

Inventing the Eteocypriots: Imperialist Archaeology and the Manipulation of Ethnic Identity

Michael Given

Department of Archaeology, University of Glasgow, Glasgow G12 8QQ, Scotland

Abstract

For 60 years the 'Eteocypriots' have been seen as the Iron Age survivors of the indigenous population of Cyprus. In the 1930s, however, when the Eteocypriots first appeared in the literature, the British colonial rulers of Cyprus were exploiting ancient history and archaeology to combat Greek nationalism. This article investigates the ideology and mechanisms of imperialist archaeology, examines the textual and artefactual material used to 'invent' the Eteocypriots, and demonstrates that there is no secure archaeological or historical evidence for their existence. By encouraging the creation of an 'authentically' Cypriot ethnic group which pre-dated the Greeks, the British colonial regime denied the Hellenic character of ancient and modern Cyprus.

Introduction

In 1928 the island of Cyprus celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of British colonial rule; or, to be more accurate, its British colonial rulers congratulated themselves on 50 years of imperial control. The Governor, Sir Ronald Storrs, wrote a 'contrasting summary of conditions prevailing in the Island in 1878 and 1928' (Storrs 1945: 490), and pointed to improvements in the roads, bridges, harbours, health, water supply, forests, and all those other imperialist indicators of the development of civilization. Fifty years of archaeology had demonstrated the primitive and oriental character of Cyprus during the preceding five millennia, and justified the need for superior British organization and administration.

Three years later, on 21 October 1931, Storrs's official residence in Nicosia was burnt to the ground by Greek Cypriot demonstra-

tors demanding *enosis*, or union with Greece. Being Greeks, they declared, and sharing in the glories of Hellenic culture, they had bequeathed the western values of logical reasoning, representative art and democracy to Europe, and so it was hardly just that they should be ruled by a race of people who at the time of Pericles and Thucydides were still barbaric savages. The identity of the Greek Cypriots, they knew, was not in doubt: classical poets and historians talked about the Greeks of Cyprus in the fifth century BC, and archaeology continued to uncover the remains of the island's classical and Hellenic past.

The late 1920s and early 1930s were a critical point in the development of imperialist ideology on Cyprus. The old Orientalist justifications were clearly inadequate in the face of the arguments of educated Greek Cypriots: it was no longer enough to declare

that the Cypriots were primitive, chaotic orientals requiring British rule for their own good. The attempted solution to this crisis was the creation of a new Cypriot identity, something that was neither Greek nor Turkish nor Phoenician nor Anatolian, and yet more than a mixture of them all. Colonial officials looked for non-Greek and non-Turkish traits in the modern population of the island, while western archaeologists sympathetic to their cause, including Einar Gjerstad, director of the Swedish Cyprus Expedition, invented a new ethnic group: the 'Eteocypriots'. These were supposedly the original, autochthonous inhabitants of the island, who survived into the Iron Age in an ethnic pocket in the city of Amathus on the south coast. So convincing were the archaeologists to themselves that this spurious ethnic group still appears in every publication on Iron Age Cyprus.

The aim of this article is to explore the relationship between imperialism and archaeology, focusing on Cyprus during the 1920s and 1930s when imperialist ideology was under particular stress. A particular feature of this period was the deliberate manipulation of ethnic identity for overtly political purposes. Owing to the general sympathy of western archaeologists with the imperialists, as well as prevailing trends in culture-historical explanation which privileged racial explanations of cultural variety, archaeology was one of the most important tools for this process. My second aim is to demonstrate that the Eteocypriots never existed; at least, they never existed in antiquity. There is no secure archaeological or historical evidence to distinguish them from the general cultural milieu of Iron Age Cyprus, and it is clear that they were the offspring of imperialist manipulation and academic collaboration in the 1920s and 1930s.

Archaeology and Imperialism

As the Greek demonstrators were marching on Government House on 21 October 1931, the Governor Sir Ronald Storrs was inscribing a copy of Camille Enlart's *L'Art Gothique et la Renaissance en Chypre* (1899) as a present for his Private Secretary, Rupert Gunnis (Storrs 1945: 507). The book was written in the old, comfortable imperialist paradigm: the great monuments of the colony's past were European, not local; this proved that then as now the population needed Europeans to govern them; and these European monuments clearly required European guardianship. In Cyprus during the early 1930s, this paradigm was no longer adequate to justify British rule—as the demonstrators were about to prove.

The relationship between archaeology and imperialism changed according to time, place and the individual concerned. The great variation in imperial discourse has encouraged a recent growth of studies in specific 'colonial projects' (Thomas 1994: 105), of which this article is one. Belief in this variation may have been a deliberate colonial strategy to prevent the cooperation of resistance movements (Young 1995: 164-65), but if so it was merely exploiting differences that undoubtedly existed, as the case of Cyprus makes clear.

This discussion of archaeology and imperialism, then, makes no attempt to construct an overarching theoretical structure. All it tries to do is to indicate some of the common themes and mechanisms within the discourse of imperialist archaeology, and to show how dramatically the historical situation of Cyprus (with, to some extent, Malta) resisted the standard processes of imperialism. Because this resistance derived from an undeniable combination of historical circumstances, it forced the colonial rulers either to question the very nature of rule and identity (as Storrs began to), or to

close their eyes to the problem entirely (as most of his successors did).

Archaeological Criticism

When archaeology is so closely bound up with imperialist or nationalist ideology, it is impossible to defend the objectivity or innocence of archaeological explanation, and today there are few commentators who would try (Trigger 1984: 355-56; Jones 1997: 6). Some, though, would argue that such archaeology constitutes a deviation from academic standards of accuracy and responsibility, thus making a total division between 'propaganda' and 'scholarship'. But as historically situated individuals, we all work and write in specific political contexts. Postcolonialism, for example, is just as important an influence on me in the 1990s as culture history and racial theories were on Einar Gjerstad in the 1930s; and it is certainly no less political.

It is not enough, therefore, to retreat into empiricism or the pretence of objectivity and freedom from political bias. Refusing to question the basis of archaeological knowledge or the political context of the acquisition of archaeological data merely enshrines historically specific interpretation as hard scientific fact. It is exactly this uncritical approach that leads to the irresponsible exploitation of archaeology for political purposes by fascists, imperialists or nationalists (Jones 1997: 10-12).

Because this lack of reflexivity has characterized almost all archaeology before the 1980s, there is clearly a need for what has been termed a 'political anthropology of archaeology' (Sant Cassia 1993: 293; cf. Morris 1994: 8-11), and this article aims to be a small example of precisely that. But I, for one, have no wish to demonstrate that my predecessors were prejudiced and manipulative bigots, an arrogance that seems to characterize much con-

temporary postcolonial criticism (cf. Freeman 1996: 30, 32). If this study is an anthropology of archaeology, then the archaeological texts are 'informants', who should be understood and appreciated rather than reprieved or converted (Herzfeld 1982: 10). Colonial novels such as Kipling's *Kim* and Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* are not diminished by postcolonial criticism: they become more valuable as works of art, because their worldliness and historicity are more fully understood (Said 1993: 13). In the same way, archaeological texts are more valuable as works of historical analysis when their intermediary role between the society under analysis and the society of the writer is appreciated. When Einar Gjerstad's works on Cyprus are set beside contemporary theories of race and culture and the political situation in Cyprus in the early 1930s, they gain enormously in interest, piquancy and relevance. How much more useful and appreciative this is than merely dismissing his work as outmoded or overly taxonomic.

Imperialist Themes

In many respects the relationship between anthropology and colonial rule was more straightforward, and certainly more explicit, than that between archaeology and colonial rule, certainly in most British colonies (see papers in Stocking 1991; Pels 1997). The development of indirect rule in British colonies, particularly in West Africa in the 1910s and 1920s, required a detailed analysis of local systems of rule in order to appropriate and adapt them for imperial use (Lackner 1973). As far as the Nigerian government was concerned, for example, the purpose of anthropology was to 'serve as the handmaiden to administration' (quoted in Lackner 1973: 144). Only after the Second World War did academic anthropologists begin to fear 'lest the colonial tail wag the anthropological dog'

(Man 1949: 138 [quoted in Lackner 1973: 141]). In many cases anthropological analysis and administrative adaptation of local systems of rule altered local people's perception of what constituted their 'traditional' polity; in Fiji, for example, this altered perception continued even after independence (Clammer 1973).

Archaeology addressed more general and often more emotive issues concerning the character and identity of local society, though the political effects of this were rarely explicitly mentioned. It was a particularly powerful tool in the description, adjustment and creation of ethnic identity. This partly derives from the tangible and apparently 'objective' nature of material evidence, neatly described by Nicholas Thomas (1991: 176):

We take the 'concrete and palpable' presence of a thing to attest to the reality of that which we have made it signify; our fantasies find confirmation in the materiality of things that are composed more of objectified fantasy than physical stuff.

Another explanation for the utility of archaeology to imperialists is that in its culture-historical mode (Jones 1997: 15-26) it is particularly well suited to the construction of racial stereotypes, each of which has a list of clear and easily identifiable traits, and similarly clear and unambiguous boundaries. To a colonial ruler wishing to express the division between his own race and that of the people he ruled, and to explain why that people needed to be ruled, archaeology provided simultaneously a clear analogy and a historical justification.

There are two principles which are common to many discourses of imperialist archaeology: the unambiguous distinction between different races and the ranking of those races in a pecking order based on their level of 'civilization'. Any one group tends to see itself as

essentialist: there is some ultimate 'Greekness' or 'Irishness' which surpasses academic attempts to define, analyse or explain it (Just 1989: 76). This essentialism denies historical process or change (JanMohamed 1985: 68-69), and is easily established by archaeological proofs of 'primitiveness'. Archaeology's long time-span and aptitude for understanding historical processes makes it well suited to explaining social change; but this aptitude is ignored in favour of establishing continuity. By parading ancient 'survivals' in modern society—ox-ploughs, threshing sledges, oil jars—archaeology proves that the colonized people have not changed since antiquity, thereby denying them all dynamism and cultural vibrancy, and hence justifying western imperial rule.

In most imperialist situations the ruling powers are clearly distinguished from local peoples, the 'natives', in a dualist conception that allows few or no exceptions (JanMohamed 1985; van Dommelen 1997: 208). This opposition often forms a necessary part of either group's identity, which is not just an essentialist awareness of the self but also the negative of a perceived 'Other' (cf. Said 1993: 60). A colonial ex-patriate's identity, for example, can stress the 'non-native' component much more strongly than the 'Englishman' or 'Frenchman'. This opposition gains historical depth by using archaeology and history to sharpen the contrast: western societies are dynamic, constantly spreading their influence and developing new technologies; 'oriental' or 'native' societies are static, primitive and lack initiative and inventiveness.

Notions of purity and hybridity are clearly relevant to this largely racial imperialist discourse. They are also problematic and highly variable. In many cases the imperialists need to create an absolute distinction between the two groups, and so use a rhetoric of purity whereby the dividing-line can and must never

be crossed in any direction. Focusing on hybridization, therefore, is an effective post-colonial strategy in both history and archaeology, as it undermines imperialist authority by breaking down its carefully constructed racial difference (Young 1995: 22-23). Local people can appropriate elements from their imperialist masters and, in a creative and dynamic process of 'creolization', incorporate them into their own society (Young 1995: 24-25; van Dommelen 1997: 309, 314-15). Similarly they can themselves influence the imperial power, producing a process of acculturation which passes from the colonized to the colonizers (Mattingly 1996: 59-60).

Like objects, however, racial purity and hybridity can stand for whatever they are made to signify. Outside the dualist colonial situation, the British often found it appropriate to describe themselves as hybrids, particularly to demonstrate their flexibility in different situations (including their very varied colonies). One formulation is Daniel Defoe's 'That Het'rogeneous Thing, *An Englishman*', quoted by Benedict Anderson at the beginning of *Imagined Communities* (1991). Another comes in Arthur Bryant's popular and significantly titled *Makers of the Realm* (1953):

Long skull and broad, short build and tall, dark pigmentation and blond, have persistently mingled; so have the instincts and memories of a score of races. Such intermixture in so small an island has made its people many-sided and versatile (Bryant 1953: 17; cf. Trigger 1984: 364-65).

Although in the colonial situation hybridity is a threat to the colonial power, it can in specific domestic contexts be used as a prop for that power. Backed up by migrationist or diffusionist archaeology, it can be a proof of racial superiority, an answer to the charge that the British were not physically designed

for the deserts of Arabia or the swamps of West Africa.

Imperialist Mechanisms

The most noticeable way the past protrudes into the present is in the form of monuments, and their interpretation was crucial to imperial rulers. If they were notable achievements due to size, plan or decoration, their construction had to be attributed to non-natives, who were in a sense predecessors of the current colonial powers. Sometimes this was mostly true, such as the mediaeval Gothic remains of Cyprus studied by Enlart; though even here the contribution of Cypriot labourers and masons is often ignored, and many features were appropriated into the local ecclesiastical and vernacular architecture. Often, however, such interpretations exploited theories of migration and diffusion to deny any local creativity or powers of organization. Iron metallurgy in West Africa could only be attributed to white men (Holl 1990: 300); architectural monuments in the Dutch East Indies were built not by the natives' ancestors but by Indian immigrants (Anderson 1991: 181); most notoriously of all, Great Zimbabwe was built by any number of civilized, usually white, foreigners (Kuklick 1991).

Once their position in the racial hierarchy was established, these monuments had many uses. European monuments needed careful and efficient European guardians (cf. Anderson 1991: 180-81). They were endlessly reproducible as logos on postage stamps, coins, postcards, tourist posters and official publications, thus disseminating their ideological message (Anderson 1991: 182). Modern imperialists could point to the civilizing role of their ancient predecessors, and restore or copy their monuments to bring home the parallel. This was often done more explicitly in French and Italian colonies than in British.

The French foreign legion in North Africa, for example, trumpeted their road-building activities in monuments and inscriptions based on Latin models erected by the Roman legions for the same purpose (Mattingly 1996: 54).

Archaeological artefacts, though less imposing than monuments, were more portable and could be arranged in significant ways. On the most basic level, they could quite simply be removed to adorn the private collections of colonial officials and the museums of the west (Shanks 1996: 43-49). This practice encapsulates the imperialist appropriation of native culture in a very literal sense (cf. Hamilakis and Yalouris 1996: 119-21). Being composed largely of 'objectified fantasy', an artefact can be made to stand for the culture it was taken from by a process of metonymy (Clifford 1985: 240). The natives themselves are stereotyped and 'commodified' so they can be used as a resource for colonial fiction (JanMohamed 1985: 64). In the same way, ethnographic and archaeological artefacts are commodified and used for colonial history. Sometimes a particular object is 'singularized' and used to tell a specific story: a cannibal's fork from Fiji, for example, tells the story of the eating of human flesh (Thomas 1991: 165-67), thus setting native barbarity against western civilization.

On a wider scale these objects can be orchestrated into a collection or museum whose arrangement is itself an ideological expression of the relation between the imperial power, which collected the artefacts, and the local culture, which lost them. Taken as a whole, a display of objects from a specific culture can be a 'rigidification' of that culture (Thomas 1991: 174), forcing the material into fixed categories of function or style. This is one manifestation of Benedict Anderson's 'totalizing classificatory grid', whereby the colonial census, map or museum demonstrates its total knowledge and organization of local society (Anderson 1991: 184; cf. 173). The

archaeological museum displays a past that is often inaccessible (or irrelevant) to local people, thus giving historical depth to this knowledge and control of society (cf. Said 1978: 32).

Modern empires often had ancient empires in the same area, and carefully selected aspects could act as a paradigm for the most recent imperial power. We have already seen French use of Roman monuments and inscriptions in North Africa, and the Romans in the Mediterranean provided many useful parallels: a strong military, extensive land survey, notable engineering works, and a widespread process of acculturation or 'Romanization'. A fortified settlement became proof of Roman control of the area; ancient centuriation and modern cadastral planning brought western order to native chaos; Roman and Italian civic architecture demonstrated the civilizing mission of the imperialist power (Mattingly 1996: 50-55). Just as importantly, evidence of local resistance to imperial rule was firmly suppressed, whether ancient Garamantian or modern Berber, and local people of all periods became the passive recipients of a superior culture (Mattingly 1996: 56).

'European' Colonies

Many of these themes and mechanisms of imperialist discourse are relevant to an investigation of imperialist archaeology in Cyprus, particularly in the first 50 years of British rule. From the late 1920s, however, it became clear that Cyprus, along with Malta and Gibraltar, Britain's other European or 'semi-peripheral' colonies, contradicted many features of the imperial ideology (Sant Cassia 1993: 296; cf. Herzfeld 1987: 1-2). Ronald Storrs was one of the few officials who began to recognize this ambivalence and tried to deal with it; another, though rather later, was his chief, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Leo Amery:

Cyprus, Malta and Gibraltar ought not to be under the Colonial Office at all but, like the Channel Islands, under the Home Office, regarded as European dependencies of the United Kingdom and not as Colonies, a word which is apt to suggest primitive black men and exploitation (Amery to Sir Edward Grigg, 9 July 1945; Amery 1988: 1065).

Cyprus was the only British colony with a principally Greek population (the Ionian islands had been ceded to Greece in 1864). Since their schooldays, however, British imperialists had accepted the classical Greek source of much of western civilization: their own culture, they were told, derived from that of ancient Greece. Now their Greek Cypriot subjects were laying claim to that same classical heritage, but as its direct descendants. This meant that the British and the Greek Cypriots claimed the same cultural origins, and so were, in a sense, hybrids. What was worse, it was the British, not the Greek Cypriots, who had been assimilated to a superior culture. This ambivalence, which still affects European attitudes to Greece (Herzfeld 1987: 5-6), was deeply disturbing, and threatened the division of colonizer and colonized into absolute racial opposites. This was a principal cause of the ideological crisis of the late 1920s and early 1930s in Cyprus, which pushed the discourse of imperialist archaeology beyond its normal parameters.

Language and Imperialism

According to the dictates of Romantic nationalism and its prophet, Johann Gottfried von Herder, language is the ultimate expression of a people: it has an almost mystical authenticity, and is bound up in the land itself (Anderson 1991: 67-71; Jones 1997: 41-42). In what is now called ethnolinguistic nationalism, ethnic groups such as Basques

and Kurds point to their distinctive languages as their most salient national characteristic. The 19th- and 20th-century debate in Greece between the classical and Orthodox components of the national identity took the form of a debate between *katharevousa*, the purified, classicizing form of modern Greek, and *dhimotiki*, the vernacular (Herzfeld 1987: 101).

Given the need for historical depth in claiming possession of an authentic language, the disciplines of historical linguistics, archaeology and epigraphy were essential. Conversely, they could be used by imperialist ideologues to deny national identity, or construct new ones which did not threaten imperial rule. It was easy, for example, to characterize a modern vernacular as debased and full of foreign influences, as, notoriously, Jakob Fallmerayer did for modern Greek (Herzfeld 1982: 8, 94-95). To do this for an ancient language, it was necessary to control access to and interpretation of the language, particularly through the European sciences of epigraphy and historical linguistics. Berber and Arab nationalists in North Africa, for example, often could not read Latin, and so were in no position to deny the parallels and continuities established by the French between the Roman and their own empires (Mattingly 1996: 51; cf. 62).

The case of the Cypriot dialect of modern Greek is a good example of one language allowing two conflicting ideological interpretations. By focusing on its Turkish and other loan words, imperialists tried to establish that Cyprus was not the true descendant of ancient Greece. Conversely, by focusing on its archaisms, nationalists could demonstrate that it preserved more forms of classical Greek than modern Greek on the mainland did. Like rural Gozo, which was considered to be more Maltese than Malta (Sant Cassia 1993: 302), Cyprus was more Greek than Greece itself. Arguments also centred round the antiquity of a language, with the help of archaeology: Greek had a longer heritage in Cyprus than

Turkish; but older languages still could deny the authenticity and aboriginality of Greek.

The language question in Malta, which became more and more problematic during the 19th century and reached its climax in the 1920s, is an instructive example of the imperialist and nationalist struggle over language. As Malta was another European or 'semi-peripheral' colony, it is also a particularly relevant parallel to Cyprus. When the Treaty of Paris of 1814 confirmed British control over the Maltese islands, the main language of administration, particularly in the courts, was Italian. The Maltese language, which has a strong Semitic base, was the spoken vernacular of the local people. As the use of English became increasingly widespread in administration and education during the 19th century, it was hotly resisted by pro-Italian nationalists (cf. Laferla 1947: 35-36).

By the 1920s, anti-nationalists tried to oppose pro-Italian nationalism by encouraging the use not of English but of Maltese. Chief among these was Gerald Strickland, a British as well as a Maltese patrician and politician, who in the 1920s led the pro-British Constitutional party (Cannadine 1994: 124-25). He encouraged the wider use of Maltese and greater literacy in it, and he reinterpreted it as an indigenous and authentic local language, which reflected an essentialist Maltese non-Italian culture (cf. Sant Cassia 1993: 299, 303). Harry Luke, Lieutenant-Governor of Malta from 1930 to 1938, similarly supported the growth of an authentic non-Italian Maltese identity. This is very evident in his book *Malta: An Account and an Appreciation*, first published in 1949. He cites Strickland approvingly (Luke 1960: 132), demonstrates visually that Maltese is totally alien to Italian (25-26), and attributes any perceived Italian components of Maltese culture to Fascist propaganda (26-27, 133-34).

The language question was one facet of a

wider battle in identity. In response to what they perceived as the deliberate Italianization of Maltese culture, the British and their Maltese supporters elaborated and reinterpreted the discourse of local history, archaeology, folklore and language. The best way of resisting pro-Italian nationalism was to 'appear to sponsor an indigenous subaltern culture' (Sant Cassia 1993: 300), and establish a 'timeless aboriginal rurality' (301; cf. Herzfeld 1982: 6-7). In Malta this was relatively straightforward, as there was a local language and culture available for exploitation. In Cyprus, by contrast, the principal vernacular was also the language of nationalism, while the island's second vernacular belonged to an absolute racial Other. To create an aboriginal, Cypriot culture which was neither Greek nor Turkish, British imperialists had to turn to the ancient past and the techniques of archaeology, epigraphy and historical linguistics.

Imperialist Archaeology in Cyprus

The changes in the discourse of imperialist archaeology on Cyprus are evident and significant, and not just confined to the late 1920s and early 1930s. To emphasize and clarify this, I have divided the period from the British occupation of Cyprus in 1878 to Independence in 1960 into three phases: Orientalist (1878-c.1900), Philhellenic (c.1900-c.1930), and 'Authentic Cypriot' (c.1930-1960). The divisions are to some extent arbitrary, and there is a considerable overlap. The phases are also structural as well as developmental, as the ideology depended on the individual and the context. A visiting travel writer in the 1930s, for example, would use the same ideological framework to interpret the past as a colonial official in the 1910s or an academic archaeologist in the 1890s. Nonetheless, there is a clear development, in response to internal and external pressures, and the three phases conveniently distinguish its main features.

Orientalist (1878–c.1900)

When the British occupied Cyprus in 1878, they were already aware of the interest of the island's antiquities, mainly through two much-read books by Luigi Palma di Cesnola (1877) and Robert Hamilton Lang (1878). Immediately upon their arrival they took over control of the antiquities and their interpretation. The first excavation, at Kition *Bamboula* in 1879, was undertaken by the District Engineer, Lt Hugh Sinclair (AR 1879: 197, 203–204). For the next 10 years almost all excavations were conducted by colonial officials such as Herbert Kitchener, who was supervising the Cyprus Survey (1879–83), and Falkland Warren, the Chief Secretary to the Government (1879–91). Even when visiting academics such as E.A. Gardner and J.L. Myres carried out research and excavation, they worked closely with the government, by legal necessity and personal inclination. As late as the 1910s, the High Commissioner Sir Hamilton Goold-Adams regularly 'granted himself an excavator's licence' and took his wife and his Private Secretary, Harry Luke, out 'unearthing and clearing ancient tombs' (Luke 1953 I: 212). The institutional and personal links between imperial authority and archaeological practice could hardly be closer.

These same links are clearly visible in archaeological interpretation from the period. In this discourse, the past had to reflect and bolster the present, and so ancient Cyprus duly became Oriental, primitive and subservient. Its original settlement by the Phoenicians (e.g. Lang 1878: 3) and an 'enervating' climate (e.g. Stewart 1908: 230) gave it its Eastern character, still reflected in the minarets, palm-trees and camels beloved by travel writers and the artists from the illustrated papers. Max Ohnefalsch-Richter's *Kypros, the Bible and Homer* of 1893 put the

Bible well before Homer, and in spite of his protestations in the preface (1893: v) about the joint Semitic and Hellenic inheritance of Cyprus, his subtitle *Oriental Civilization, Art and Religion in Ancient Times* is more faithful to the nature of this work. The usual 'survivals'—ox-ploughs, place-names, rituals—established the primitive character of the society and its lack of dynamism; Robert Hamilton Lang, for example, wrote a paper 'On archaic survivals in Cyprus' (1887). In all of these texts there is full confidence in the ideology, no questioning of the assumptions, and a complete refusal to listen to opposition or contradiction (for more references see Given 1991: 6–9).

Philhellenic (c.1900–c.1930)

Three related factors began to trouble this ideological self-confidence: Greek Cypriot claims to Hellenic identity, growing Philhellenism among educated Britons, and a dramatic fall in the prestige of the Phoenicians.

After 30 years of colonial rule, which brought little financial investment but considerable encouragement in the field of education, the Greek Cypriot intellectual elite was growing in numbers and becoming increasingly vocal. Lawyers and teachers pointed to the evidence of their Hellenic past, daring to appropriate the classical quotations and columns that the British had considered their own cultural property, and demanded *enosis*, or union with Greece. This met with an increasingly sympathetic reception in Britain, where there was already a strong approval of anything Hellenic and a growing hostility to anything Semitic (Bernal 1987: 385–88). In Cypriot archaeology this took the form of a reaction against what Sir George Hill, the most virulent of these writers, termed 'the Phoenician mirage', the way in which scholars of the late 19th century had

seen the influence of Phoenician culture in everything (Hill 1937: 485; cf. Perdrizet 1896: 353; Jeffery 1918: 423; see Bernal 1987: 367-99).

One indicator of the changing tides of imperialist ideology is the official *Handbook of Cyprus*, written and edited by successive members of the colonial regime. In each of the nine editions that this volume went through between 1901 and 1930, the sections on history and antiquities were updated in small but significant respects. Considering the extent to which the *Handbook* was quoted, cited and plagiarized, it did not merely passively reflect current trends but had an active influence on the way in which history was understood.

In the first few editions, edited by Joseph Hutchinson and Claude Delaval Cobham, we see the orientalist ideology still in place. Cypriot history is a catalogue of foreign conquests, each leaving the impress of the invaders (1903: 3), while the art is a simple reflection of those conquests:

The influence of Egypt, Assyria and Phoenicia is everywhere present, but for a single spark of originality, or of inspiration caught from the living model, or from Greek art, we may look in vain (*Handbook of Cyprus* 1903: 15).

In 1907 we begin to see an increasingly strong Hellenic influence on ancient Cyprus. In the single insertion in the history section the Ionian immigrants are termed 'the most pliable and most enduring element', which, with the help of Christianity, endured throughout the island's history (*Handbook of Cyprus* 1907: 39-40). Similarly, in 1909 the one new passage in the Antiquities section unexpectedly approves of Cypro-Classical terracotta figurines, on the grounds that they were made from Attic moulds or by Athenian potters (*Handbook of Cyprus* 1909: 56).

In 1913 Harry Luke, previously Goold-Adams's tombing secretary, currently Com-

missioner of Famagusta, and the future Lieutenant-Governor of Malta, took over the editorship, along with Douglas Jardine, Assistant Secretary to the Government. The official character of the publication was enhanced by a change in title from *A Handbook of Cyprus* to *The Handbook of Cyprus*. The hellenizing trend continues: new sections include Greek legends about Aphrodite (1913: 5), quotations of Homeric references to Cyprus (6-7), a full account of Solon's visit to the island (7-8), and a greatly expanded narrative of the reign of the heroic and hellenizing King Evagoras I of Salamis (10-11).

Individuals such as Claude Delaval Cobham and Harry Luke saw themselves as 'scholar-officials', with a particular right to pronounce on the history of the peoples they ruled; Ronald Storrs was another. But this Philhellenic trend is also evident in the work of academic archaeologists such as J.L. Myres. By 1914, when he published his *Handbook of the Cesnola Collection*, he was propounding his theory of the Mycenaean colonization of Cyprus in the Late Bronze Age, which was to give so much ammunition to generations of Greek Cypriot nationalists. This colonization made Cyprus an outpost of 'western civilization' (Myres 1914: xxx), and established the Greek language on Cyprus for good (xxxiv); by the fifth century BC there were 'nationalist ambitions' (xxxviii) and 'Hellenic feeling' (xxxix). In the 1910s, and much more strongly in the 1920s, this terminology was all too obviously relevant to contemporary Cyprus.

'Authentic Cypriot' (c.1930-1960)

By the late 1920s, imperialist ideology in Cyprus was in crisis. To justify their rule, colonial officials had to declare their belief in a primitive and Oriental Cyprus. But they could not simply deny or ignore the Greek Cypriot claims to a classical and European heritage. With increasing anti-Semitism, they

certainly could not tell the Greek Cypriots they were descendants of the Phoenicians. This ideological crisis had immediate political ramifications, and culminated in the burning of Government House in October 1931.

For a few years there was a determined, but clearly pointless, attempt on the part of imperialist ideologues to pass off the Cypriots as a *mélange* of different races, neither wholly Eastern or wholly Western, but an amorphous blend of the two without any original or essential character. This racial *mélange* was most commonly expressed in architectural analysis (see Given 1997b). The high point was Alban Caröe's paper on 'The fusion of Byzantine, Western and Mahomedan architectural styles in Cyprus' (1933). This work is replete with examples of the Cypriot 'hybrid civilisation', 'fused and mingled style', 'Cypriot *mélange*', 'intermingling and fusion', 'conglomerate Cypriot style', and many more (Caröe 1933: 46-47). It is perhaps symptomatic that the original manuscript of this article was burnt in the same emblematic fire that destroyed an earlier expression of the imperialist ideology, Enlart's *Art Gothique* (Caröe 1933: 45). The *mélange* theory had little academic interest or archaeological viability; above all, it was so unattractive to the Cypriots, both Greek and Turkish, that it had no political weight whatsoever.

The individual entrusted with the task of dealing with the ideological crisis and constructing a new identity was Sir Ronald Storrs (1881-1955), Governor of Cyprus from 1926 to 1932. The need to manipulate the ethnic identity of the Cypriots was made quite explicit in a minute sent to him in 1928 by his superior, Leo Amery, the Secretary of State for the Colonies: Storrs was told quite openly to foster a sense of 'Cypriot patriotism' as a foil to Greek nationalism (Georghallides 1985: 73-74).

Storrs had been appointed Oriental Secretary to Sir Eldon Gorst in Egypt in 1907, and

after Allenby's capture of Jerusalem in 1917 had become Military (later Civil) Governor of Jerusalem, where he had the task of imposing British rule on two very different communities. In both positions he declared his approval of local nationalism, provided it was not in any extreme form which might embarrass British rule. We see this approval throughout *Orientalisms* (1945 [1st edn 1937]), his entertaining and popular volume of memoirs. He laments the unpopularity of traditional dress and architecture in Egypt (Storrs 1945: 92; cf. 231), and strongly disapproves of imposing the English language (224, 350) or English Protestantism (411). He fully appreciated the value of monuments, antiquities and museums as symbols of national character, and was always keen to support projects which preserved such symbols (94, 312).

In all these situations Sir Ronald Storrs, the British colonial official, is telling local people how to preserve their national heritage, and imposing his definition of that national heritage and therefore of the national identity. In 1916 he and T.E. Lawrence were designing a set of Hejaz postage stamps to convince the world that the Arab Revolt was an achieved fact. They received a suggestion from King Hussein, the nominal leader of the Revolt:

He sent...a design purporting to typify Islamic architecture, but to the layman indistinguishable from the Eddystone Lighthouse. I felt this would never do, and wandered with Lawrence round the Arab Museum in Cairo collecting suitable motifs in order that the design in wording, spirit and ornament, might be as far possible representative and reminiscent of a purely Arab source of inspiration (Storrs 1945: 189).

Only the English Orientalist can truly recognize, classify and reproduce what is 'purely' and authentically Oriental (cf. Said 1978: 32).

In Jerusalem, where the Orientalist was dealing not merely with 'The Oriental' but with 'The Arab' and 'The Jew', there was even more need for the detached expert, the outsider with insight. Storrs set up handsome street signs in Arabic and Hebrew—and English (1945: 315, pl. after p. 272; cf. Georghalides 1985: 15-16). When the Jews proposed 'King Solomon' for the new name of a hotel and the Arabs 'Sultan Sulaiman', Storrs pronounced the 'Allenby' (Storrs 1945: 317). In each case the English alternative was neither one side nor the other, and therefore could stand for both. Indeed, this is how Storrs saw himself: 'not wholly for either, but for both' (340; cf. 385). This is why the emblem of the Englishman Sir Ronald Storrs, blazoned across the front cover of *Orientations*, can be a synthesis of the crescent of Islam, Solomon's seal, and the five-fold cross of Jerusalem (Figure 1; see Storrs 1945: xix).

The ideological content of Storrs's interest in history and archaeology is very clear. It was totalizing, for example. His *Chronology of Cyprus* (1930) demonstrates his ability to command Cypriot history in its entirety, consisting of 37 pages of entries running from 3000 BC to AD 1930. The European monuments of Cyprus needed European guardianship, a role of which he was very proud (Storrs 1945: 490-95). He admired the reconstruction work undertaken by his Italian counterparts in Rhodes, and clearly regretted that he did not have the same total power over his own colony (Storrs 1945: 480-81; cf. Hill 1952: 494, 542). His private collection of antiquities and exotica included a few classical sculptures, Byzantine icons, Jerusalem copper trays, and two ancient Egyptian wooden hawks (Storrs 1945: 512-13). Rather than imposing a rigid systematic classification, this collection was more a record of his travels and his broad cultural tastes; it indicated the extent of his knowledge of the



Figure 1. Emblem from the cover of Ronald Storrs's *Orientations* (1945)

Orient. It too was destroyed in the fire of October 1931.

Storrs's solution to the ideological crisis of the late 1920s began with the partial dehellenization of the past. This is most evident in the new 1930 edition of *The Handbook of Cyprus*, edited by himself and Assistant Secretary to the Government Bryan O'Brien. By the occasional change of a word or phrase, the prose is made to sound more scholarly, more authoritative: 'Herodotus tells' (1913: 9) becomes 'Herodotus relates' (1930: 9); 'The Amathousians...sacrificed to Onesilus every year' (1913: 9) becomes 'The Amathousians...instituted yearly sacrifices to the honour of Onesilus' (1930: 9); and so on. Accompanying this is a drastic dehellenization of history. The Greek myths about Aphrodite are removed, the Ionian immigrants severely limited, and Solon's visit cancelled entirely. In their place we have a greater sympathy with imperial authority, whatever the nationalities involved. The account of the Ionian Revolt is rewritten with considerably less sympathy towards the pro-Ionian Onesilos, who is now portrayed as a usurper and opportunist rather than a pan-Hellenic hero (1930: 8-9; cf. 1913: 8-9). Of the two additions to the history section, one

deals with the Peace of Antalkidas, which 'confirmed Persia in her possession of the island' (1930: 11), and the other with the Ptolemaic period when the island was 'administered by a viceroy' (1930: 13).

This process of suppressing the Hellenic aspects of Cypriot history was expressed more explicitly by Storrs in 1929 in a private letter to John Shuckburgh, the Assistant Under-Secretary of State. In this letter, Storrs advised that British newspapers should be prevented from disclosing the Swedish Cyprus Expedition's recent discovery of Hellenic antiquities in Larnaca, for fear of strengthening the case of the pro-enosis deputation currently in London (Georghallides 1985: 232-33). As Storrs had no qualms about saying in *Orientalisms* (1945: 67, 317), political interest had to take precedence over freedom of speech and knowledge, including knowledge of the past. This is one reason for his admiration of the Italians in the Dodecanese.

Ancient Cyprus was not, however, denationalized by Storrs, making it a cultural vacuum fit only for foreign occupation. Instead he combined the *mélange* theory with the new authenticity. Rather than being Oriental and assimilating certain Hellenic features (or, as the nationalists would have it, *vice versa*), ancient Cyprus became a true amalgam which was specifically Cypriot and which also preserved much of the island's aboriginal culture. His most direct expression of this theory comes in the preface to his *Chronology of Cyprus* (1930):

Many of those who have held sway have left something of the impress of their genius and character. None have availed (any more than in England) and, since 1878, none have attempted nor, I trust, will attempt to improve away or denationalize the primal insular quality of the people or the place (Storrs 1930: preface).

This same 'primal insular quality' is emphasized in the pages of the *Chronology*, while any Hellenic influence is minimized. The first population of Cyprus was, he declares, 'distinct from Egypt, Syria, and Cilicia', thereby having its own Cypriot character. In spite of the 'Minoan settlements', all that happens in cultural terms at the end of the Bronze Age is that 'Syrian and Cilician influence supersedes Egyptian' (Storrs 1930: 1); there is no total hellenization which would make Cyprus Greek and dilute the distinctive Cypriot character. Like many British in Cyprus after him, such as the novelist and propagandist Lawrence Durrell (Given 1997a), he preferred an 'authentic' Cyprus, however primitive, to one which was Greek, however modern and dynamic.

Orientalisms (1945) gives a very different picture of the cultural composition of Cyprus from the *Chronology*. Storrs professes himself 'Philhellene and Philokyprios' (1945: 516), and declares that 'Greek colonists Hellenized Cyprus as early as the fourteenth century' (469), and therefore the modern Cypriot is 'Greek-speaking, Greek-thinking, Greek-feeling, Greek' (470). Georghallides has pointed out the discrepancy between these claims and his actual policies as Governor (1985: 217), and his position was certainly very different. Retired from the colonial service, he was beginning to make a name for himself as a lecturer and writer, and had the freedom from official policies to indulge in the aesthetics of Philhellenism—'loving the merry patient people no less than their infinitely romantic Island' (1945: 516)—rather than the harsh realities of political control and ideological manipulation.

The Swedish Cyprus Expedition

However great the ingenuity and imagination of colonial officials, there still needs to be some source of new information about the

past. It was during Storrs's governorship that Cyprus received the biggest single archaeological project in its history: the Swedish Cyprus Expedition. Directed by Einar Gjerstad, this expedition carried out excavation and research in Cyprus from August 1927 to March 1931, excavating some 25 sites and taking 771 wooden chests of antiquities back to Sweden (Gjerstad 1980: 174).

When analysing the work of academic archaeologists, as opposed to colonial officials, we are on slightly different ground. The correct term for Storrs's reinterpretation of the cultural and ethnic identity of the Cypriots is undoubtedly 'manipulation': it was explicit, deliberate, and directed towards the maintenance of British imperial rule in Cyprus. Einar Gjerstad and his colleagues, however, considered themselves objective scholars who used scientific procedures to establish historical truth (cf. Gjerstad 1980: 11). Nonetheless, they were clearly sympathetic to the colonial regime, and were working in the same general European ideological system of culture history and racial hierarchy.

Storrs's enthusiastic support for the Swedish Cyprus Expedition is evident from the first correspondence in 1926. This support even involved changing the Antiquities Law to allow excavators to take a proportion of the finds out of the country (SA1/983/1913: Red 72-1).¹ In December 1926 Popham Lobb, the Colonial Secretary to the Cyprus Government, drafted a letter on this subject to the King's Custodian of Antiquities in Sweden:

The wishes of the members of the proposed expedition in this respect will receive sympathetic consideration together with as liberal an interpretation as may be legally permissible of actual and future legislation. I am further to add that every facility possible will be given to meet the convenience of the proposed expedition, to which His Excellency, who is deeply interested in Archae-

ological Research, would desire to extend a hearty welcome (SA1/1466/1926: Red 8; words in italics added by Storrs).

Storrs approved Popham Lobb's draft, but strengthened his promise of support by adding a declaration of his personal interest. During the actual excavations, the support of the Cyprus Government ranged from the appropriation of land from unwilling landowners (SA1/1466/1926: Red 55, 76) to providing policemen to guard excavations when finds were temporarily stored on site (SA1/774/1928). Einar Gjerstad mentions Storrs's personal support several times (Gjerstad 1980: 12, 173; cf. Gjerstad *et al.* 1934: xiii; Storrs 1945: 491).

Gjerstad and his team left Cyprus in March 1931, and the analysis and writing started immediately. Several articles in the early 1930s reported their finds and gave preliminary conclusions (Gjerstad 1932; 1933a; 1933b; Westholm 1933). In 1933 Gjerstad published a popular account of the excavations in Swedish, *Sekler och Dagar*; in 1980 this was translated, and the analytical portions updated, as *Ages and Days*. The three main descriptive volumes of the final publication appeared in 1934, 1935 and 1937, while the analytical volume for the Iron Age was published in 1948. Such was the mass of information gathered by the Expedition—and the lack of it beforehand—that they could establish whole new swathes of the culture history of the island (Gjerstad 1933b: 261). On a more general level, many of the broader themes and conclusions that appear in the Expedition's earlier publications were a precise match of those of Sir Ronald Storrs and his new imperialist ideology.

Like Storrs's *Chronology of Cyprus* and almost all imperialist museums, the Swedish Cyprus Expedition had a totalizing view of its mission: their sphere of interest was 'the entire cultural history' of the island; their excavation

site 'the entire island of Cyprus' (Gjerstad 1980: 11); this is another example of Benedict Anderson's 'totalizing classificatory grid' (1991: 184). When it came to dividing up the finds in October 1930, the Expedition's overriding concern was to have a 'representative' sample of artefacts (Gjerstad 1980: 11, 172). Their initial overall aim, expressed in the very first letter of inquiry to the Government of Cyprus in 1926, was to 'throw light upon the part played by Cyprus as a connecting link between the early Eastern and Western cultures' (Sigurd Curman to Cyprus Government, 15/10/1926; SA1/1466/1926: Red 2). This was, in effect, the *mélange* response to the clash between Orientalist and Philhellenic ideologies, and does occasionally appear in their later publications (e.g. Gjerstad 1980: 128).

Of much more interest to the Expedition, as well as to the colonial authorities, was the question of origins, and the identification of the original, indigenous population of the island. This was made clear by Gjerstad in the first paragraph of the introduction to the first volume of the final publication:

[Cyprus] served as a connecting link between the Orient and the Occident... The importance of Cypriote civilization is not, however, restricted to its role of intermediary of culture. Cyprus was also a creator of culture and possessed an indigenous civilization which at different times reached a high standard (Gjerstad *et al.* 1934: xiv; repeated in Gjerstad 1980: 11).

Gjerstad had written his doctoral thesis on early Cypriot prehistory, published in 1926 as *Studies on Prehistoric Cyprus*, and was keen to disseminate his theory about the Anatolian and North Syrian origins of the Cypriot population (Gjerstad 1926: 294; 1933b: 262). Later colonization added Greek and Phoenician influences to this 'urcypriische nordsyrisch-anatolisch' culture (1933b: 273; cf. 276), but

it still retained its own individuality and character. Survivals of the primitive in modern society (e.g. Gjerstad 1980: 49, 78-80, 110, 138) took on a new ideological significance: they demonstrated in 'concrete and palpable' terms (Thomas 1991: 176) that this original indigenous culture still existed, unaffected by more recent immigrations and influences.

Working and writing in the 1920s and 1930s, Gjerstad was well aware of the power of propaganda. Grigoris, a member of the Greek National Party whom he met in a café in Yialousa, 'spoke about the history of Cyprus and maintained that England should cede Cyprus to Greece because Evagoras had ruled in Salamis in about 400 B.C.' (Gjerstad 1980: 50). Propaganda in the teaching of history in Cypriot schools was one of Storrs's major complaints (Storrs 1945: 467-68; cf. Given 1997b). Gjerstad extended this observation on the role of Greek propaganda to ancient Cyprus, and accused that same king of Salamis, Evagoras I, of using propaganda to maintain his own rule and keep his state independent of Persia (1980: 142). Gjerstad's description of the results of this propaganda on Cypriot society in the fifth century BC could have been written by Storrs about the 1920s and 1930s:

The sad result for Cypriot culture was merely that the political agitation and cultural propaganda made the Cypriots think that they were Greeks and not Cypriots. In this way they lost their sense of nationality and their feeling for the distinctive character of their culture and strove to imitate Greek art instead of preserving their own (Gjerstad 1980: 142-43; cf. 1933b: 280).²

So impressed were the imperialists by this interpretation that both Ronald Storrs (1945: 470) and George Hill (1940: 220) quoted it approvingly.

Two examples from the work of the Swedish Cyprus Expedition illustrate how the need to

establish an authentic, non-Greek Cypriot culture dominated interpretation: Archaic Cypriot sculpture from Ayia Irini, and the palace at Vouni. In both cases, and many others, Gjerstad used artistic style to identify the cultural identity of the material culture he was examining. Style, he claimed, was 'the only criterion of real cultural affinity' (1932: 151; cf. 1980: 116). The Ayia Irini terracotta sculptures from the Archaic period, he noted, had clear affinities with that of North Syria; this could 'be explained correctly only by reference to the fact that the original Cypriots had ethnic characteristics in common with the population of North Syria' (Gjerstad 1980: 116; cf. 1933b: 270). These sculptures are at least 3000 years later than his date for the earliest colonization of the island; but far from contradicting his argument, this is 'a magnificent testimony to the strength displayed by the Cypriot population to assert itself as a cultural factor' (Gjerstad 1980: 117; cf. 1933b: 271). The possibilities of subsequent contact or influence through trade or emulation are suppressed, in favour of the rhetoric of an indigenous, non-Greek Cypriot culture.

The fifth-century BC palace at Vouni was one of the highlights of the Expedition's work in Cyprus. Its two major building periods involved considerable differences of plan. Characteristically, these were interpreted in terms of cultural difference, rather than internal change within the society. Because of the apparent 'megaron' element in the second palace, Gjerstad identified it as 'Greek', and attributed its construction to an 'anti-Persian king' of nearby Marion who belonged to 'the Greek national party' and was put on the throne by Kimon after his capture of the city in 449 BC (1933a: 594). In modern eyes, this argument clearly depends too heavily on the identification of racial characteristics, and Franz Maier has shown that there is

insufficient archaeological evidence to link the construction of the palace to one particular historical event (1985: 36-37).

The first palace was supposedly built by a pro-Persian king in the indigenous Cypriot style (Gjerstad 1933a: 594), with a large central court and a *liwan*, an arrangement where the central room in a row of three opens directly onto a courtyard, without an intervening wall. Gjerstad compared this feature to North Syrian and Anatolian *liwan* houses; because he considered those regions to be the origin of the Cypriot population, he also found examples of *liwan* houses from prehistoric Cyprus (1932: 161). Westholm compared it to the temples in Paphos and Soli, and similarly attributed it to Anatolian predecessors, tracing its development via the Nabataean temple and Paleochristian basilica to the Islamic *medreses* (theological schools) of Turkey (1933: 230-32). For both of them, the most important feature is that it belongs to the authentic indigenous culture of Cyprus. The terminology for this culture was not yet settled, and so there was considerable variety: 'original Cypriote culture-tradition' (Gjerstad 1932: 169); 'original Old-Cypriote tradition of culture' (1933a: 592); 'Old-Cypriote native architectural style' (594); or simply 'urkyprisch' (1933b: 275). This new culture needed a language before it could acquire an authentic name and be recognized as an genuine ethnic group.

Inventing the Eteocypriots

It is time to bring the 'Eteocypriot' language into the picture, as it was at exactly this point in the development of the imperialist discourse that Gjerstad's 'urkyprisch' culture received a name. What follows is a survey of the Eteocypriot language from its distant origins in the 1870s to its coming of age in the 1930s and 1940s. The chronology is critical.

This is more than a descriptive exercise in the history of scholarship; it is the charting of an academic ethnogenesis.

Soon after the decipherment of the Cypriot syllabic script in the 1870s, Clermont-Ganneau noted that there was still a small group of indecipherable inscriptions 'cachant une langue non hellénique' (1876; quoted in Masson 1983: 85). This received little attention until the 1910s, when several more indecipherable inscriptions were found. Two such inscriptions of unknown provenance were discovered in the Ashmolean Museum in 1909 by Richard Meister (ICS 192-93; Meister 1911). These were compared with two more found by Paul Perdrizet at Amathus in 1896 and published in 1914 (ICS 194-95; Vendryes 1914). Reviewing all four inscriptions in 1914, Paul Kretschmer compared some words with early Anatolian languages, particularly Lycian, and claimed on this evidence alone that these inscriptions belonged to the 'vorgriechische' or 'autochthone Bevölkerung von Cypern' (Kretschmer 1914: 260).

For all of this period the city of Amathus had been without hesitation considered to be Phoenician (di Cesnola 1877: 249-51; Myres 1914: xxxix; Jeffery 1918: 255, 424). In 1914 Ernst Sittig published a newly discovered digraph from Amathus (ICS 196), and for the first time suggested that this unknown language might be connected with various literary references attesting to the antiquity of the city of Amathus and the autochthonous character of its inhabitants (Sittig 1914: 1). In keeping with rising anti-Semitism, he denied the Phoenician character of both Amathus and Kition, and claimed his inscription as proof that in the fourth century BC the autochthonous Amathusians spoke an unknown language that was 'probably' pre-Greek (1914: 2). In an excellent demonstration of the working of a factoid (Maier 1985: 32), this 'probably' was dropped by later writers, including Sittig's

reviewer (Kretschmer 1917: 252), and the pre-Greek nature of this fourth-century inscription was taken as fact.

There was still no official term for this language, and 'urkyprisch' (Kretschmer 1917: 252) contended with 'kyprisch-amathusisch' (Sittig 1924: 197; cf. 200-201). Attempts to decipher it noted a few common sequences, particularly *a-na* (Sittig 1924: 197), but failed due to the small number and short length of the inscriptions. Power's attempts to demonstrate that the language was Akkadian (1929) met with a devastating critique from Pedersen (1930) that was generally considered well-deserved; though it did not stop him from repeating his claims, without reference to his critic (Power 1934: 5, 14).

J.L. Myres in 1930 speculated that the inscriptions in an unknown language belonged not to the 'aborigines' of Cyprus, but to the Minoan colonists who had supposedly preceded the Greek-speaking Achaeans (1930: 95). Paul Kretschmer had already compared this language to the 'Eteokretischen' language of Crete (1914: 260). The Eteocretans or 'true Cretans' were actually attested in ancient literature, including Homer (*Odyssey* 19.176). It was Johannes Friedrich in 1932 who used the analogy to coin the term 'Eteo-kyprier', to distinguish the 'Urbevölkerung' of Cyprus from the Greek Cypriots (Friedrich 1932: 49). The racial implications of this are clear: because there is a language, there must be an authentic race, significantly called the 'true Cypriots'. The ethnonym was created first, and the name of the 'Eteocypriot' or 'Eteocyprian' language was a secondary derivation.

It was at this point that the Swedish Cyprus Expedition started publishing its reports and analyses. Gjerstad's theories about an Anatolian 'urkyprisch' population fitted precisely with the linguists' assumptions about the autochthonous pre-Greek character of this handful of inscriptions; both were in keeping

with the prevailing ideology of Western Europe as a whole and colonial Cyprus in particular. The first scholar outside the field of historical linguistics to use the term 'Eteocyprian' was Sir George Hill, in his paper on Amathus designed to demolish the 'Phoenician mirage' (1937: 485). He examined the classical references to the antiquity of Amathus, briefly described the 'Eteocyprian' language 'which these pre-Greek Amathusians spoke' (489), and drew a romanticized picture of Amathus as a pocket of indigenous survivors 'from a hoary antiquity' (Hill 1937: 489; cf. 1940: 53-54, 101).

Even the Philhellene Stanley Casson (1937: v) detected an 'undercurrent' in Cyprus which 'always remains Cypriot' (1937: 1). Although he did not use the term Eteocypriot, he described the undeciphered inscriptions as 'the aboriginal language itself', and advertised it as the language and script of Cypriot (as opposed to Greek) nationalism in the fifth century BC:

The ancient and, by then, characteristically Cypriot script, was relegated for use in a more nationalistic stratum of society, and so favoured by those who kept alive the aboriginal language or wished to write Greek in a nationalistic medium (Casson 1937: 96; cf. 163).

The contemporary political relevance of terms such as 'nationalistic' and 'aboriginal' is clear. By the 1940s the existence of this authentic, pre-Greek ethnic group, which summed up the true characteristics of Cyprus, was undisputed. In 1941 Alfred Westholm found them a characteristic tomb type (Westholm 1941: 53; cf. Gjerstad 1980: 148-49), and in the analytical volume of the Swedish Cyprus Expedition published in 1948 Einar Gjerstad brought all of these strands together. The Eteocypriots were a full ethnic group descended from the pre-Greek Bronze Age inhabitants of Cyprus and speaking a language

probably connected with Asia Minor (Gjerstad 1948: 431). For some time after the end of the Late Bronze Age 'parts of the island still remained entirely Eteocyprian' (429). During the early Iron Age Amathus was 'probably a purely Eteocyprian city and its Eteocyprian character was long preserved' (429). The academic and ideological ethnogenesis had been achieved, and the Eteocypriots were an accepted fact.

The Archaeology of the Eteocypriots

It only remains to examine the archaeological justification for the existence of the Eteocypriots. As an increasing number of archaeologists in the 1990s have been pointing out, there is little secure evidence for their existence as a distinct ethnic group, either in Iron Age Amathus or in Cyprus as a whole (see Given 1991: 185-87). Andres Reyes, in particular, has examined the archaeological and textual evidence for the Eteocypriots, and come to the conclusion that there is no basis for the survival of a distinct, indigenous population in Amathus (1994: 13-17). The main classes of evidence used to establish an Eteocypriot ethnic group are a handful of ancient literary references, the inscriptions and tomb types.

The literary references to an indigenous population in Amathus have been carefully examined by Claude Baurain (1984) and Andres Reyes (1994: 13-15), using considerably more rigorous methods of source criticism than were applied in the 1930s. According to the fourth-century BC historian Theopompus of Chios (FGrHist 115 F 103), the Amathusians were the remnants of those with Kinyras who were driven away by the Greeks with Agamemnon after the Trojan War. In the fourth-century BC coastal description by 'Pseudo-Scylax' (§103), the Amathusians are characterized as 'autochthonous'.

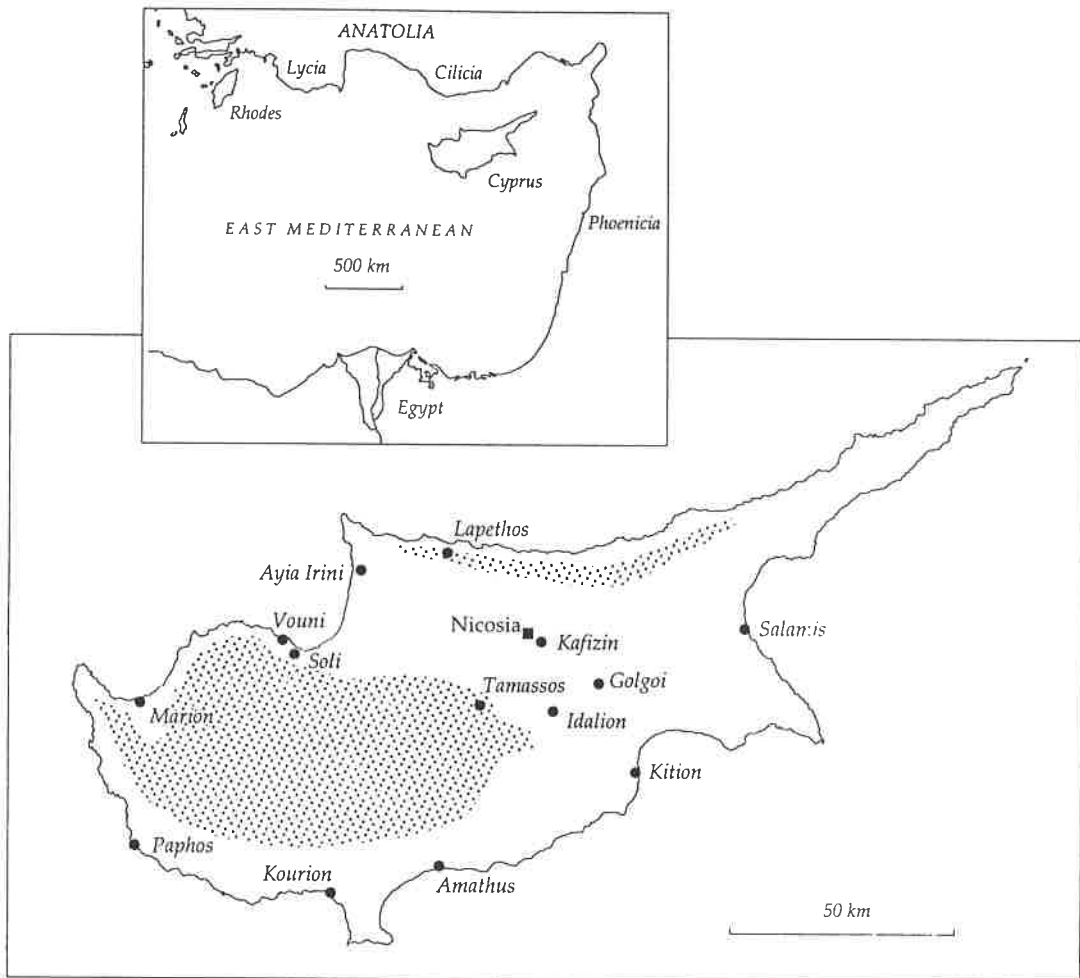


Figure 2. Cyprus and the Eastern Mediterranean

Stephen of Byzantium (*s.v.* Amathous) in the fifth century AD describes Amathus as a 'very old city' which may have taken its name from Amathousa the mother of Kinyras.

Too little is known about the sources of Pseudo-Scylax's and Stephen of Byzantium's brief references for any firm reliance to be put on them; and Theopompus's description is as much mythological as historical. The fourth century BC was the beginning of the age of the aetiological myth, when every city in what was rapidly becoming the Hellenistic world needed a foundation myth to connect them

to the prestigious mythology of Greece. To a visiting Greek writer, the anomaly of Cyprus's peripheral position in the Hellenistic world could best be explained by using the terms of the 'exemplary past' of the Trojan myth cycle (Baurain 1989: 470-71).

As for the inscriptions, there is no doubt that there do exist a few examples of a non-Greek language with characteristic verbal patterns and inflections and perhaps proper names (Masson 1983: 86; Scafa 1996). The main problem is that there are so few inscriptions that definitely belong to this language.

As Reyes comments, 'An unintelligible inscription is not *ipso facto* Eteocypriot', an attitude not always shared by epigraphers working on Cyprus (cf. Bazemore 1992: 63-64). There is a considerable number of syllabic inscriptions not readable as Greek (including many not in Masson's *Inscriptions chypriotes syllabiques*). These may reflect one or more unknown languages, and some may be 'non-sense inscriptions' purely for visual effect. But they cannot be taken as evidence for a specific language, unless they have securely identifiable attributes. Seven texts from Amathus have definite 'Eteocypriot' morphological features (ICS 192-96, 196a, 196e); as do one from Kafizin (Mitford 1980: 44-45), one without provenance (Masson 1988), and one from Abydos in Egypt (ICS 388). There may be more, but these are not certain (see Reyes 1994: 22). Ten short inscriptions do not make an ethnolinguistic group.

There is also a problem with the dating of these inscriptions. By the letter forms of the alphabetic text, the bilingual ICS 196 dates to the second half of the fourth century BC (Masson 1983: 207), and two others from Amathus are also fourth century (ICS 196a, 196e). The Kafizin inscription is late third century BC. No others can be dated securely. As far as the extremely limited evidence goes, then, we are apparently dealing with a single phenomenon restricted to the fourth and third centuries BC. There are no inscriptions between the Late Bronze Age and the fourth century that are securely dateable and securely identifiable as Eteocypriot. This 700-year gap is too long to assume that there is any continuity or 'survival' of the Late Bronze Age language of Cyprus. As Vendryes commented as long ago as 1914, the inscriptions could just as easily be explained by a later group of incomers who temporarily borrowed the existing syllabary (Vendryes 1914: 280). Such was the ideological need in the 1920s and 1930s for a pre-Greek authentically Cypriot native group,

however, that this explanation was ignored, or suppressed.

An apparent peculiarity of Amathus in the Iron Age is the considerable number of tombs of an unusual shape and construction. Most Cypriot tombs of this period consist of a roughly square chamber cut in the rock with a long entrance passage or dromos leading down to it. There are many of these at Amathus, but there are also many 'shaft tombs', where a rectangular shaft is sunk in the rock and roofed with long limestone slabs; access is gained by a much shorter dromos, often at right-angles to the axis of the chamber (Figure 3). When the 26 Iron Age tombs at Amathus excavated by the Swedish Cyprus Expedition were first published, no racial explanation was given for this variation. The differences between the various types, most of which were variations on the shaft tomb, were 'better explained by economic than by chronological and typological reasons' (Gjerstad *et al.* 1935: 140; cf. 138). No mention was made of any racial distinction, and it was noted that the grave goods and burial customs were the same (Gjerstad *et al.* 1935: 139).

In 1941 Alfred Westholm published an article on 'Built tombs in Cyprus' which changed this view. He identified the shaft tombs as older than the rest, mostly because of their typology (1941: 31, 52), and contrasted them with the 'Mycenaean mainland type' with the long narrow dromos (30). Invoking the evidence of the literary references, the supposedly autochthonous language, and George Hill's denial of the Phoenician character of Amathus, he attributed the shaft tombs to the oldest inhabitants of Cyprus (53), in contrast to the 'Mycenaean' tomb type of the Greeks. In 1948 Gjerstad emphasized this typological and racial distinction, which he also detected at Lapethos, and attributed the shaft tombs to the 'Eteocyprians' (Gjerstad 1948: 432).

To modern eyes this distinction smacks of excessive typology and too ready a willingness

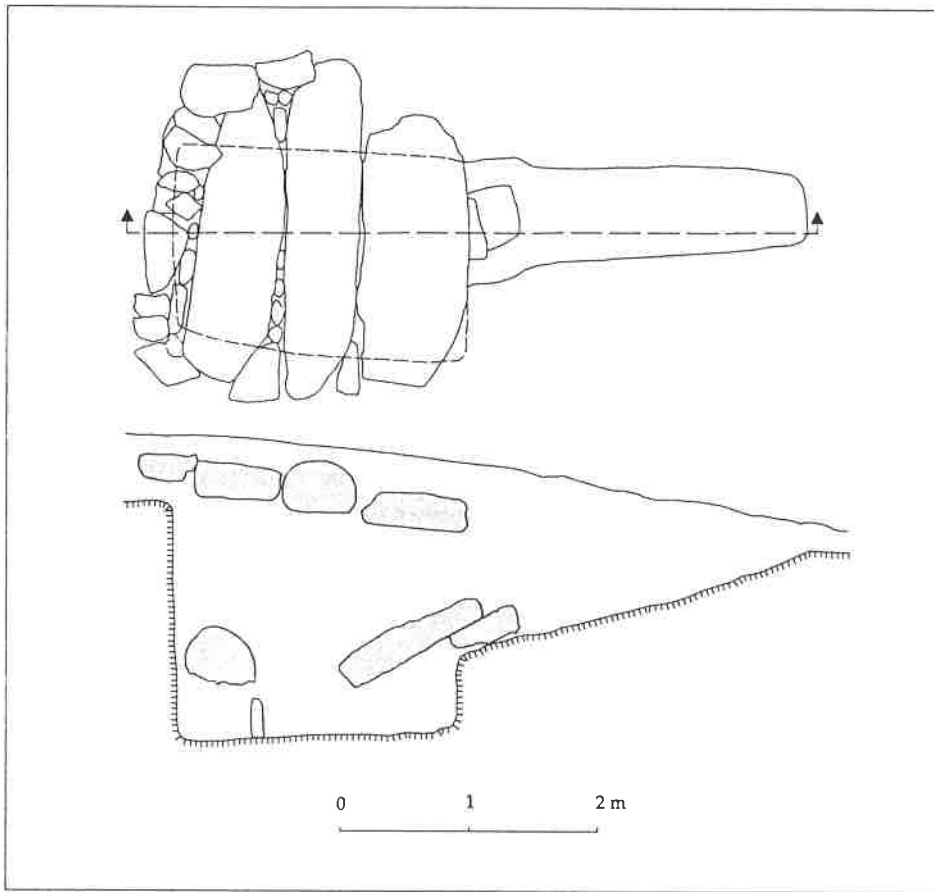


Figure 3. Amathus, Swedish Tomb 15: plan and section
(after Gjerstad *et al.* 1935: 101, fig. 32.1-2)

to give racial rather than internal social explanations for variation. It is also true that several hundred more tombs have been excavated and many to some extent published, so we have much more information than Westholm and Gjerstad did. From cemetery plans (e.g. Karageorghis 1987: 696), it is clear that in a crowded necropolis the shorter shaft graves fitted into a small space much more easily. Given the softness of the yellow *chavara* (secondary limestone) into which the tombs are cut, it is necessary to go very deep to have a cave-type chamber with a natural rock roof.

For a poorer burial, it was much easier and cheaper to sink a comparatively shallow shaft and to roof it with slabs of hard grey limestone.

The much greater number of tombs now investigated confirm what Gjerstad had originally noted in 1935: that there is no variation whatsoever in grave goods and burial customs between the shaft tombs and the chamber tombs. Typology alone is insufficient for the display of ethnic difference, particularly when the outward appearance of the two tomb types would have been identical; the differ-

ences were the result of social stratification, visible from the depth and workmanship of the tomb entrance, and the presence or absence of masonry.

Tomb types are only one aspect of material culture, and the Eteocypriot theory has never extended to the more general material culture of Amathus. During the Iron Age there is no set of distinctions that might imply the existence of two or more ethnic groups; and there is no distinction that sets off Amathus from the rest of Cyprus. This is the case right from the beginning of the Iron Age: Maria Iakovou notes that from the first foundation of Amathus in the 11th century BC, 'ceramics, burial customs and burial goods are indistinguishable from the homogeneous culture of Early Iron Age Cyprus' (Iakovou 1994: 156; cf. Karageorghis and Iakovou 1990: 98). If this is the case in the 11th century BC, how can a few fourth-century BC inscriptions constitute a 'survival' from the Late Bronze Age?

The same applies to the Archaic and Classical periods. Amathus had its distinctive characteristics, such as a predilection for representing the local goddess in the form of the Egypto-Phoenician Hathor, and an unusually centralized city-scape. But these are no more than the expected regional variation between the different city-kingdoms of Cyprus, with their different environments, trading contacts and internal dynamics. In general terms Amathus belonged to the same cultural *koine* as the rest of Iron Age Cyprus, and there is no systematic set of displayed distinctions which might signal a separate ethnic group.

Conclusion: The End of the Eteocypriots

The aim of this article has been twofold: to explore the workings of imperialist archaeology, and to demonstrate that the ancient 'Eteocypriots' are a 20th-century myth. This supposed authentic, indigenous ethnic group was

the offspring of official imperialist manipulation and prevailing trends in academic fashion. As both of these were influenced by the same racial essentialism and hierarchization, the relationship was a highly incestuous one. Now, however, we may have achieved 'the end of the Eteocypriots', by which I mean the end of a spurious authenticity created by British imperialism to combat Greek Cypriot nationalism. One hopes it will not take another fire to signal the demise of this remnant of imperialist ideology.

What about the inscriptions? After his review of the evidence for the existence of the Eteocypriots, Andres Reyes comes to the conclusion that it is best 'to restrict the use of the term "Eteocypriot" to the still undeciphered language in which a small number of syllabic inscriptions from the island are written' (Reyes 1994: 13). With the power of romantic nationalism still very much with us, however, it is too easy to assume that where there is a language there is also a people. I suggest that 'Eteocypriot' should be used only for the ideological creation of the 1930s. It would be more appropriate to refer to the inscriptions as 'UCS' or 'Undeciphered Cypriot Syllabic'.

It is worth adding, by way of a coda, that this imperialist attempt to deflect Greek nationalism in Cyprus towards an invented 'Cypriot patriotism' was a complete failure. Throughout the campaign for *enosis* with Greece, Greek Cypriots refused to believe that they were cultural hybrids or primitive, indigenous barbarians. The only people that the imperialists managed to convince were themselves, and their supporters: the archaeologists.

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About the Author

Michael Given is Honorary Research Fellow in the Department of Archaeology, University of Glasgow. His research interests include cultural identity in Iron Age Cyprus, the ideology of imperialism and nationalism in the 19th and 20th centuries AD, and landscape archaeology. He is Field Director of the Sydney Cyprus Survey Project, and has conducted field survey and excavation in Cyprus, Greece and Turkey. Recent publications include a co-authored volume on British colonial architecture in Cyprus, and an article in the *Journal of Mediterranean Studies* on nationalist and imperialist school architecture in colonial Cyprus. E-mail address: m.given@archaeology.arts.gla.ac.uk

Notes

1. References prefixed 'SA1' refer to unpublished Government documents preserved in the State Archives, Nicosia. 'Red' refers to the page number of the correspondence section of the minute paper. The copyright of all this material remains with the Government of Cyprus.
2. Gjerstad's *Sekler och Dagar* (1993c) was updated when translated as *Ages and Days* (1980). Much of it had already been translated into German for *Die Antike* (Gjerstad 1933b). References to this German article, as well as to *Ages and Days*, are given to demonstrate that the ideological context of these quotations is 1933, not 1980.

References

Special abbreviations:

- AR *Annual Report of the Government of Cyprus*
 ICS *Inscriptions chypriotes syllabiques* (see Masson 1983)
 SA1 Unpublished documents from the Cyprus State Archives, Nicosia (see Note 1)

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