Julia Domna. See above for its contextualised reconstruction.

But let us now turn to the true situation of the ancient city of Citium. Ptolemy thus situates Citium on the littoral of the island of Cyprus.

> Κίτιον πόλις, Λᾶδες ἄκρα, Θρόνοι πόλις καὶ ἄκρα.
>
> *Citium, Urbs. Dades, Promontorium. Throni, Urbs, et Promontorium.* [55]
>
> Kition, city. Dades, promontory. Throni, city and promontory.

Strabo also places Citium ahead of the Dades promontory.[56] Having found, with the help of these two ancient Geographers, that the ancient city of Citium must have remained to the West of the Dades promontory, we shall now proceed to figure out its more precise location. First, we need to find out which is the promontory named Dades, as they now bear different names from those they were called by the ancient Geographers.

My friend says that ancient Dades corresponds to the promontory, which is now called cape Citti. We established it at the other, more easterly cape, which is now called cape Pila. He excludes that the present cape Pila was the ancient Dades promontory, saying

> *che in tal guisa resterebbe senza alcuna antica denominazione il Capo Citti,*
>
> that this way the cape Citti would remain without any denomination,

and concluding that he may read in ancient maps the indication Dades promontory, where today is located cape Citti, and that therefore the city of Citium should be placed towards the west of it.

On the other hand, I do not lack examples of maps of equal merit, which mark the Dades promontory, where cape Pila is now. Worthy of mention is a nautical map drawn in the year 1358 in Menorca, where the Dades promontory is precisely noted where cape Pila can be now found. Additionally, Camozio,[57] and Porcacchi[58] similarly

55 Ptol. *Geog.* 5.14.2. Original text in the 1787 edition is: Κιτίον, πόλις, Δάδες ἄκρα. Θρόνοι, πολις, καὶ ακρα.

56 Strabo *Geography* 14.6.3.

57 Camozio, corresponds to Giovan Francesco Camocio who was active in Venice in the second half of sixteenth century; he authored 88 small geograpical maps then collected in a single volume known as *Il Camocio* and titled *Isole famose, porti, fortezze, e terre marittime sottoposte alla Ser.ma Sig.ria di Venetia, ad altri Principi Christiani, et al Sig.or Turco, novamente poste in luce, in Venezia*. While the maps included may be only partially attributed to Camocio, it is likely that Mariti is here referring to this album, which does not bear the year of publication. See Beans 1933.

58 Porcacchi 1572.

mark the location of Dades. And Stephen Lusignan in his *Chrografia of Cyprus*, where he speaks of the island and its borders, describes these promontories in the following order:

> *Il Capo Chitti, la ponta delle Saline, il capo de dades, ouer il Capo Pila, il Capo Pedalio, ouer della Grea.*[59]
>
> cape Chitti, the cape delle Saline, cape Dades, or cape Pila, cape Pedalio, or the Greca.

It would seem, however, from this description that Lusignan failed to mention *Throni*, both the city and the promontory mentioned by Ptolemy; but it may be noted that Lusignan himself[60] does not fail to mention the city of Throni, even though there was no memory remained in his time, and says that

> *Troni era città anticamente; la quale era tra il Casale Pila, & Santa Napa,*[61]
>
> *Throni was an ancient city, it was between the Casale Pila and Ayia Napa,*

i.e. between cape Pila, or the Dades promontory, and the cape Greco, or the promontory Pedalium, or rather Idalium, since Santa Napa is located after cape Pila before reaching cape Greco; This way the description of this section of the coastline does not differ from that described by Ptolemy and Strabo. Camozio nothing differs from the Lusignan, and only marks, besides the city, also the promontory Throni in the same place between the Dades promontory, and the Pedalium promontory.

I referred to these two authors, as they are the ones, I have found to have best marked the coastlines of the Island of Cyprus; and much faith we can especially lend to the mentioned Lusignan, since besides being a Cypriot, he was also very familiar with the geography and landscape of that kingdom, and did not lack knowledge of the History, and of the Doctrine too. He was a Lector of the Dominican Order and boasted his descent from the Royal Family of Lusignan.

Among various Geographical maps my adversary proposes to me, he makes specific reference to that published by our celebrated Dot-

59 Original text in Lusignan 1573, 4. Original reference in the 1787 edition is: "p. 3. a ter.".

60 Original reference in the 1787 edition is: "p. 10. a ter.".

61 Original text in Lusignan 1573, 4.

tor Giovanni Lami in the works by Meursio.[62] My friend regards as having been established on the traces of the Geography of Ptolemy and Strabo, in which he finds the Dades promontory situated at cape Citti. But during the time that he finds himself favoured by that map with respect to the situation of the mentioned promontory, he does not notice the difference, which he then makes with respect to the situation of Citium, which is situated there between the Dades promontory and the Throni promontory, thus remaining to the east of the Dades promontory, when according to Ptolemy and Strabo, Citium should have remained situated to the west. Thus, he needs to give up for a moment considering that he finds in that map a great deal of accuracy.

But here is how I describe this stretch of coastline for the sake of clarity, and in order to be able to see at a glance how the city of Citium stood in relation to the above-mentioned promontories.

> *I, cape Citti. II, CITIUM. III, Dades promontory,* today *cape Pila. IV, City,* and *promontory Throni, V, Pedalium promontory,* or rather *Idalium,* today *cape Greco.*

To the eventual problematic issue that cape Citti would be left without any denomination by describing the coastline this way, I will reply that I do not see why it is claimed that this *cape* should have any other denomination above the present one, and that it should go back as far as the most ancient geographers. For a moment Ptolemy omitted it; what could be easier than to see it omitted even by his ancient followers? That perhaps there are still now on the island other promontories, capes, and locations not mentioned by that Geographer? But this minute examination has no place here. Everyone can satisfy himself on the remaining discussion. We have, however, the very name of cape Citti, and we do not know the time when it originated, and if it is mentioned in the old maps and by some of the old geographers. Why, then, can this not be its ancient name, without claiming another from more remote antiquity, and from Ptolemy himself?

Having thus established concerning this part of the littoral, it will then be observed that we can admittedly move to assert that Citium was, and should also be in rigour of Geography, where its ruins can be observed today by all of us, i.e. between Borgo delle Saline and the City of Larnica or, more exactly, on the border of the city of Larnica, since Larnica presently partly covers ancient Citium.

62 See above for in-depth reference about van Meurs and Giovanni Lami.

My friend argues that Porcacchi in his *Isolario,*[63] after having placed the Dades promontory where now we are placing it, and the other geographers placed it,

> *si contraddice poi mettendo Citium ove è il presente Villaggio di Citti.*
>
> Contradicts himself by placing Citium where the present village of Citti is.

But with good grace of my friend, he swaps, while Porcacchi always places it in this way west of Dades, where Ptolemy and Strabo had placed it, only prolongs its situation too far to the west, since in his time a more exact observation had not been made that Citium should remain further to the east of the village of Citti about six and a half miles, to the west of the Dades promontory.

He regrets very much that I have strayed from his sentiment, and that of many other modern authors, who wanted to attribute to the present village of Citti what belongs to the ancient city of Citium, convinced that famous and ancient city was located where now extends that village.

We will certainly not take into consideration what Porcacchi concluded about it, nor what Lusignan himself said about the village of Citti, much less what Dapper,[64] Cavalier Janua, and Drummond wrote about it, and others who were misled by the name of the village.[65]

This village of Citti had been a Casale at the time when the Lusignan ruled Cyprus, and it was a fief of one of their family, and as Stefano Lusignano says in his *Chorografia*

> *Fu feudo di Chiarone, ovver Gariù Lusignano, del quale fu privato dall'ultimo Re Bastardo, e di poi fu venduto dalla Signoria di Venezia alli Podochatari.*[66]
>
> it was a fief of Chiarone, or Gariù Lusignano, of which it was deprived by the last Bastard King and was then sold by the Venetian lordship to the Podochatari.

The similarity of the name, or rather the very name of Citti, which is somewhat approximate to that of Citium, has certainly persuaded modern travellers, and the inhabitants of the island, to believe that the ancient Citium is to be found in this village, resting their belief

63 Porcacchi 1572.

64 Dapper 1688.

65 Drummond 1754, 143-5.

66 Lusignan 1573, 10.

more on the name of Citti, which is originated by the cape which is near this village, but this false belief will cease, when it is observed, that the cape did not take its name from the village, but the village took it from the cape itself, and this was presumably due to the increasing the fertility of land surrounding the cape Citti.

As for this cape, it must have acquired such a name, since the city of Citium was the closest city found going from this cape towards the east. Not far from the sea, it was the closest city where there was a port, whose vestiges are still visible in my time; this was mentioned by Strabo, saying that it could be closed.[67]

> εἶτα κολπώδης καὶ τραχὺς παράπλους ὁ πλείων εἰς Κίτιον... ἔχει δὲ λιμένα κλειστόν.[68]

> Then comes the coasting-voyage to Citium, which for the most part is sinuous and rough. Citium has a harbour that can be closed.[69]

On the top of it there was probably a lighthouse, or an ancient tower that watched over it; in the same place a few years ago, there was an old windmill, which I hear that has now been demolished. Furthermore, there is no evidence of a city in the village of Citti, whose few remaining buildings belong to Christian times.

As far as Citium itself is concerned, where and how it appears to us, the foundations of many old structures have been found out and, during all the years I stayed in Cyprus, they continued to be unravelled, most of them being large squared dressed stones, then used for the foundations of other buildings currently being constructed across nearby Larnica.

Also, the antiquities found make it certain that a city was placed there. Moreover, having returned in 1783 from his journeys before continuing to travel abroad, Signor Abbot Sestini, my cousin, who also visited Cyprus, assured me that new ancient evidence had been traced back, and especially some Roman inscriptions, which he is go-

67 The canal illustrated which connected the basin of the ancient port to the sea on the first plan by Mariti (1769) no longer reaches the coast in the offset plan of Citium in the *Dissertazione*. Travellers since the beginning of nineteenth century still saw this port basin, as attested by Mas-Latrie in 1847, reported by Yon 2011, 38: "le bassin que j'ai vu combler pendant mon séjour à Larnaca, mais dont on trouve le dessin dans Mariti et Drumond, était certainement le port fermé *(κλειστὸς λιμήν)* dont il est quess tion dans Strabon".

68 Original text in the 1787 edition is: "Κίτιον, εχει λιμένα κλειστόν. *Citium, habet portum, qui claudi potest*". Original reference in the 1787 edition is: "Lib. XIV".

69 Strabo *Geography* 14.6.3. Transl. by H.C. Hamilton, W. Falconer (1903).

ing to publish in his book. He is also of the constant feeling that the ruins of Citium should be sought there and not elsewhere.[70]

Additional evidence should be presented to persuade me to place Citium, where is now located the village of Citti. Thus, it has been reminded to me that salterns are mentioned by old writers as being near Citium; and I do not contradict this; here is what Pliny argues about.

> *In Bactris duo lacus vasti, alter ad Scythas versus, alter ad Arios sale aestuant: sicut ad Citium in Cypro.*[71]
>
> In Bactriana there are two vast lakes; one of them situate on the side of Scythia, the other on that of Ariana, both of which throw up vast quantities of salt. So, too, at Citium, in Cyprus.[72]

And further on in the same place.

> *Marinorum maxume laudatur Cyprius a Salamine, de stagnis Tarentinus ac Phrygius, qui Tattaeus vocatur. Hi duo oculis utiles. E Cappadocia qui in laterculis adfertur cutis nitorem dicitur facere. Magis tamen extendit is quem Citium appellavimus. Itaque a partu ventre meo cum melanthio inlinunt.*[73]
>
> Of the sea salt the most in favour comes from Salamis in Cyprus, of pool salt that from Tarentum and that from Phrygia which is called Tattaean. The last two are useful for the eyes. The salt imported from Cappadocia in little bricks is said to impart a gloss to the skin. But the salt I have said comes from Citium smooths the skin better, and so after childbirth it is applied with melantium to the abdomen.[74]

Although Pliny's description keeps us in doubt as to whether these salterns lie to the west or east of Citium, even if they now lie between the village of Citti and Larnica, near which are the ruins of the ancient Citium, as they are closer to this city than to the village, it does not seem to me that my friend can find all the reasons for this too.

70 Sestini 1788, 142-3. See above in detail.

71 Original reference in 1787 edition is: "Lib XXXI. Chap. 7".

72 Plin. *HN* 31.39. Transl. by K.F.T. Mayhoff (1906).

73 Original text in the 1787 edition is here summed-up by Mariti as follows: "*Marinorum maxime laudatior (sal) Cyprius, in Salamine. Magni tamen extendit is, qui CiC teum appellavimus*".

74 Plin. *HN* 31.41. Transl. by W.H.S. Jones (1963).

Conversely, I may corroborate my sentiment by examining the distance of two hundred stadia, which Diodorus Siculus assigns between the city of Salamis and that of Citium.

> καὶ παρέπλευσεν εἰς Κίτιον, τῆς Σαλαμῖνος ἀπέχον σταδίους διακοσίους.
>
> *Et appulit Citium, quod Salamine distat ducenta stadia.*[75]
>
> and coasted along to Citium, which was distant from Salamis two hundred stades.[76]

As is known, two hundred stadia correspond to twenty-five miles. Several times I made that journey, especially from Famagusta to Larnica, which was the ancient Citium, and I could measure the following distances.

> I. From the ruins of Salamis to Famagusta. M. 6
> II. From Famagusta to Larnica. M. 25
> Total distance M. 31

That is 48 stadia more than those noted by Diodorus.[77] However, it is true that the actual roads do not have the appearance of being those which they might have been in antiquity, as they run too far towards the north; and it might be evaluated at a glance that if we took a more straight line of direction, we might save the above-mentioned six miles (48 stadia) or at least a good part of them, and then we would agree in the account with Diodorus, and thus find Citium in its very place where we place it. And conversely, if we were to extend as far as the village of Citti, we would find a distance from Salamis of almost 300 stadia. Which would be definitively too far from what Diodorus stated.

After all the above debated objections raised up by my friend, he goes on with the idea of confirming and reinforcing his hypothesis, through an examination of the present city of Larnica, in which he finds no ancient memory before Christian times, and only may trace back in its name that of *Sepulchre*, which corresponds to the Greek word Λάρναξ. He argues that from this denomination the other sim-

75 Original text in the 1787 edition is: "Καὶ κατέπλουσεν εἴς Κἴτιον, τῆς Σαλαμῖνος ἀπίχον σταδὶους διακοσίους". Original reference in the 1787 edition to: "Lib. XX".

76 Diod. Sic. *Library of History* 20.49.2. Transl. by C.H. Oldfather (1954).

77 Diod. Sic. *Library of History* 20.49.2. Transl. by C.H. Oldfather (1954).

ilar ones of Arnaca, Arnaco, and especially the present one of Larnica, or Larnaca, were originated.[78]

But before following him across his conjecture, which is not far from the truth in this particular respect, I will say here that Larnica seems to have been a land, which then grew because of the convenience of the navy and trade, and that the close ruins of Citium must have been convenient for the increase and enlargement of its buildings, as they are at present, so that it can now be corrected as a city. Currently, the major branches of foreign trade may be found in Larnaca, here all the European Houses of Commerce are gathered and have their sieges and the Consuls of the Christian Princes their residences. We may add what Lusignan says about when describes the commerce in his times:

> *E per rispetto a questo meza lega dalla Marina è un Casale Grande, che veramente è una terra grossa per rispetto delli mercadanti, e delle mercanzie, e però mandano un Capitano Veneziano Gentilhuomo, il quale ogni due anni si muta. Et già la Signoria determinò di dare un altro Casale al Sincritico, e questo farla Terra libera, e nobilitarla.*[79]
>
> in respect to this, half a league from the Marina is a large Casale Grande, which is truly a Terra Grossa in respect to the Mercadanti, and of the Merchandise, and therefore they send a Venetian Captain Gentiluomo, who changes every two years. Already the Seignory has determined to give another Casale to the Syncritic, and this will make it a free Land, and ennoble it.

Let us now go back to our friend, who, after reminding us of the name of Larnica as originating from the Greek word for *Sepulchre*, moves on elaborating his argument that the ruins where we place Citium rather belong

> *a un quartiere, o a un subborgo dell'antica città di Citium.*
>
> to a district or a suburb of the ancient city of Citium.

78 The etymology here argued both by Mariti and then re-proposed by Mondaini in his *Lettera* is particularly fortunate and widely reported (e.g. Clarke 1812, 808). Still recently, Yon (2011, 24): "On le met en rapport avec les nombreux sarcophages de pierre qu'on n'a cessé d'y découvrir; il serait peut-être, plus précisément, lié à la découverte à la fin du ixe siècle du sarcophage présumé de saint Lazare, 'l'ami du Christ' ressuscité par lui, et premier évêque de Kition".

79 Lusignan 1573, 10.

It is someway curious that he should suppose this to be a suburb, or quarter of the ancient city, whereas, locating Citium, where is now the village Citti, would give to that city so great an extent, that it would include even the *Saline*, about six miles and a half far. But we leave this argument as absurd. He keeps on considering the original meaning of *Sepulchre* attributed to Larnica and says that the aforementioned Larnica

> *era il luogo ove si dava sepoltura agli abitanti di Citium, come lo dimostrano i vari Sepolcri, che si trovano dentro Larnica presente, o poco distanti da essa*

> was the place where the inhabitants of Citium were buried, as shown by the various Sepulchres, which are found within the present Larnica, or not far from it.

If one looks at Citium where he would like it to be, i.e. where Citti is now, it will be easy to persuade oneself that the burial ground of its inhabitants should not be so far away as this one is about six and a half miles, since we do not admit that Citium, or a district of it, or a suburb of it, extended from the village of Citti to the place where our real Citium is situated. Such a distance may be excluded, but one may agree that Larnica was the burial ground of Citium.

In the time of my stay in Cyprus, and more precisely in 1766, many Sarcophagi were found to the north of Larnica, and in an elevated place. These were of a kind of very soft marble, and capable of containing a lying corpse, but without inscriptions, and in some there were several heads with small terracotta pots filled with tiny bones, which looked like birds. The land where these were discovered belonged to Signor Zambelli, a Venetian shopkeeper, and the bricklayers came across it when they were laying the foundations of a house, which the said Signor Zambelli had built there.[80]

The Turks claimed that he had disturbed the repose of the dead Muslims, but once it was shown that the human bodies were not arranged there according to their ritual, and that they belonged to very ancient times, everything was calmed down with a few gifts. Two other repositories, or rather burial chambers, can still be observed outside the enclosure of the ancient wall and moat of Citium. Each one is formed of large, huge stones joined together, which must have been transported there from some hills about ten miles away.

80 The mentioned Zambelli may be tentatively identified with Giovanni Antonio Zambelli, who also served as Venetian pro-consul in Larnaca in 1769-70 (Constantini 2009, 174; Merrillees 2023, 26). In the offset map of Larnaca published in the *Dissertazione* **[fig. 3]** the Residence of the Ventian Consul and the House of Zambelli appear located in the same spot (no. 4).

The same friend of mine, in order to confirm that Larnica was a burial ground, says that he came down to see many such tombs, among which he esteems remarkable.

> one found under the house of a certain Yianni the watchmaker Cypriot, consisting of a large vaulted chamber supported by two arches, in which were two deposits with a few bones inside, some of which exceeded the ordinary stature of the largest men of our times.

He adds that in the garden of the House of the Three Cypresses:

> four sepulchral chambers of various sizes had been discovered at the time when the French shopkeeper Monsieur Hermitte lived there, built on the same model as the above-mentioned ones, and others had been found in those surroundings.

Mr. Dapper, who travelled to Cyprus in the early years of this century, described Larnica once as a very beautiful and well-populated city, as evidenced by the monuments and ruins that can be seen near the seashore, where he says that coins and many tombs were being found out during digging works.[81]

Larnica, could not show any evidence of its past grandeur or beauty at the beginning of this century, and the ancient monuments of which Dapper speaks about were the ruins of the ancient Citium. These, along with the sepulchres and caves, now still lie under the ground and after the removal of many stones the land is now cultivated.

From this evidence, we may easily conclude that Larnica was indeed a burial ground and that this burial ground belonged to the city of Citium, not far from it, as was the ancient custom, and as is still practised by the Easterners, who have their burial grounds on the main roads not far from the cities, and not at a distance of six and a half miles, or a little more, or a little less from Citium, as my friend suggests.

Having thus demonstrated that the actual Citium was extending where we place it, we will move on to make a further argument, which will equally confirm us in our sentiment.

If we accept that Cetim, Noah's great-grandson, was the first to settle the island of Cyprus (we must face this fact, whatever it may be), therefore, it is certain that on crossing the sea and landing in Cyprus, he must have known the Gulf and the coast very suitable for disembarking and consequently he must have fixed here his abode point.

81 Olfert Dapper never travelled to the island (nor to any other locations he wrote about), information and illustrations published relied on secondary sources (Tsampika Lampitsi 2023; Arkan 2021)

His successors did not have to depart from a location that appeared the most useful for international trading. Since the Cypriots were famous at sea in the next periods, and were friends of the Phoenicians, they must have only considered maritime place favourable for their trade, and the recovering and placement of their fleets. For that reason, it does not appear that they could have rather chosen the alternative location of Citti Village, where there is neither good coastline nor favourable harbour.

After having argued that the famous city of Citium was placed where we have indicated it, it is certainly true that, in consideration of the steady upheaval and the destruction of the buildings' foundations occurred, its actual location will soon be lost. By good fate, Mr. Niebuhr himself made a certain remedy for this. After several trips and visits to the area where this city once stood, with the aim at perpetuating its memory, he decided to draw the exact plan that I reproduce here, of the same size and measure, which was sketched by the aforementioned Cavaliere.[82] In this plan the layout of Larnica will also be observed, in relation to itself and to Citium. The lines that appear crossing on the mentioned plan, correspond to the practicable and walkable roads, as they were traced in my time, and intersecting the ruins of ancient Citium to some extent.

This is the reply I should have addressed to my friend in Aix, with whom we have always been on good terms, and we are too, but as I am with Marcus Valerius Martialis who

Aurum, et opes, et rura frequens donabit Amicus
Qui velit ingenio cedere, rarus erit.

Many a friend will give gold and riches and land, but one prepared to yield in talent will be found but seldom.[83]

82 Mariti met Carsten Niebuhr during his visit to Cyprus in July 1766. Most likely, the map that illustrates Larnaka in the *Dissertazione* could be also based on the on-site observations they made together in the area where traces of ancient Kition were emerging.

83 Mart. *Epigrammata* 8.18.1. Transl. by D.R. Shackleton Bailey (1993).

Letter from a Tuscan Traveller Written from Cyprus to an Etruscan Academic

In Livorno, at Carlo Giorgi,
With Approval
1786
Fratelli Martini Typography,
Price I, Tosc. I

The publisher

This Letter that now comes to light recently came from Cyprus to a Friend of mine, who graciously gave it to me.

It is written in a natural, easy, and vague style; and being scattered with History, Philosophy, Poetry, and pleasantness, I have decided to make it known and publish sure that the public should be grateful to me, as I have provided them at little expense with an instructive and entertaining book.

Dearest Friend,

You travelled across this Country a few years ago and already described its history. Not satisfied enough with that, now you are coming to me and seek further news about. But what would I have to add to what you have already described?

Nonetheless, my recent journey to the region of Limassol convinced me to give you a report of this little excursion, which I conducted for my own pleasure last Spring. Then, you will use the way you prefer this little *Odeporicon*, which I make a gift to you.[84]

I do know that nothing will probably benefit your erudite ideas from reading it, I am sorry, but I no longer feel inclined to peruse large volumes to be considered a scholar.

It is true that if I find out an old monument on my way, I stop examining it, and if this monument is worthy of admiration, then I admire it. If I come across an ancient inscription, I am pleased to read it, nor do I despise numismatics, but I little care for the waste of my time in studying fragmented marbles and worn bronzes, or at most in unravelling certain enigmas. I am happy to wander alone without running the risk that my interpretations might produce more and more ignorance, as it often happens while one would like to instruct.

84 *Odeporicon* connotates the narration of a journey, including motivations and processes of the travel, the overall information gathered and its interpretation. Hodoeporics is a standard of late eighteenth century literary production and an established literary genre, widely diffused and consumed in Western Europe. For a general reference to travel literature see Monga 1996; Cachey Jr. 1996.

But this letter will make you realise that I am not at all melancholic in nature, although my temperament is inclined to seriousness, but since a certain age I have tried to correct it, to such an extent that if I want to be a philosopher now and then, I can only sustain it for a short time.

You will remember how ingenious I was in take the troubled thoughts away from me; and this has now made my soul cheerful. Try to despise boring things if you want to live contentedly. Fate has often played a trick on me, but my method has led me healthy and well to a happy age. You yourselves once had little regard, and genius; if continued this way of life, you would live above others.

Now we are between us separated since long time. A flattery brought you back to Europe, and a different idea from yours still keeps me in Asia. Our hearts, however, will be indivisible, our correspondence will continue to approach each other, and the thick news of our existence will console us. But let us come to our purpose.

You firmly know the physical constitution of this Country; it is in substance the same as when the laughing Graces and the tenderest Amori settled there. But the time, steady destroyer, has forgiven nothing to this blessed island, so called *Macaria* by the ancient writers. Therefore, one can no longer observe anything but what Nature has bestowed upon her, but what is sufficient to satisfy the wanderer and the curious traveller.[85]

The splendour and beauty which arts, industry, tranquillity, riches, and good humour are wont to give to famous cities and kingdoms is lacking here; nor can we expect it here, where oppression reigns, and where a despotic government, by reducing these peoples to its system, has rendered them inert, without strength, without genius, and without will. And one may hardly detect good sentiments still surviving among some of them, and a shadow of that vivacity, which was typical of the Greek peoples; so difficult is it to change the inclinations of people without changing their climate and physical influence. By forcing the Natural, one makes monsters of them.

Nemosia, formerly called the New City of Limassòl, from where I just came back.[86] This new City[87] was built by Guido De Lusignani in great art, splendour, and magnificence. When the Turks made themselves masters of the island over the Venetians, after having sacked

85 A long-standing reference to the epithet Macaria can be detected in the description of the island, e.g. Knolles 1603.

86 This section corresponds to the beginning of the fourth Letter by Namindio manuscripted by the author in 1785 and then edited by Rita Severis (Namindio 2007).

87 On the origin and possible multi-etymologies of Nemosia/Nemesos see Hatzioannou 1983; Severis 2007, no. 140; Nicolaou-Konnari, Schabel 2015.

it, they abandoned it to the flames. From that time on, under such despotic and destructive rule, it has never been able to rise again.

The convenience of its harbour and coastline has always kept a way open for trade, although it is now a low settled place and the people who remain are housed in small, uncomfortable houses.

Since the inhabitants do not have any authority who may represent them to the government, they do not count on any effective protection from the ongoing harassments they suffer from the Turks. On the other hand, there are a few old lineage and wealthy families there.

The traffic is even more active in summer, when the calmness of the sea allows small vessels to navigate in steady connection with Syria for wheat, barley, acquavite, cheese, salt and other products that pass through the province. There is a Lake at a short distance from the city, which forms Salt, but it is not of a large extension.

On the evening of my arrival, I was invited to a wedding, which was about to take place there. I was told that it was one of the most important alliances in the city. My inner curiosity advised me to join the event. I went to the house of the bride, where, according to custom, the ceremonial should take place.[88]

I was greeted by the relatives with demonstrations of joy, and respect, as it is an honour for the inhabitants of the island to have Europeans at such a solemn family occasion.

Introduced into a room, I found the city's clergy summoned, which was reduced to six persons, in addition to all the relatives and guests. The back of the room was filled with females, who formed a semicircle with double ranks. In the middle sat the *Niffi*, that is the Bride, having on one side, and on the other the *Paraniffi*, who are the two ladies destined to her service during the wedding.

This was a young girl of 18 years old, well-formed, tall and with a handsome face. Her name was Sofia.

Stava con gli occhi bassi, e di modestia
L'immagine direste ch'essa fosse;
Ond'in mirarla, amor mi fe molestia.
Purpurea rosa, ch'il suo brio produsse
Fra i gigli sul mattin; tale il bel volto
L'ammirabil rossor in se ridusse.
Dentro la bella bocca stea raccolto
Sigaleonte il taciturno Dio,
Ch'impediva al bel labbro d'esser sciolto;
Ond'era un simulacro al parer mio
Eretto sull'altar dell'illusione

88 The entire episode of the wedding provides us with a set of relevant information concerning marriage custom and fashion in eighteenth century Cyprus. See references by Rizopoulou-Egoumenidou 1996 in a greater detail.

Per dimorarci immobile, e restìo.
All'aspetto, alla forma, e proporzione
Appagar si potea l'uman desio,
Ma la Vener parea di Pigmalione.[89]

He stood with his eyes downcast, and you would say it was the image of Modesty; whereupon in gazing at her, Love made me uneasy. Purpure rose, which her joy produced among the morning lilies. The admirable redness made her face that splendid. Inside the beautiful mouth is gathered Sigaleon the taciturn God, who prevented the beautiful lip from being loose. Whereupon it was a simulacrum in my mind erected on the altar of Illusion to dwell resting and unwilling. To her appearance, form, and proportion, human desire could be satisfied. But Venus seemed to belong to Pygmalion.

Thus, all Greek brides demonstrate such a truthfulness on their wedding day that let them appear, motionless, deaf, and mute.

I looked at her for a while in that invariable pose. She was richly dressed, and her head was adorned with handkerchiefs of the finest veil embroidered with gold. On the left-hand side, she was artfully and symmetrically arranged with flowers, their freshness alluded to the fresh rose on her face. A large handkerchief, more shining than the others, from the back of her head rested on her shoulders. A gold necklace enriched with pearls adorned her neck. A shirt of the finest and most transparent silk discreetly covered her chest with the graces it concealed. Her round, snow-white arms were adorned with rich jewels, and her hands held close together were covered with a white veil embroidered with gold, and with bixin-like coloured silk.[90]

In my deepest examination, when my imagination was feeding on delight, a person approached me, shook me, and offered me a candle; I accepted it, and afterwards others were dispensed to the assistants. At that moment all the candles were lit up, and the ceremony began.

Four musicians, or singers, who shouted like crazy then began their song with a cheerful, festive tone.

Era d'inverno, e mi sembrava il Maggio,
Quando i Rosignuoli a lunghe orecchie
Co i lor canti ad Amor rendono omaggio.

89 This specific section is structured in *terza rima* or *terzina*, a stanzaic form, used most notably by Dante Alighieri in *Commedia*. Despite the hendecasyllabic verse was already in use in the Italian lyrics, the *terzina* and the *ottava* were still popular in late eighteenth century, especially for descriptive sections in verses. See Beniscelli, Tatti 2016 with references.

90 On the dressing style of traditional Cypriote wedding in eighteenth century see Ριζοπούλου-Ηγουμενίδου 1996 and Hadjikyriakos 2009, with references.

> It was winter, but I felt like it was May, when the long-eared warblers with their songs pay homage to Love.

The entire assembly gathered in the hall, so that the crowd of people became excessive for such a small space.[91]

The Priest with his assistants stood in the middle among the bride and groom, and the Paraniffi. They were followed by the godfather and godmother, and by the father and mother, along with the closest relatives. All together formed a circle in the midst of the hall. The musicians fell silent, and the *Papàs* dressed in sacred robes began their chanting, which I found sweet and regular.

At this time the priest placed the *Stefani*[92] on the heads of the bride and groom, and they held hands. *Sophia*'s was truly white, and well-made.

> Viddesi allora quella bianca mano
> Delle grazie formata sul modello,
> E si viddero spandere pian piano
> Rose novelle sul suo volto bello.
> Intatte rose, a cui labro profano
> Non osò approssimar l'ardor gemello,
> Ed unite dei gigli al bel candore
> Facean corona al verginal pudore.[93]

> Then we saw that white hand shaped on the model of Graces, we saw slowly spread-out new roses on his beautiful face. Intact roses, to which profane lip dared not approach the twin ardour, and together with lilies to the beautiful whiteness, they crowned the shameful modesty.

Thus, the beautiful *Sophia* stood with her bridegroom, and at the same time the priest gave the nuptial blessing. Afterwords, they both received the Holy Communion, with bread and wine according to the rite of the Eastern Church. It took some time to perform this ceremonial, after that the function of Church was completed. However, this ceremony was followed by another specific ritual established by a Cypriot custom, which is practised at all weddings on the island.

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91 Improvised verses in the form of a dialogue between two singers (*tsiatistà*) were traditionally performed during wedding festivals. Severis reports that they have typically produced challenging confrontations among the participants to the party, if one of bride's ex-suitors appeared on stage and sang (Severis 2007, no. 146).

92 * *Stefani means crown, or garland of flowers.*

93 The section structured in quartine appears vaguely inspired by the Epithalamion, a genre particularly fortunate in the tradition of Italian Arcadian Academy (Riccardo Donati, pers. comm.).

The whole circle of participant to the ceremony set in motion to make a tour of the hall itself. During this performance, the relatives and friends threw up wheat into the air so that the wheat descended fell on the bride and groom, and in the meantime,[94] they keep on singing stanzas with the following meaning:

Deh concedi ai fidi Sposi
Giusto Ciel con larga mano
Beni, e figli virtuosi,
Ed in copia egual al grano.

Give to the faithful bride and groom abundant Heaven, goods, and virtuous children, and equally give them the wheat.

An old woman, who was all moved by the tenderness that such a solemnity inspired in her, also turned round, and instead of singing, went weeping. She was standing behind the priest, and being pushed by the crowd, she set fire to his thick and scattered hair without realising it. You know that Greek priests have a large head of hair scattered over their shoulders.

The fire spread off in a moment. The priest with his head on fire gave piercing screams, as the fire stuck there with unusual stubbornness did not want to extinguish.

Suddenly, the confusion and disorder became extraordinary. All people around, penetrated by grief for the good priest, tumultuously struck him on the head with their hands, trying to extinguish the flames, others took the decision of throwing water they found there on him, but all without discretion or consideration, to such an extent that poor Papa began to cry out: "Stop! It's enough! I feel like drowning, my poor head has suffered more under the fury of your hands than the disaster of the two elements".

In the end, the fire was extinguished with great harm of the poor priest, who also had his eyelashes burnt and – and this is even worse – in addition to his hair, he also found himself with half of his beard burnt off.

I lack sufficiently vivid colours to paint a picture of the singular aspect he had after he suffered the fire. The compassion on him was truly universal, but I do not know for what bizarre reason few of the bystanders could hold back laughter as they gazed at that priest, who did not leave the hall. The wittiest imagination would be lost in painting the picture, be content enough to know

94 This performance corresponds to the standard of the so-called dance of Isaiah in the Orthodox liturgy. At the final stage of the dance, relatives and friends used to throw over the bride and groom corn, rice and pomegranate seeds, recalling prosperity and fertility (cf. e.g. Riak 2019).

che la pietosa, e venerabil scena
Si converse in grandissima risata,
Tantoché ognun potea parlare appena.
La faccia del *Papàs* arsa, e strinata
Ridotta nerra a guisa di un carbone
Era da fare orror a una brigata.
Con mezza barba, e i cigli in combustione,
Con la testa percossa, ed abbruciata
Il Ritratto parea del gran Plutone.

that the pitiful, venerable scene converted into great laughter, so loud that everyone could barely speak. Papa's face burnt and wrinkled, turned into the guise of coal, horrified the whole brigade. With half of his beard, and burning eyelashes, with his head beaten and scorched, he appeared as the portrait of the great Pluto.

In such a strange, curious, and unexpected event, which finally lead everyone to laughter, the beautiful *Sophia* also lost the serious attitude, under which her liveliness was hidden, and appeared serene and laughing, like everyone else around.

Qual Stella che traspar fra un'Atmosfera
Carca di nebbia, e pregna di vapori,
La brillante sua luce offusca, e annera
Tutta eclissata dai terrestri umori,
Risplende poi qual Astro di Citera
Se Borea sorte fier di grembo a Dori,
Così *Sofia* ridendo, il serio velo
Ruppe, fugò le Nubi, e mostrò il Cielo.[95]

Like a star shining through a fog-laden atmosphere full in vapours, her brilliant light, eclipsed by earthly moods, dims, and blackens. Then shines as the Star of Kythera, if Borean fate get proud of Dorians' lap; thus, Sofia laughs and broke the serious veil, dispelled the clouds, and showed the Sky.

This way the wedding came to an end, and as the hour was late, I moved away from the others and left for my quarters.

The following morning, I was sent a present on behalf of the bride and groom consisting of a silk shirt and a set of similar pants, along with a white veil belt richly embroidered at both ends. This is evidence of esteem, which the Cypriotes demonstrate to the most distinguished persons among the guests. I received it with sentiments

95 This specific verse section is structured in *ottava*.

of gratitude, and I demonstrated my gratitude in the most task-like manner possible. I stayed the whole day in the house bound by a continuous rain, and the next morning, as the weather was clearing up, I mounted my horse and left Limassol.

Moving towards the East,[96] I found out the promontory known today as *Capo delle Gatte*. In explaining the name's origin, Tradition mentions that the island became depopulated and deserted, after having suffered several years of drought during the reign of Constantine the Great. The Greeks who returned to settle the island after this disaster, found in this area such a quantity of snakes that the access was hardly possible.

After trying every possible solution to free the area from the snakes, they figured the best expedient was to have cats hunt them down. The *Calogeri* or Greek monks who lived in the vicinity gathered many them, which they kept and fed in the monastery, which still exists and is called Akrotiri.[97] This way they managed to kill all these reptiles in a short time and made that boundary clean and accessible.[98]

This Monastery presently gives its name to a village, which later formed there. Its extension is not large, the situation is very pleasant, and it is surrounded by a fertile and pleasant mountain. According to ancient writers, this was the place where the city of Curi was located; one can still see several marble columns belonging to this city scattered around, along with further evidence of its ruins.[99]

Continuing my journey through an increasingly fertile land, I arrived at a site called Colossus from the name of a still existing for-

96 [*scil.*] the direction should be westward to reach *Capo delle Gatte* moving from Limassol.

97 * *promontory*

98 The episode is reported by numerous sources with no substantial variants (e.g. Beauveau 1615, 90; Dapper 1688, 53); interestingly, Domenico Laffi (1708, 81) about this same context reports that: "[…] *adesso poche vestigie si vedono di detto Convento; tuttavia, li Turchi come ho veduto co' propri occhi seguitano questa loro passa usanza di fabbricar case e ospitali per li Gatti, e Cani comprando carne per governarlu, dicendo, che fanno bene a questi animali per l'anime de' loro Defonti*". The mentioned monastery is located on a promontory of the Akrotiri peninsula, nowadays part of the British Sovereign Base. As a proof of the long-standing tradition about its foundation, the monastery has today become known as *Ayios Nikolaos ton gaton*, or *Akrotiri Gata*.

99 The evidence of marble columns scattered over the top of the hill at Kourion is analogous of that already reported by Mariti in his *Viaggi* (see below) and then described by Luigi Palma di Cesnola almost a century later: "*La città di Curium sorgeva al sommo di un monte roccioso* […]. *A centinaia monticelli di ruderi ammucchiati, indicano il luogo ove sorgevano le case, i templi ed i pubblici edifici. Sovra uno di tali monticelli giacevano mezzo interrate parecchie colonne di granito. Il Cesnola le fece sterrare per assicurarne le dimensioni e le trovò posare sopra un pavimento a musaico che, rimosse le colonne, mise a giorno, quanto era largo, in modo da poter rilevarne la pianta di un tempo*" (Giacosa 1898, 161; Bombardieri 2015, 78-80).

tress that the Templars Knights had built there. Their principal Commandery was once established here, and after the extinction of the Order passed into the possession of the Hospitallers Knights, today known as the Knights of Malta.[100]

On my way through the countryside, I met a priest who was cultivating his *cotoniere*, the fields where cotton grows up. His appearance and age made him respectable. The dress he wore was white and tailored according to the common custom of the island's peasants. A black priest's cap, and a violet-coloured belt which he girded himself with, formed the whole of his distinctive dress.

Quite close to him six small children were laying on the ground, each holding a book in his hand. When he gets close to them while tilling the soil, he taught them how to read, and when he went away from them keeping on his work, he made them all sing together Church's psalms, which he was teaching them.

A small supply of bread, with some olives, and a little wine was their food provision throughout the day. The reverence and respect that these little children showed towards their teacher, the charity and love which the teacher treated his disciples with, and the great skill he practised to put himself on an equal footing with them, formed reciprocal sentiments, fostered by a simple playfulness so close to that placid and innocent life of the first men. They reminded to me those blissful centuries, where under the gentle Laws of Nature, meekness had not yielded to pride, rank did not produce inequality of individuals, simplicity had not degenerated into pomp, law into abuse, religion into systems. All in sum appeared to me at that moment in its first order.

I imagined then to find in him one of those usual country priests who combine the method of their rural life with a spirit equally crude, and material. I began to speak to him with the idea of trying to persuade myself, and soon realised that I was dealing with a person who, without possessing that great complex of vain science, which deludes the senses and enervates the soul, had a spirit so full of the elements of natural virtue and certainty, that seems impossible to reason with such energy of truth as he did. I asked him why he was engaged in such hard labour for his age. He answered me:

"God commanded it to our first Father".

100 The history and foundation of the fortified building tower in the Kolossi village is already similarly reported by Lusignan (1573, 47), Pococke (1743, 447), Drummond (1754, 250-81) and by Mariti (1769, 219-20). The actual 'Castle' at Kolossi has been rebuilt by Louis de Magnac in 1454 and then passed to the noble venetian family Cornaro till the Ottoman occupation in 1570. See in detail Edbury (1994, 66-7) and Nicolaou-Konnari, Schabel 2015.

"If all Men were content with the inheritance of the Earth, they would be possessors of the just" I told him, "it would be necessary that the order of things should not have varied from its beginning".

"Man" he replied "was governed by Nature, and the order of things changed when he preferred to obey himself. His ambition, his restlessness suggested to him to elevate himself above others, and the whole system of simplicity and independence was overthrown under the law of the strongest".

"It is true" I replied, "but now that the disorder is irremediable, it seems necessary to follow the course of the great torrent which we are swept along".

"I am well aware" he resumed "that when Man is born in the midst of the gulf of the world, it is difficult for the soul to govern him, but a torrent, as immense, vast and swift it may be, always has banks on its sides. Those who fear being kidnapped by the speed of its course, take refuge in it. I am happy to live among a few people, in a kind of solitude, where the simplicity of a country life banishes the illusions of honours and grandeur".[101]

"I am a Priest" he continued "but also I am a Man, and the sweat of my brow makes me live, I prevent my neighbour through the example, I am not indiscreet, and I do not live by the price of their labours, I serve the obligations of my vocation, which imposed me to teach and help men, and if the Priesthood were kept within these borders, which are those of its origin, it would be more and more respected by and would rule over their hearts".

"These children are you watching at are the lambs of my little flock, I share with them what Providence gives me; I teach them and show them the way they must practise to become useful to themselves and to their fellow men. In the exercise of such rules all my imagination is satisfied, and my soul seems to be blessed with the pleasure I feel".

I did not know what more to discuss, I moved away from him surprised to consider that the model of virtue is most often found far from the common exchanges among men, neglected among obscurity, and oblivion. This evidence often reminded me in my journey what

101 The overall background of the episode and the exchange between the priest and Mondaini is generally inspired by the concept of realising the natural self, widely diffused in eighteenth century Europe and specially focused upon the education theories elaborated by Rousseau (see e.g. Scott 2021). The storyline structured by Mondaini recalls that of Rousseau tutoring the student Émile in the countryside. The whole meeting with the Priest country teacher emphasises that whatever is 'natural' is good, while whatever is unnatural is bad, including constructed social paradigms, i.e. "*Tout est bien sortant des mains de l'Auteur des choses, tout dégénère entre les mains de l'homme*" (Rousseau [1762] 1874, 5).

the Alexander the Great said to Diogenes: "How far man stood from true happiness, seduced by opulence and ambition".[102]

All the Greek priests who live in the villages live off their labours, they work hard the land, tend the crops, and bring their products to sell out. The others who live in towns, either live on their own incomes, or thanks to any profession, such as tailor, bookseller, painter, or similar.

About four miles away from *Capo delle Gatte*, I found the river *Lycos*, which flows from the slopes of Mount Olympus in Cyprus.[103] This river irrigates with profusion an extended land and fertilises the whole district. There I was presented with a very pleasant countryside, most of it occupied by the cultivation of cotton. I found there many vast plains sown in wheat and barley. On the starboard side the *Orini* stand up, which are a series of close hills largely extending over a broad area and penetrating as far as the region of Paphos. Their soil is mineral, iron-coloured, covered with stones and pebbles that look like pieces of iron, and on its surface one occasionally may detect Quartz and Rock Crystals. According to what their exterior evidence, these places must be abundant in metals.[104]

The Cypriots cultivate across these hills the vineyards of the exquisite *Commanderia* wine. The Templar Knights, and after them the Hospitallers Knights, established their Commende there, and the precious wine got its name after this epithet.[105]

102 Multiple tradition refers to a brief encounter of Alexander and the philosopher, which is generally said to have taken place in Corinth, where Diogenes lived in his later years. Different versions of the story of the meeting are found in various sources, most notably in Plut. *Alex*. 14 and *Mor.* 70d, Diog. Laert. *Vitae Philosophorum* VI.38, VI.60), and Epictetus *Discourses* 3.22.92.

103 'Lycos' is the attested ancient name for actual Kouris River, that flows from Troodos massif southward to Episkopi Bay (Rupp et al. 2021); Olympus is the literary ancient name for central Troodos massif, as commonly attested (e.g. Dapper [1688] 1703, 26 "*le mont Olympe, apellé par les Grecs d'aujourd'hui Trochodos & Trobodos*").

104 *Orini* is commonly intended for denoting a hilly landscape, morphologically connected to the mountainous relief of central Troodos (Severis 2007, 124, no. 166). The reference to pebbles "*che sembrano pezzi di ferro*" ("that look like pieces of iron") might be consistent to the evidence of diabase stones within the Kouris riverbed and in the immediate surrounding, where they may also have appeared scattered on surface of ancient settlement areas (e.g. Swiny 1981; Bombardieri 2017b). Similar observations have been more carefully reported by Domenico Sestini in the same years (Sestini 1788, 143). Most likely, the mention of soils rich in iron and minerals ore deposits can derive from a second-hand knowledge of the richness of Cyprus in copper rather than a specific observation conducted on field.

105 The historical reconstruction of the Commandaria land in the foothills of Limassol appears in the *Viaggi* (Mariti 1769, 240-1) and widely described in *Del Vino di Cipro* (Mariti 1772b, 47-9). Mondaini mentions a "*cavatello full of muscatella grapes from Cyprus*" sent to Mariti in a letter dated back to July 1777 (Fondo Mariti, Bologna). On the Commandaria see also Papadopolous 2008.

The well-regulated cultivation of vineyards, the colour of soil, and the crystallisations shine upon there forming a varied and delightful picture. As I was moving forward, the beauty of plain increased. Many streams of the clearest waters, which come from the springs of Mount Olympus, meander everywhere and make the plain rich in natural products and vegetation. The fresh, salubrious air, the benign, placid climate, everything around inspired refreshment and heralded the proximity of that famous district that was once the home of Graces and Amori.[106]

I walked a mile and a half after leaving the river *Lycus* and still treading a soil covered with the profusion of Nature, I got the village named Piscopìa.[107] This is one of the most prosperous and inhabited places all over the island. The trade in cotton, wheat, wool, and many other products make the village rich and remarkable. Its location is high, its climate excellent. The residents are well-built and robust, and the females have a very graceful and attractive appearance. Many small rivers run along its contours and many gardens filled with fruit trees, oranges and lemons form its delightful enclosure. Cedars may be found there in large abundance; their fragrance fills the air with the sweetest odour. All the fruits flourish there in an extraordinary size and, according to their rare qualities, it seems that Pomona has chosen them out of all the others of the earth for her own reserve.

I stayed at Papa's. On the same evening many of the most distinguished girls from the village came to offer me a gift. Their simplicity appeared accompanied by respect, their beauty sustained by pure gifts of Nature, their youth joint to a virtuous imposing boldness; these were the qualities in them I never ceased to admire. All their gifts together would have been sufficient to adorn the richest table.

Chi di Pollastri, e chi di Biscottini,
Chi don mi fece dei più rari erbaggi,
Chi dei frutti più scelti, e sopraffini.

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106 * *Here we mean the city of Paphos, not far from there.*

107 The relevance of the village of Piscopia (modern Episkopi) is undoubtful in Medieval and Modern sources, where it appears generally described for its pleasant surrounding and the proximity to the ancient site of Kourion (e.g. Cotovicus 1619, 95; Baumgarten 1704, 490). The village passed to the possessions of the Venetian family Cornaro since 1374 and later known as 'La Piscopia da Cornaro' or 'Cornaro Piscopia'. Family Cornaro established a large sugar plantation in Episkopi and nearby Kolossi, where slaves of Syrian or Arab origin were employed along with local serfs. The sugar production centres were located at the site Serayia at the southern edge of the village of Episkopi and in the area of the so-called castle at Kolossi, respectively (Solomidou-Ieronymidou 2015). While their memory persisted (Mariti 1769, 192), the sugar cane plantations declined in seventeenth and eighteenth centuries to be replaced by cotton plantations, as clearly attested by Mondaini too.

Chi mi portò Ricotte, e chi Formaggi,
Chi dei *Culuri*,[108] e chi dell'uva fresca,
Chi Vin di Cipro, e chi vari altri Omaggi.
La più bella di lor, non vi rincresca,
M'offerse un panierin di Granchi teneri,
Ch'era il pregio maggior della sua pesca.
Vi ringrazio allor dissi, o belle Veneri,
Di tanta cortesia sì rara, e amabile
Che mi ricorderò fino alle ceneri.
Alla vostra beltà schietta, e ammirabile
Una sol grazia ardisco dimandare
Che spero troverete irrecusabile.
Bramo vedervi innanzi a me ballare
Coi savi vostri Giovinetti Amici,
Questo è il favor, che mi dovete fare.
Impiegate vi prego i vostri uffici,
Dissi alla Donna del *Papàs*, e fate,
Ch'io risenta il favor dei vostri auspici.
L'amabil *Papadia*[109] disse, lasciate
Di questo a me la cura, e in pochi istanti
Ecco tutte le Figlie radunate.
Già son concorsi i Giovani, e gli Amanti
Alla fama del ballo inaspettato,
Ma lungi dalla Ninfe tutti quanti.
V'eran due Lire, ed un strumento a fiato,
Che formava l'Orchestra melodiosa,
E due Candele accese in un sol lato.
Il *Papàs* ne partì per far qualcosa,
Credo ch'andasse a leggere l'Ufizio,
Perché dove si balla egli non posa.

Some brought me chickens, some biscuits; some offered to me rare herbs, some others the best selected exquisite fruits; some brought to me ricotta[110] and some others cheese, some others sesame buns and some fresh grapes; others brought to mw wine of Cyprus, or further gifts; the most beautiful among them – you hopefully may not regret it – offered me a small basket full of tender crabs, which was the booty of her fishing. "I thank all of you, beautiful Venuses, for such a courtesy, rare and pleasant" I said "I will remember it till my death. I like to ask you, charming and admirable beau-

108 **Ciambelle.*

109 ** Papadia vuol dire moglie del Papàs.* ("*Papadia means the Papas' wife*").

110 Most likely, the Cypriote version of the *ricotta* served might have been the local cheese *anarì* (Severis 2007, 126, no. 171).

> ties, for a favour, which I hope you will not reject. I am burning to look at you dance in front of me, along with your young friends. This is the favour I am asking your for". "Please intercede" I said to the Papas' wife "and let this happen". The kind Papadia told me: "leave it to me" and in a few moments I saw all the girls gathered, and already the young men and lovers coming along to attend the unexpected ball. But away from the nymph, everyone. Two lyres were there located and a wind instrument which formed the melodious orchestra. And two candles lit on either side; the Papas moved away to do something, and I think he went to officiate since he is not used to dance.

The dance then began with a contradance called *Roméga*, which is nothing more than a sort of chain, in which the young men and their daughters, holding hand in hand, make repeated rounds, following the cheerful and festive music.[111]

This dance lasted a quarter of an hour. A large mat was then brought in and spread out in the middle of the hall to make another dance and new space has been made in the hall.

Most of the men went out into the street and stood at the door to look inside. The dance about to begin was called the *Agrismèni*, that is the Indignant.[112] It was performed by two people: a young wom-

111 The reference is to a dance pattern widespread in Greece and Cyprus as *syrtos*. Specifically, the name *romèga* appears attested in the eighteenth and nineteenth century sources to describe a so-called *antikrystos* dance performance where dancers are divided into two groups set in lines facing each other. On the available archives for Cypriot Folk dances see Stavrakis et al. 2012.

112 Most likely, the dance described may derive from the popular folk song Στείλε με μανά στη βρύση / στο νερό (mother send me to fetch water). The main character of the song is a girl who asks her mother to go and fetch water from the well or fountain. When reaches the water source she meets with her pretender who starts pursuing her. The young lover offers his handkerchief as a proof of love, she initially refuses and then accepts to dance (Severis 2007, 130 with references).

Turns out numerous folk songs in the southern Mediterranean tradition are weaved around women going to fetch water from a well or wash clothes at the fountains. They may talk of a chance meeting with a handsome wayfarer at the well and the blossoming of love. This is the case for the Sicilian song *La cifalota* (The girl from Cifali), where the lover sings: "*Di quantu beddi passanu / ca vannu a la funtana / cu vidi 'sta suprana / non si la scorda cchiù. Ccu dd'occhi latri fa la batiota,/ ma cchiù ni sapi di na maritata / si voli mi la pigghiu senza dota, ca la ricchizza sò l'avi ammucciata*" (Of all the beautiful girls who go to the fountain, those who see her will never forget her. With those thieving eyes she is a convent schoolgirl, but she knows more than a married woman. if she wants me, I'll take her without a dowry, because she has hidden her wealth). Interestingly, the famous popular song *La Calabrisella* (The girl from Calabria) also includes a clear reference to the handkerchief as a token of mutual love. In one of the attested versions of this folk song, the dialogue between the lovers recalls the mentioned Cypriot Στείλε με μανά στη βρύση / στο νερό:

"*Nina, ti vitti all'acqua chi lavavi / E lu me' cori si linchìu d'amuri:/ Quandu li panni a la sipala ampravi,/ Jeu t'arrobbai lu mègghiu muccaturi./ Tu mi vidisti all'acqua chi lavava, Jeu ti vitti 'nsonnu e mi guardavi./ Se m'arrobbasti 'u mègghiu muccaturi, M'assa-*

an, the most well-built of the gathering, entered the large mat dancing. The music air played by the instruments was a pathetic andantino. After she turned once, a young man came in dancing in an eager movement, holding a handkerchief in his hand and trying to approach the young woman. The woman scorned him and ran away with a disdainful appearance. The young man became uneasy, threatened her fate, approached her again, wanted to offer her peace, tried to soften her up, but she pushed him back and insulted him.

> Mi pare Alfeo mirar tutto affannato
> Dietro Aretusa che crudel lo fugge,
> E correndo lagnarsi del suo fato.

> It seems to me that Alphaeus is looking around shaking behind Aretus who cruelly flees him and running around complaining about his fate.[113]

All steps and movements by both the dancers went on in coordinated cadence, and vividly expressed the effects of disdain and love. Finally, the young man, looking at himself so fiercely rejected, trembles and no longer knows which way to turn. The young Lady stares at him with a stern, threatening gaze; he sighs in despair, looks up the sky with contempt, ties the handkerchief round his neck, strongly wrings it and rests.

> Corre la bella allora, e lo sostiene;
> Morto le sembra, e piange il suo rigore,
> Gli slaccia il collo, il chiama, e già sviene.
> Ei si sveglia alle voci del dolore,
> E vedendosi in braccio alla sua Diva,
> La smarrita virtù richiama al core.
> Di tutti due la gioja si ravviva,

sti 'nta lu cori 'u mègghiu hjuri" (Nina I saw you at the fountain washing, and my heart filled with love; when I saw you hanging out your clothes in the sun, I stole your most beautiful handkerchief. You saw me at the fountain washing, I saw you in my dream and was watching me/ and if you stole the most beautiful handkerchief from me, you left the most beautiful hours in my heart).

113 The clear reference is the Ovid's version of the myth of Alpheus and Arethusa (Ov. *Met*. 5.577-641). The nymph Arethusa, while bathing in the Alpheus River in the Peloponnese, was seen and pursued by the river god, and then saved by Artemis, who changed her into a spring that, flowing underground, emerged at Ortygia in Sicily. Variations of this mythological episode are reported. In an earlier variant Artemis is the object of river god's harassment and escaped by smearing her face with mire, so that he failed to recognise her. In a further variant, the river god Alpheus fell in love with Arethusa, who fled to Ortygia, where she was changed into a spring. Alpheus, however, made his way beneath the sea and united his waters with those of the spring. For an overview e.g. Forbes Irving 1990, 305-6; Maddoli, Saladino 1995; Rosati 2009; Bessone 2020.

Si prendon per la man, fanno la pace,
E la danza divien lieta, e festiva.

The beautiful Lady comes then and takes him in her arms. She thinks he died and mourns her harshness; she unties his neck, scream his name and almost faints. He wakes up by her cries of pain and finding himself in the arms of his Diva, the lost love appeals to the heart. Happiness fills up both, they hold hands each other and make peace. And the dance becomes joyful and festive.

Thus, the instruments changed their pathetic air into a much more cheerful and lively one, and the dance ended in a *Trescone* performed with the greatest precision. The imagination of Pantomime has always been appreciated by Greeks, and the naturalness and ease of its performance revealed that the genius of this art still is maintained in the spirit of the Nation.

In the meantime, my host had prepared an abundant supper in the house of the Papa. There I made the whole gathering pass. The Papas amid all the men occupied one side of the table, and the Papadia sat on the other, surrounded by the women. They all ate and drank their fill, and then deeply happy departed, and I amused myself among the simple, lovely people, whom I achieved great honour with at very little expense.

But now it is time for me to tell you about Piscopia: this reputable village hints at the site where was erected the ancient city of Curium, or Curias, according to Pliny.[114] This was one out of the nine Royal Cities that flourished in Cyprus; Herodotus mentioned one of its kings named Stasanor, who is supposed to have been the last ruler of the city.[115] It was founded by Cureus, son of King Cyniros.[116] The beach and coastline were very convenient for city's trade and the Cypriot naval fleets. Its surroundings were overshadowed by a forest consecrated to Apollo, where it was located a temple erected in his honour. Pallas was also worshipped in this city. The medals often found there persuade us that she was the protector of the Curium kingdom.[117] They bear on the obverse a woman's head covered with a crested helmet, singularly decorated, and on the reverse two very large birds crossing each other with their long necks; around their

114 Plin. *HN*. 5.35.

115 Hdt. 5.113.

116 The reconstruction here provided by Mondaini appears directly deriving from Mariti (1769, 193)'s information. See above.

117 There is no clear evidence of a cult of Athena Pallas at Kourion (see e.g. `https://base-map-polytheisms.huma-num.fr`).

necks appear the inscription KURIEWN (ΚΥΡΙΕΩΝ), that means 'belonging to the Curienses'.[118]

If one could conduct diligent focus research with impunity, one would find many rare traces underground that would give a more extensive insight into her merit. The ignorant Turk does not allow, and I must therefore remain here without telling you about it in a greater detail.

The pen seems jaded to linger with you, but my mind takes its place. Believe that you will always have a privileged and permanent place in my mind. And in the meantime, I confirm myself with the usual affection.

Cyprus, March 1st 1786

118 The description of Kourion coins' details, including the legend, clearly derives from the imagined 'medals' elaborated by Dapper (1688, 288, Pl. IV top) and re-published by Reinhard (1766-68, 201). There is no complementary evidence for this prototype in the Kourion numismatic corpora. See Kagan 1999; Destrooper-Georgiades 2023.

Giovanni Mariti, *Viaggi per l'isola di Cipro e per la Soria e Palestina fatti da Giovanni Mariti accademico fiorentino dall'anno MDCCLX al MDCCLXVIII*, Tomo I

Printing House of HRH,
Florence
1769

CHAPTER III
On the Ancient City of Citium Now Destroyed

Departing from the *Borgo delle Saline* and travelling towards the North to the city of Larnica, one may find out many ruins. From this curiosity arises the desire to know what once existed in this place, as we read in Strabo and Ptolemy that between the ancient city of Amathus, today old Limassol, and the Dades promontory, now called cape Pila, was then located a city named Citium. It seems, therefore, that these ruins belong to that city.[119] I cannot understand how Stephen Lusignan is forgetting these ancient ruins by placing Citium where is now located a *Casale*, called Citti, where there is no evidence for a city of memorable antiquity;[120] and I guess that he was mistaken, relying on the name of the Casale, which does not derive from the city of Citium, but from the promontory, called cape Citti nowadays too. My opinion, therefore, is that the above-mentioned ruins really belong to the ancient Citium, as they are not far from the description of the ancient geographers. I also have on my side the Cavalier Niebushr, a mathematician to the King of Denmark, who drew the plan which is on the frontispiece of this book.[121] One can also clearly see in this map the harbour, which Strabo locates near the ancient Citium, mentioned about that city.

> εἶτα κολπώδης καὶ τραχὺς παράπλους ὁ πλείων εἰς Κίτιον... ἔχει δὲ λιμένα κλειστόν.[122]

> Then comes the coasting-voyage to Citium, which for the most part is sinuous and rough. Citium has a harbour that can be closed.[123]

119 Ptol. *Geog.* 5.13.2; Strabo *Geography* 14.6.3.

120 Lusignan 1573, 10.

121 An updated version of the map illustrating Larnaka and the location of ancient Kition will then appear as an offset illustration in the *Dissertazione* (Mariti 1787b). Admittedly, both the maps were based on Niebuhr's schematic plans. See above.

122 Original text in the 1787 edition is: "Κίτιον, εχει λιμένα κλειστόν. *Citium, habet portum, qui claudi potest*". Original reference in the 1787 edition is: "Lib. XIV".

123 Strabo *Geography* 14.6.3. Transl. by H.C. Hamilton, W. Falconer (1903).

Finally, I fell upon good fortune to read a description of Cyprus, made by Ascanio Savorniano Venetian gentleman,[124] manuscripted by our erudite Signor Domenico Manni, in which he describes the *Saline* as follows:

> *et antiquamente vi fu una Città chiamata Citium, le cui vestigie si vedono chiaramente. A questo luogo non vi è alto alcuno, che dia nocumento, anzi giovamento, ove si potrìa fare una Cittadella, che dominarìa, et con poca spesa, perché si potrìa servirsi di parte de i Baloardi della Città* (oggi sono distrutti) *fin a quell'alto, ove anticamente fu un Castello* (oggi è un mulino a vento) *si vede un alveo, che dimostra esservi stato un Porto etc.*[125]
>
> In ancient times there was a city called Citium, whose ruins stand clearly evident. In this place there is no high place, which gives harm, or rather benefit, where one could build a citadel, which would dominate, and with little expense, because one could use part of the city's bastions (today they are destroyed) up to that high place, where in ancient times there was a castle (today it is a windmill) one can see a riverbed, which proves that there was a port etc.

Thus, we need to correct those maps drawn upon the *Chorography* by Lusignan.[126] And it is certain that the city of Citium was of the most renowned on the island, so that one could not diligently identify its true location, as we all learnt from Strabo that it was the birthplace of the prince of the Stoics Zeno, and that of the physician Appollonius.[127]

124 Several copies of the manuscript *Descrittione delle cose di Cipro* by Ascanio Savorgnano have survived. One of them, transcribed by Francesco Marcaldi, bears the date 20 November 1573 and is currently included in the Collection of Manuscripts and Rare Books of the Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation (ΠΙΤΚ B-197). This manuscript describes the political and social condition in Cyprus before the Turkish attack in 1570. Ascanio Savorgnano was sent to Cyprus in 1562 in order to write a report that has been drafted in accordance with the instructions of the Venetian Senate, and initially kept secret. The Florentine erudite and antiquarian Domenico Manni here mentioned by Mariti, owned a copy of the Savorgnano manuscript, as clearly stated in his *Osservazioni Istoriche*: "*Tra' miei Manoscritti io conservo una Descrizione delle cose di Cipro, fatta pere opera di Ascanio Savorgnano Gentiluomo Veneziano, eletto dalla Repubblica di Venezia per renderla informata innanzi alla guerra di esso Regno*" (Manni 1744, 30).

125 The details reported in brackets correspond to Mariti observations and actualisation of the described contexts by Savorgnano.

126 Lusignan 1573.

127 Strabo *Geography* 14.6.3.

A king of Citium was grateful to Alexander the Great, and gave him his sword, which he esteemed so highly and kept by his side; with that sword he defeated Darius, as noted by Plutarch.[128]

Cimon from Athens lost his life in that city, when he fought the Persians there, as Plutarch confirms.

> ἀπέθανε δὲ πολιορκῶν Κίτιον, ὡς οἱ πλεῖστοι λέγουσι, νοσήσας: ἔνιοι δέ φασιν ἐκ τραύματος, ὃ πρὸς τοὺς βαρβάρους ἀγωνιζόμενος ἔσχε.
>
> *Decessit in obsidione Citii (ut plerique referunt) ex morbo, alii volunt ex vulnere, quod confligens cum Barbariis accepit.*
>
> He died while besieging Citium, of sickness, as most say But some say it was of a wound which he got while fighting the Barbarians.[129]

Amasis from Egypt, who reigned in the eighteenth Dynasty took Citium from the Assyrians and destroyed it along with several cities on the island, and then he rebuilt it with the others.[130]

As I mentioned above, at the present time only the foundations of walls of the ancient city can be detected, and a few additional buildings, as it has become a plain piece of land suitable for cultivation; and as the land is being worked, large stones are being uncovered every day, which are used for the modern constructions of the *Borgo delle Saline* and Larnica.

I myself, in the year 1767, came upon an excavation that was being carried out for the purpose of extracting stones, among which the workers found a head of white marble, representing Antoninus Caracalla, and many Greek medals of the Roman Empire, Septimius Severus, Antoninus Caracalla, Julia Domna, with a Greek inscription, and on the reverse side the representation of the Temple of Paphos with the legend ΚΟΙΝΟΝ ΚΥΠΡΩΝ; and some others with Caracalla on one side, and Geta on the opposite side;[131] in addition to these, medals of Claudius Caesar Augustus with a Latin inscription, and on the reverse a laurel wreath; in the middle of laurel wreath one may find written ΚΟΙΝΟΝ ΚΥΠΡΩΝ. The mentioned head passed into the hand of Mr. Timothy Turner Consul in Cyprus of H.M. of Great

128 Plut. *Alex*. 32.9, where is mentioned: "*He had a sword, too, of astonishing temper and lightness, a gift from the king of the Citieans*". Transl. by B. Perrin (1914). Original reference in the 1769 edition is: "*In vit. Alex*".

129 Plut. *Cim*. 19.1. Transl. by B. Perrin (1914). Original reference in the 1769 edition is: "*in Vita Cimonis*".

130 Amasi here might correspond to Pharaoh Ahmose II. See above in greater detail.

131 The reference is here to the small collection of roman coins of the Severan period that was then brought to Italy and partially donated by Mariti to the Accademia Etrusca in Cortona. See above in a greater detail.

Britain, who then sent it to England; while some of the medals remained with me.[132]

There is evidence of ancient aqueducts, which show that even in those centuries there was a need to bring water from distant places, as those in the country are not even good for drinking nowadays.

This city was bordered by a wide ditch, which is also cultivated, and traces of the ditch can still be seen today; almost on the edge of the ditch there are two deposits of the same structure as those in the map of Citium illustrated on the frontispiece.[133] Both deposits are built up of three large stones joined together, the stone employed, not being in these surroundings, it seems to have been transported from some hills ten miles away.

In the ancient sources there is no record of the date when this city of Citium was destroyed; however, from the above-mentioned medals found in the foundations, it can be deduced that this destruction did not occur before the year 210 A.D.

CHAPTER. XVII

Journey from Limassol to Paphos

Curi City destroyed on the Capo delle Gatte
From the city of Limassol one moves on to Curi, which was an ancient city built on the *Capo delle Gatte*; it is now an entirely destroyed, with only a scanty evidence of antiquity attested, consisting of several marble columns.[134]

Village of Acrotiri
A church dedicated to St. Nicholas may be found here, and a Monastery of Greek Religious called Acrotiri, which is also gives the name to the village.

Village, and Colossus Castle.

132 As noted above, Timothy Turner served as English vice-consul in the period 1763-68 (Özkul 2013, Tab. 2), also representing Tuscany and Holland in Cyprus. Mariti had been recommended by his friend Antonio Mondaini and was then officially appointed as vice-consul of the Tuscan consulate in Larnaca.

133 In the map the canal appears connecting the coast and a basin to the north-east of the city (this canal is also illustrated in the Pococke map). This evidence has been explained by recent years investigations and the discovery at the edge of a "closed basin" of Cypro-Classical *neoria*, corresponding to the hangars of the war port dated back to the fourth century BC, and following geomorphological analysis of the sea coast modifications (Yon 2011, 38; Yon, Sorisseau 2010).

134 The evidence of marble columns scattered on the top of the Kourion hill is persistent in the description of the site by Mariti and Mondaini (1786, 27-8).

A mile and a half away from Acrotiri, and about three miles from the sea, it is located a site called *Colosso*, which is a village with a massive castle, built up by the Knights Templar; originally belonged to them, the castle was then owned by the Knights Hospitallers, who are the Knights of Malta.

River Lycus
Before arriving to Piscopìa there is a torrent, which is the ancient river the old Geographers named Lycus, which was one of the major on the Island.

Village of Piscopìa
Six miles away from *Capo delle Gatte* one gets the village Piscopìa, which is on a plain, and where cotton of the best quality in the kingdom is picked up. In the time of the Venetians, these plain lands were cultivated with sugar cane; this cultivation was then abandoned because cotton cultivation was getting more and more profitable.[135] Piscopìa is one of the most flourishing villages on the island, also rich in lemons, oranges, olives and other fruit trees, with plenty of running water, and in a pleasant environment. The Venetian noble family Prosapia Cornara Piscopia took its name from this place.

Piscopìa is the ancient city of Curias.
The beautiful ruins found underground the village of Piscopia confirm what the ancient authors mentioned about the city of Curias, which was a Royal City in the time of the nine kings. It is claimed that Stasanor was the last king, and that he fought along with Alexander the Great.[136]

135 See above about the memory of sugar cane in the area of Kolossi and Episkopi and subsequent changing cultivation.

136 The information provided by Mariti is confusing here. Stasanor of Kourion appears commanding a large force during the revolt of Onesilos against the Persians at the time of the Ionian Revolt. He fought at first on the Greek side but at the battle in the plain of Salamis (498 BC) he went over to the Persians and his betrayal won them the day. "μαχομένων δὲ καὶ τῶν ἄλλων,Στησήνωρ τύραννος ἐὼν Κουρίου προδιδοῖ ἔχων δύναμιν ἀνδρῶν περὶ ἑωυτὸν οὐ σμικρήν. οἱ δὲ Κουριέες οὗτοι λέγονται εἶναι Ἀργείων ἄποικοι" ("While the rest were still fighting, Stesenor the ruler of Curium, allegedly an Argive settlement, played the traitor with great company of men under him") (Hdt. 5.113. Transl. by Godley 1920). Nothing is known of the other kings of Kourion until Pasikrates, probably its last king, who sailed in the Cypriot fleet, which went to the aid of Alexander the Great at the siege of Tyre in 332 BC.

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The observations and practice of Mariti, Sestini and Mondaini shed light on a transformative turning point in Western Europe's early interest in ancient Cyprus in the late eighteenth century. Looking at the island's antiquities as they emerged to their attention, we observe how the memory of ancient Cyprus gradually becomes evident. Losing the ethereal form of erudite references, the early history of the island takes on the tangible connotation of archaeological objects. While this new evidence was explored, it was soon also exploited and exported abroad in the form of personal collections. These early collections of antiquities seem to pave the way for the future paradigm of extractive archaeology that would largely dominate the next century (and beyond).

Luca Bombardieri is Associate Professor in Aegean and Cypriote Archaeology at the University of Siena, after having been appointed as Lecturer and Associate Professor at the Universities of Florence and Turin, in Italy. He earned an MA and PhD in Archaeology and Ancient History at the University of Florence under the supervision of Paolo Emilio Pecorella, and joined research projects in Italy, Iraq, Syria, where he supervised the excavation of the Neo-Assyrian Palace at Tell Barri/*Kahat*, as well as in Cyprus. Luca Bombardieri is the scientific director of the *Missione Archeologica Italiana a Erimi (Cipro)/Erimi Archaeological Projec*, in collaboration with the Department of Antiquities of Cyprus, the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and numerous international research partner institutions. Co-director of the book series *Studi Ciprioti*, he is also a member of the scientific board of the *Cahiers du Centre d'Etudes Chypriotes* and Principal Investigator of the *EartHeritage* research project (Italian Ministry of Research). His research covers a broad range of interests, including aspects of social organisation and ideology of Bronze Age communities in Cyprus, the prehistory of Mediterranean islands and modern reception of Mediterranean prehistoric art and ideology.

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