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Late Medieval Cypriot Tombstones in the Colonial Period: Between the Protection of Medieval Cultural Heritage and its Political Instrumentalization

A focal point on the crossroads of the eastern Mediterranean, Cyprus has been the object of long-lasting territorial disputes with roots going back to the Middle Ages. Until the last quarter of the twelfth century, Cyprus was a Byzantine possession. In 1191, it was conquered by King Richard I (the Lionheart) during the Third Crusade, then sold to the Knights Templar before being transferred to the dispossessed king of Jerusalem, Guy of Lusignan, whose origins can be traced to the French region of Poitou. The Lusignan dynasty would dominate Cyprus for almost three hundred years until 1489, when the Venetians officially took control of the island. In their turn, the Ottomans conquered Cyprus in 1571 and ruled it until the Congress of Berlin in 1878, when the island was handed over to British administration. Formally annexed to Great Britain in 1914, Cyprus was declared a British Crown Colony in 1924 and gained independence only in 1960 after a turbulent period of revolts against the colonial presence between the 1930s and the 1950s.

This brief summary of successive foreign dominions over Cyprus between the Middle Ages and the modern era opens up a series of questions concerning the intersection of colonialism, power, legitimacy, and identity that bear upon the study of medieval Cypriot heritage. Consequently, our approach to the histories of Cypriot tomb sculpture is shaped by postcolonial discourse.¹ Using both edited and archival material, it is our goal to analyze, within the context of colonial policies in the Eastern Mediterranean, the role played by European intellectuals between the mid-nineteenth and mid-twentieth centuries in the recording, relocation, preservation, and museumization of tombstones from the Lusignan kingdom (Fig. 10.1).

Cyprus offers a privileged postcolonial case study because it saw colonial administration twice in its history: the first time under the Venetians and for a second, modern period, under British rule (although Cyprus was then also the target of French

¹ See, for example, François Pouillon, “Orientalism, Dead or Alive? A French History,” in *After Orientalism. Critical Perspectives on Western Agency and Eastern Re-appropriations*, ed. Pouillon and Jean-Claude Vatin (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 3–17, at 9–12.

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Fig. 10.1: Funerary slab of Simone de Gibelet in the Church of Our Lady Angeloktisti at Kiti (Larnaca). Photo: Eva Avril, GRAPH-EAST, 2021. Reproduced by kind permission of the Department of Antiquities, Cyprus.

colonial aspirations). For Lusignan Cyprus, however, the label “colonial” is inappropriate. While it is true that the Franks constituted a socially and politically dominant class, they were indigenous to the island—most were born and spent their whole lives there—and were not dependent on any external authority. It is all the more significant, then, that the modern colonial powers would endeavor to buttress their legitimacy by evoking, among other things, the precolonial medieval heritage. British rule, the focus of our discussion, gave impetus to the protection of this heritage in the period between the First and Second World Wars. The British use of Cypriot heritage was directed against both local ethnic communities, who were indifferent to the medieval monuments, and against the efforts of other colonial powers, notably France and Italy, who criticized the cultural policy of Great Britain in order to consolidate their position on the island.

The modern assimilation of Cyprus to the West was studded with Orientalist elements, as can be seen, for example, in excavation photographs of Gothic monuments flanked by palm trees surrounded by men wearing turbans and traditional outfits (Fig. 10.2).



Fig. 10.2: Excavation in 1901 at the Franciscan convent in Nicosia. The slab is now kept in the Holy Cross Church in Nicosia. Photo: Camille Enlart © Ministry of Culture (France), Médiathèque du patrimoine et de la photographie, diffusion RMN-GP.

In the same vein, the islands' supposed decadence was blamed on the interference of "non-Western" ethnic groups (foremost the Greeks) or rival powers (such as the Venetians). Postcolonial historiography has highlighted how this process also downplayed and even suppressed the multi-layered nature of the island's society in the Middle Ages (while Greeks then constituted the majority of the population, other ethnic and religious groups exercised *de facto* political control). If Cyprus was part of the broad phenomenon of nineteenth- and twentieth-century Anglo-French Orientalism, it did not always comfortably fit ideas of exoticism or provide the haunted memories and landscapes generally at the core of Orientalism.² In fact, it could not do so—precisely because the colonialists emphasized the island's Western medieval past. That perspective also explains why scholarly and antiquarian efforts from the nineteenth into the

² Niki Sioki, "Posters of Cyprus: Promoting the Colony during the Interwar Period," in *Colonial Cyprus: A Cultural History*, ed. Maria Hadjiathanasiou, Andreas Karyos, and Emiliou Solomou (London: Bloomsbury, 2024).

twentieth centuries focused on the preservation and the museumization of Cypriot funerary monuments. As will be argued here, these actions that endeavored to save and valorize Cyprus's artistic patrimony were shaped both by the individual actions of certain scholars and by political goals defined from a Western colonial perspective.

Growing Interest in Cypriot Funerary Art

The beginning of colonial interest in Cyprus's tombstones cannot be divorced from the ideological context and the broader cultural environment of the Victorian era in Britain and the Second Empire in France. In both countries, a growing number of intellectuals were engaged in the revalorization of medieval heritage. Britain's initial drive to take hold of Cyprus was fed, among other things, by the Romantic myth built around the crusading Richard I, who was believed to have been a courageous, courteous, and just sovereign. The "chivalric revival," which took place in the first half of the nineteenth century and saw Sir Walter Scott's literary works at its epicenter, played a major role in this process of creating influential historic models and historicizing images.³

The attention to tombstones can be related to the nostalgia nineteenth-century European scholars felt for the loss of equivalent medieval burial monuments in their own countries. Those had largely been destroyed during the previous centuries, whether in the aftermath of the Protestant Reformation, as casualties of French Revolutionary iconoclasm, or as the victims of Baroque and later redesigns.⁴ The antiquarians at the heart of our analysis participated in the thriving field of antiquarian studies, which, since its foundations in the sixteenth century, had been devoted to genealogy, heraldry, and other aspects of the lives of people to whom these scholars felt emotionally connected in terms of ancestry and heritage.⁵ But it was the development of archaeology (and anthropology) within the context of the European colonial enterprise that kindled nineteenth-century interest in ancient and medieval Cypriot monuments. They now entered the realm of archaeological expeditions as well as of competitions in historical writing organized by learned institutions such as the French Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres.

3 Peter W. Edbury, *The Kingdom of Cyprus and the Crusades 1191–1374* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 11–12; Andrekos Varnava, *British Imperialism in Cyprus, 1878–1959: The Inconsequential Possession* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009), 45–47.

4 Philip Lindley, *Tomb Destruction and Scholarship: Medieval Monuments in Early Modern England* (Donington: Shaun Tyas, 2007), 53–137.

5 Lindley, *Tomb Destruction*, 53–137; Robert Marcoux, "L'espace, le monument et l'image du mort au Moyen Âge: Une enquête anthropologique sur les tombeaux médiévaux de la Collection Gaignières" (PhD diss., University of Laval and University of Burgundy, 2013), 13–31.

France's interest in Cyprus was exacerbated by the religious uncertainty in which the Christian population of the eastern Mediterranean lived; that modern political dimension was projected onto the history of the Crusader states. The study of the Crusades was well established by the nineteenth century, but Louis de Mas Latrie (1815–97) stands out. Although he went to Cyprus only once, in late 1845 as part of a more extended journey to territories that once made up the Latin East, he nourished a long-lasting interest in the island focused on geography, archaeology, and epigraphy. During fieldwork carried out during his stay, Mas Latrie met Marcello Cerruti, the consular secretary to Cyprus for King Charles Albert of Sardinia from the House of Savoy. As early as 1845, this Genoese functionary recorded in a manuscript some French inscriptions found on local tombstones (mainly from Nicosia), accompanying them with a series of drawings. His booklet represented the very first attempt to collect the traces of a heritage that was, in his words, at risk of being destroyed.⁶ Yet Cerruti showed little interest in the Venetian or Genoese tombstones; his attention was monopolized by funerary monuments with French inscriptions, perhaps because of his friendship with Mas Latrie.

Cyprus's medieval past also attracted the attention of the French who lived on, or traveled to, the island. An example is the so-called Phoenician expedition in 1860–61. This French field trip to the eastern Mediterranean aimed to uncover the Phoenician heritage and culminated with the discovery of the large Amathus stone vase, now in the Louvre.⁷ Along with ancient finds, some of the earliest medieval Cypriot tombstones, discovered in a cemetery near Limassol, were also transported to France, where they are still housed in Paris's Musée de Cluny (Fig. 10.3).

The decision to include Cyprus in the original program of the expedition was due to a young French archeologist, Sosthène Grasset, who was living there and who wanted to ensure that France would collect these hitherto unknown funerary slabs. Therefore, he brought them to the attention of Baron Emmanuel Guillaume-Rey, a prominent French Orientalist and archaeologist of the Crusades who was then editing and updating the book on the families of Outremer that the pioneering seventeenth-century historian Du Cange had left unfinished. A few decades later, the art historian, archaeologist, and collector Camille Enlart (1862–1927) mounted another mission to Cyprus. His publication of 1899, *L'art gothique et la Renaissance en Chypre* (Gothic art and the Renaissance in Cyprus), aimed to show the influence of French Gothic art abroad.⁸ In it, Enlart also reported that, according to some villagers, several slabs had been removed from a church near Limassol in order to be sold to a Frenchman inter-

⁶ Piacenza, Biblioteca Comunale Passerini-Landi, Ms. Com. 14, fols. 4r–5v. María Villano is preparing an edition of this unpublished manuscript.

⁷ Inv. AO 22897.

⁸ See also Camille Enlart, *Les monuments des croisés dans le royaume de Jérusalem: Architecture religieuse et civile*, 2 vols. (Paris: Genthner, 1925–28).



Fig. 10.3: Funerary slabs of Ourri de Brie and Jacques de Sur, transported to France in 1866–67 and now in the Musée de Cluny in Paris. Photo: Camille Enlart © Ministry of Culture (France), Médiathèque du patrimoine et de la photographie, diffusion RMN-GP.

ested in their inscriptions. He believed that these were the tombstones that had been discovered in 1865 and transported to the Louvre in the following years.⁹

French archaeological expeditions in Cyprus were facilitated by the presence of fellow countrymen who served as consuls and by a thriving community of compatriots. Edmond-Clément-Marie Duthoit (1837–89) was an architect and disciple of Viollet-le-Duc who went in May 1865 to Cyprus to organize the removal of the Amathus vase. From his correspondence, we learn how Western European intellectuals viewed the Turkish and Greek inhabitants of Cyprus in the nineteenth-century colonial context, since he bluntly accused them of degrading the island's "Latin" character.¹⁰ Similarly, Mas Latrie condemned the fanaticism and administrative incapacity of the Ottomans, encouraging them to leave if they could not abide by the principles of fair-

⁹ Camille Enlart, *L'art gothique et la Renaissance en Chypre* (Paris: E. Leroux, 1899), 2:454–56; Louis de Mas Latrie, *L'île de Chypre, sa situation présente et ses souvenirs du moyen âge* (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1879), 390n1.

¹⁰ Jacques Foucart-Borville, "La correspondance chypriote d'Edmond Duthoit (1862 et 1865)," *Cahiers du Centre d'Études Chypriotes* 4 (1985): 3–60, at 23, 44, 53 (hereafter cited as CCEC); Enlart, *L'art gothique*, 2:487.

ness that the British had (supposedly) introduced.¹¹ Nicolas Iorga, a Romanian historian studying in Paris (where, in 1896, he wrote a thesis on Philippe de Mézières, a crusading soldier who became chancellor to Peter of Lusignan), considered Cyprus as a continuation of the Kingdom of Jerusalem, while several of his publications recalled how the Crusades were a larger French-initiated enterprise.¹² By placing Cyprus firmly within their nation's sphere of cultural influence, nineteenth- and early twentieth-century French narratives claimed the right to take care of the island's cultural heritage, even if it had come under British administration.

The supposed links between the Crusades and modern France had emerged in the wake of Napoleon's Egyptian campaign. Furthermore, from the 1830s onward, the romantic image of Cyprus as a medieval kingdom located in the "exotic" eastern Mediterranean under Lusignan rule served France's colonial policy well.¹³ Since the French and English were competing for control of the entire region in the context of a decaying Ottoman Empire, Mas Latrie's work contributed to the French cause, laying claim to Cyprus's crusader past for the benefit of his nation. After the Congress of Berlin in 1878, which gave the island to the British, a different trope was introduced to rationalize European dominance in the Middle East: that of virtuous rulers committed to educating local communities against the injustices committed by previous, non-European (meaning Ottoman) oppressors.¹⁴ Claude Conder, a lieutenant colonel, explorer, antiquarian, and surveyor for the Palestine Exploration Fund in the 1870s, claimed in his history of the region under Frankish rule that "the kingdom of Jerusalem was the model of just and moderate rule, such as we boast to have given to India, under somewhat similar conditions."¹⁵ Mas Latrie seems to have shared this opinion; even if he regretted that Cyprus was not under French control, he did not hesitate to note the beneficial effects of the political integration of the island into a European, Christian, liberal, and just state. Western Orientalist imagery was equally entrenched in European representations of Cyprus. The exotic element is pervasive in Duthoit's correspondence, but it also crops up in Enlart's scientific work. Much like the excavation photograph (see Fig. 10.2), his panoramic drawings of medieval Cypriot monuments feature, ostensibly for scale, "exotic" vegetation and human figures.¹⁶

Mas Latrie likewise stressed the French character of Lusignan Cyprus. It was only in 1879, one year after Cyprus was ceded to Great Britain, that he used the material he

11 Mas Latrie, *L'île de Chypre*, 81–82, 112–15.

12 Nicolas Iorga, *France de Chypre* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1931), 29; Iorga, *La France de Terre Sainte: Considérations synthétiques* (Bucharest: Datina Românească, 1934), 100.

13 Angel Nicolaou-Konnari, "La France de Chypre" de Louis de Mas Latrie," *CCEC* 43 (2013): 505–21, at 507.

14 Nicolaou-Konnari, "La France de Chypre," 517.

15 Claude R. Conder, *The Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem, 1099 to 1291 A.D.* (London: Committee of the Palestine Exploration Fund, 1897), 427–28.

16 Lucie Bonato, "Chypre, Cyprus, Zypern, Cipro, Cyprien, Κύπρος . . . : Les voyageurs européens à Chypre au XIX^e siècle," *CCEC* 42 (2012): 25–86, at 75–76.

had collected across the island for the publication of his most important work, *L'île de Chypre, sa situation présente et ses souvenirs du moyen âge* (The island of Cyprus: its present situation and its medieval traces). Although this author claimed that the French expeditions to the island were motivated by purely scientific purposes, a certain bias is nonetheless evident in his discussion. Several features make that clear. One is the exclusive focus on the Lusignan kingdom, which he assimilated into the French past. Another is the selective use of material related to the Venetians. For example, Mas Latrie published documents that feature the complaints of the last queen of Cyprus, Caterina Cornaro (1454–1510), about the interference of Venetian officers in the kingdom, thus indirectly blaming the Italians for its decline. In another work, published a few years before the annexation of Savoy by France in 1860, Mas Latrie reproduced documents about the relations between Savoy and Cyprus (through the marriages of Anne of Cyprus and Queen Charlotte of Cyprus), which led him to conclude that the rights of the House of Savoy over Cyprus were better established than those of other claimants.¹⁷ Finally, he also discarded the one source that would have provided a key Greek Cypriot perspective about the Lusignan period: the *Chronicle* by Leontios Makhairas written in the early fifteenth century. In short, the French historian tried to exalt the Frankish achievements and monuments by, on the one hand, diminishing the intellectual and artistic contributions of the Greeks and, on the other, by depicting the Venetian era as a period of decline.

That Mas Latrie did not read Greek further hampered a more accurate historical picture of Cypriot culture; as did the fact that there were fewer sources for the Venetian period than for the Frankish kingdom.¹⁸ Furthermore, Mas Latrie neglected Latin funerary inscriptions that referred to individuals originating from Venice and other late medieval Italian city-states because they did not fit the nationalistic narrative he wanted to create. He did the same with inscriptions in Greek, knowing that they, too, would reveal a mixture of different communities in Lusignan society. Since French was the linguistic pivot of Orientalists' interest, it was important to underline the difference between the Cypriot kingdom and the other Crusader states. Although the language used by the ruling class in all these territories was essentially French, from the fourteenth century onward the social dynamics existing in Cyprus favored a progressive mixing of the French-speaking element with the Italian- and Greek-speaking

¹⁷ Louis de Mas Latrie, *Histoire de l'île de Chypre sous le règne des princes de la maison de Lusignan* (Paris: Imprimerie Impériale, 1852–55), 2:viii, 3:iv, 151–52, 557–89. The efforts of the House of Savoy to restore Latin rule in Cyprus continued until the first half of the eighteenth century, as documented in Turin, Archivio di Stato di Torino, Sezione Corte, Scritture riguardanti il Regno di Cipro, il Principato d'Acaia, il viaggio di Levante in Materie politiche per rapporto all'interno [Inventario n. 107], Regno di Cipro, Mazzo 1, 2, 3 and Mazzo 1 d'addizione.

¹⁸ Nicolaou-Konnari, "La France de Chypre," 511–18; Benjamin Arbel, "Entre mythe et histoire: La légende noire de la domination vénitienne à Chypre," *Études balkaniques* 5 (1998): 81–107, at 83–85, 106–7.

ones.¹⁹ The multilingual character of Cypriot society is confirmed by tombstone inscriptions, such as the slab of a knight (likely from the House de Verny, d. 1337) in French (Fig. 10.4a), the slab of Jacques Urry (d. 1457) in Latin (Fig. 10.4b), and finally, the slab of Akyline Flangis (d. 1556) in Greek (Fig. 10.4c).

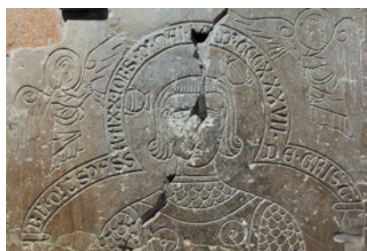


Fig. 10.4a: Funerary slab of a knight (detail). Limassol, Cyprus Medieval Museum. Photo: Eva Avril, GRAPH-EAST, 2021. Reproduced by kind permission of the Department of Antiquities, Republic of Cyprus.



Fig. 10.4b: Funerary slab of Jacques Urry (detail). Limassol, Cyprus Medieval Museum. Photo: Eva Avril, GRAPH-EAST, 2021. Reproduced by kind permission of the Department of Antiquities, Republic of Cyprus.



Fig. 10.4c: Funerary slab of Akyline Flangis (detail). Limassol, Cyprus Medieval Museum. Photo: Eva Avril, GRAPH-EAST, 2021. Reproduced by kind permission of the Department of Antiquities, Republic of Cyprus.

If Mas Latrie's biases contributed to the falsification of Cyprus's medieval history, the same can be said about Greek historians who adopted the same historiographic stance, except that it was the Franks of the medieval period who were the target of their hostile attitude. Their accounts focused on the enslavement of the Greeks by the foreigners who had taken over the island, thereby assimilating the rule of medieval Franks and Venetians to the modern British empire.

¹⁹ Evangelia Skoufari, *Cipro veneziana (1473–1571): Istituzioni e culture nel regno della Serenissima* (Rome: Viella, 2011), 148–59.

The Legislative Framework for Antiquities in Cyprus and the Birth of Museums in the British Period

As early as 1845, Marcello Cerruti drew attention to the unscrupulous management of funerary monuments current in his time. Foreign diplomats seem to have been especially at fault and Cerruti reported that a group formed by two consuls, a chancellor, and some merchants had shattered medieval slabs in search of hoped-for treasures. He provided another interesting detail that might shed some light on the formation of a legislative framework for antiquities found on Cyprus. After a series of misfortunes, including the uncontrolled reuse and unauthorized transportation of medieval tombstones, Cerruti prompted the Turkish ruler, Hassan Pasha, to write a notice forbidding the reemployment of stones with inscriptions or sculpted carvings in construction projects across the island.²⁰

On an official level, until 1869 the management of cultural heritage was regulated by imperial *firman*s (permits) granted to private individuals. Gradually, the Ottomans developed more comprehensive regulations for the protection of antiquities. These culminated in the Antiquities Law of 1874, which was expressly designed to retain finds made in the Ottoman Empire during archaeological and artistic discoveries. Although the British nominally followed this law once they took control over Cyprus, they never adequately implemented it. For example, when the Cyprus Museum was established in 1882, it benefited only minimally from previous excavations because of the still prevalent and widespread practice of private digs. Only with the mandate of Sir Henry Ernest Gascoyne Bulwer, the British High Commissioner to Cyprus between 1886 and 1892, did a shift occur. As the ex officio chairman of the Museum Commission, Bulwer decided in 1887 to restrict excavation permits only to scientific institutions.

Bulwer also provided a significant contribution to the study, revalorization, and political use of the tombstones to promote the British agenda in the early days of their rule in Cyprus. In 1887, he and his private secretary, James Tankerville Chamberlayne, visited the Omerghie Mosque (formerly an Augustinian monastery) in Nicosia.²¹ After seeing the many inscriptions on tombstones embedded in the floor, the governor urged his secretary to transcribe some of them. Chamberlayne then contacted Mas Latrie, who encouraged him to systematically record inscriptions found within Nicosian churches, aware of the difficulties that relocating them to a safer and more suitable place for display would involve.²² In 1894, Chamberlayne, a trained soldier who in those years served as a police commander in Cyprus, published *Lacrimae Nicossiensenses*

²⁰ Piacenza, Biblioteca Comunale Passerini-Landi, Ms. Com. 14., fols. 61v, 62v.

²¹ Thomas Kiely and Robert S. Merrillees, "Tankerville James Chamberlayne: A Singular Pioneer in the Revealing of Cyprus' Past," *CCEC* 51 (2021): 183–221.

²² Chamberlayne, Letter to Mas Latrie, 26 June 1888, Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Ms. NAF 24165, fol. 80r.

(Nicosian tears), the first volume of which was entirely devoted to medieval tombstones found in that city.²³ The project was not limited to collecting and transcribing funerary inscriptions since Chamberlayne also integrated information about the Frankish families mentioned on the slabs. Written in French, published in Paris, and dedicated to Mas Latrie, *Lacrimae Nicossiensēs*'s intended primary audience clearly was not British, even if French was a well-known language among members of the cultural elite. It is notable that the slabs were treated with striking accuracy thanks to a large number of detailed drawings made by W. Williams, District Engineer of Cyprus. His illustration of the 1331 slab of Marguerite d'Escaface is much more precise than the ones Cerruti and Mas Latrie provided in their works (Fig. 10.5a–d).

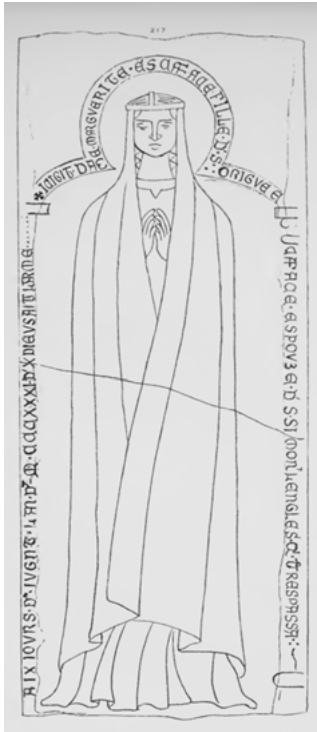


Fig. 10.5a: W. Williams, Drawing of the funerary slab of Marguerite d'Escaface. Photo from Chamberlayne, *Lacrimae Nicossiensēs*, 1894.



Fig. 10.5b: Funerary slab of Marguerite d'Escaface. Larnaca, Larnaca Castle. Photo: Eva Avril, GRAPH-EAST, 2021. Reproduced by kind permission of the Department of Antiquities, Republic of Cyprus.

²³ Tankerville J. Chamberlayne, *Lacrimae Nicossiensēs: Recueil d'inscriptions funéraires, la plupart françaises existant encore dans l'île de Chypre* (Paris: Quantin, 1894). Although a second volume was planned, it never appeared.



Fig. 10.5c: Marcello Cerruti, Drawing of the funerary slab of Marguerite d'Escaface. Piacenza, Biblioteca Comunale Passerini-Landi, Ms. Com. 14, fol. 30f, foglio 5, n°7. Photo: Piacenza, Biblioteca Comunale Passerini-Landi.

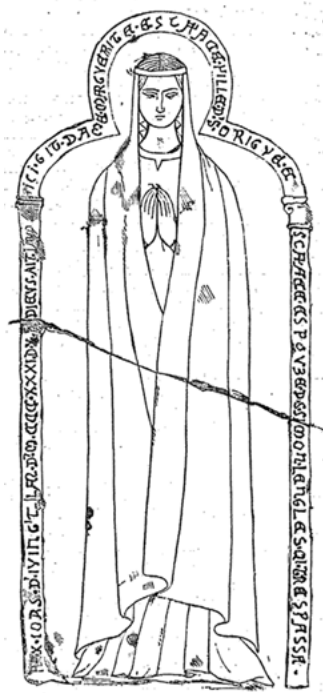


Fig. 10.5d: Louis de Mas Latrie, Drawing of the funerary slab of Marguerite d'Escaface. Photo from "Monuments français de l'île de Chypre," *Le magasin pittoresque* 15 (1847).

Along with the transcriptions and the references to heraldry, Chamberlayne gave the precise location of each stone he had identified in churches and mosques. There is no question that his book was the most important publication on Cypriot funerary monuments at the time. Not only did it draw public attention to the island's medieval remains but it also reinforced the interpretive model that gave Cyprus a firm place in Western history. The tombstones described in its pages revealed to a general readership evidence of specific ruling families associated with the Crusades, European history in the late Middle Ages, and, in particular, the expansion of Westerners into the East during this period. At the same time, the work advanced the connection between heraldry, genealogy, and funerary monuments. Although this was the norm for nine-

teenth-century antiquarians, the combination of these evidentiary strands still earned Chamberlayne the label “the Genealogist.”²⁴

Chamberlayne’s work is important in other respects too. Although the British held the same generally negative view about Cypriots as did other Westerners, *Lacrimae Nicossienses* made extensive reference to the kindness of the local population and the assistance Greek, Turkish, and Armenian laypeople and government officials had provided. In particular, Chamberlayne mentioned the help of religious authorities who were in charge of the churches and mosques in which the tombstones were found. Even more important, he supported the decisions taken under Bulwer’s mandate for the preservation of ancient monuments, though he recognized their limits (and it would take until 1905 for the first Antiquities Law of the colonial era to be enacted by the British).²⁵ According to this law, “antiquities” deserving protection were defined as all works from prehistoric times until the conquest of the island by the Ottomans in 1571. The law therefore extended to any monument related to the medieval tombstones, whether it was a full architectural memorial or sculpted stone that originally belonged to such a memorial, a tomb, or an inscription.²⁶ Despite providing a framework for the protection of ancient monuments, Gothic cathedrals, and other medieval Latin churches (which had been converted into mosques), such matters remained under the control of the Muslim Council of Turkish Commissioners for Charitable and Religious Purposes (Evcaf) or the Greek Orthodox bishop.²⁷

Chamberlayne also stands out from other amateur scholars and archaeologists of the period in that his work always remained within the bounds of legality. As with everyone else involved in the discovery of antiquities, he did have his own collection and traded in objects. But the list of items in his possession during his stay in Kyrenia in 1906, which he had to submit to authorities in accordance with the requirements of

24 Despina Pilides, *George Jeffery: His Diaries and the Ancient Monuments of Cyprus* (Nicosia: Department of Antiquities, Ministry of Communications and Works, 2009), 2: 595; Georges Jeffery, *A Description of the Historic Monuments of Cyprus* (Nicosia: Government Printing Office, 1918), 437.

25 Chamberlayne, *Lacrimae Nicossienses*, 7–8.

26 For the Antiquities Law of 1905, see Supplement to *The Cyprus Gazette* no. 865, 19 May 1905, 5626–36, clauses 1.2 (2–4), 3.28. The next Antiquities Law, promulgated in 1935, broadened the definition of antiquities to include objects produced before 1700 C.E. See “A Law to Consolidate and Amend the Law Relating to Antiquities,” Supplement no. 1 to *The Cyprus Gazette* no. 2441, 10 May 1935, 315–30, at 315, clause 2.

27 One these issues, see Nicholas Stanley-Price, “The Ottoman Law on Antiquities (1874) and the Founding of the Cyprus Museum,” in *Cyprus in the 19th Century A.D: Fact, Fancy and Fiction*, ed. Veronica Tatton-Brown (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2001), 267–75; Charlotte M. Roueché, “The Prehistory of the Cyprus Department of Antiquities,” *British School at Athens Studies* 8 (2001): 155–66; Polina Nicolaou, “The Diaspora of Cypriot Antiquities and the British Museum (1860–1900)” (PhD diss., University of Exeter, 2013), 114–43, 303–8; Robert S. Merrillees and Thomas Kiely, “The Archaeological Interests of Samuel Brown, Government Engineer, and his Circle of Acquaintances in Late 19th-Century Cyprus,” *CCEC* 42 (2012): 245–72; Anja Ulbrich and Thomas Kiely, “Britain and the Archaeology of Cyprus: I: The Long 19th Century,” *CCEC* 42 (2012): 305–56.

the 1905 Antiquities Law, reveals that Chamberlayne's aim was mainly to describe and preserve the objects, not to accumulate them as collectibles.²⁸ Also in contrast to many of his contemporaries, he seems to have had a sincere academic interest in the history and art of Cyprus.²⁹ In that, he is comparable to the English architect George Jeffery, trained in the tradition of John Ruskin and an active member of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) founded in 1877. Between 1908 and 1935, Jeffery served as the Curator of Ancient Monuments of Cyprus. As early as 1901, he expressed the hope that the huge body of medieval fragments that Chamberlayne had collected could form the core of a museum.³⁰ The project was eventually completed in 1928 in a building near the Cathedral of St. Sophia in Nicosia, which came to be known as the Lapidary Museum (Fig. 10.6).³¹

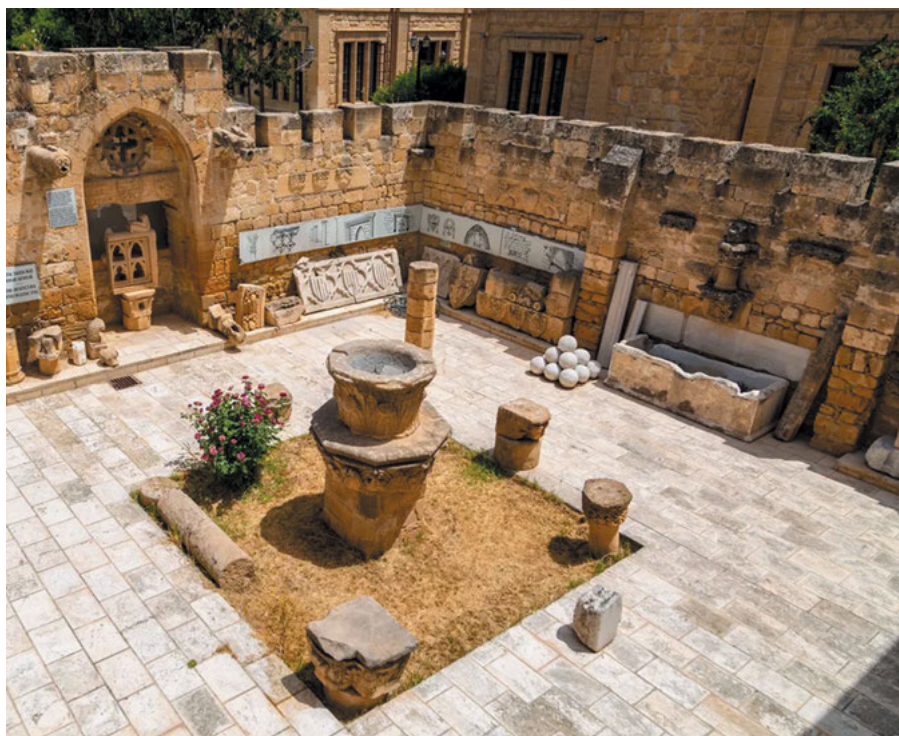


Fig. 10.6: Nicosia, Lapidary Museum in 2019. Photo: Marco Simoni.

28 Kiely and Merrillees, "Tankerville James Chamberlayne," 196–97.

29 Kiely and Merrillees, "Tankerville James Chamberlayne," 197–99, 210–11.

30 Pilides, *George Jeffery*, 672.

31 Pilides, *George Jeffery*, 38, 674.

Chamberlayne's commitment to the systematic study of tombstones was directly linked to the lack of a place for their preservation and display.³² After the publication of his work, he seems to have taken advantage of his authority by using fragments of tombstones for the decoration of a chapel dedicated to St. Elizabeth of Hungary that he had founded in 1907 as a private oratory in Kyrenia (Fig. 10.7).³³



Fig. 10.7: Kyrenia, St. Elizabeth Chapel in 2019, with the slabs from Chamberlayne's collection embedded in the walls. Photo: Marco Simoni.

The decision to expose the slabs on the walls rather than have them carpet the floor shows Chamberlayne's intention to portray himself as one of the custodians of the endangered Cypriot medieval heritage: the tombs were now displayed in a manner that at once helped their preservation and study. One might also describe the chapel and its collection of slabs as attempts both to promote archaeology in Cyprus and to

³² Chamberlayne to the Chief Secretary, 1 May 1905, Nicosia, Cyprus State Archives (hereafter cited as CSA), SA1/1660/1905, 1–2.

³³ Michalis Olympios, "Institutional Identities in Late Medieval Cyprus: The Case of Nicosia Cathedral," in *Identity/Identities in Late Medieval Cyprus*, ed. Tassos Papacostas and Guillaume Saint-Guillain (Nicosia: Cyprus Research Centre and King's College London Centre for Hellenic Studies, 2014), 195–240, at 218n87.

suggest ways of displaying medieval material as an encouragement to others to create spaces for its preservation.³⁴ Similar exhibitions—of slabs affixed to walls in locales created for them—prove that Chamberlayne’s example was followed by later curators (Fig. 10.8).



Fig. 10.8: Slab with commemorative inscription embedded in the wall of the yard of the Lapidary Museum, Nicosia; 2019. Photo: Marco Simoni.

As we move to consider museums, a more general question needs to be addressed: How did such institutions intersect with colonial discourses concerning the instruction of the local people or with the cultural and political desire to prevent the export of objects? The British held that establishing museums would have a positive influence on the education of the indigenous population and on the formation of their taste. Moreover, given the island’s riches in antiquities, they would promote Cyprus’s history and attract foreign scholars and institutional interest.³⁵ If the British decided against transferring the funerary monuments to English museum collections, it is be-

³⁴ For similar actions by the British in Palestine, see Inbal Ben-Asher Gitler and Bar Leshem, “Creating Museum Culture in Mandate Palestine,” *Israel Studies* 26, no. 3 (2021): 138–57, at 151–52.

³⁵ Nicolaou, “The Diaspora,” 133–36; Roueché, “Prehistory,” 158–64; Gitler and Leshem, “Creating Museum Culture.”

cause they already contained sufficient examples of this category of medieval art and because it was impossible to establish, via the inscriptions, connections to the English past (in contrast to what the French had managed to do earlier in the nineteenth century). Furthermore, for the British Museum, Cypriot antiquities were considered worth collecting only to the extent that they could provide answers to the “Mycenaean question,” a then highly debated issue in archaeological circles concerned with the extent of that civilization’s spatial and temporal boundaries.³⁶ For the British, ancient artifacts mattered more than medieval and Ottoman art, which could remain in situ and still be studied scientifically.

The actual removal of tombstones and other stone artifacts from the medieval churches of Nicosia to become part of future museums began only in the early twentieth century. Although the Bedestan (formerly the Church of Our Lady of Hodegetria) was used as an interim storage facility, the quantity of material was such that alternative sites had to be found. George Hill, Director of the British Museum, considered the house of the dragoman (interpreter) Hadjigeorkakis Kornesios, known as the Piki House, to be more suitable than the Bedestan.³⁷ Yet in the early 1930s, it was decided to remove the tombstones from the floor of St. Sophia of Nicosia and those that had been already transferred to the Bedestan from other places, such as the Lapidary Museum or the Kasteliotissa medieval vaulted hall.³⁸ Under the 1935 Antiquities Law, however, the newly established Department of Antiquities had to appeal to the Muslim community for approval of any activity related to tombstones that covered the floors of mosques. The removal of the tombstones from their original setting, the search for a suitable place to exhibit them, and the need to obtain approval from the Muslim authorities were neither easy nor exhaustive operations, which explains why the slabs in the Omerghie Mosque were transported to the Bedestan only in 1935.³⁹ But colonial documents indicate that, while some funerary slabs were removed from St. Sophia, this was not done on a regular basis. This is proven by the fact that, even as late as 1948, A.H.S. Megaw, then in charge of the Department of Antiquities, addressed a request to the Evcaf for permission to remove the tombstones.⁴⁰

The politically explosive 1950s, marked by ongoing tensions between the British and Greek Cypriots, saw more intensive activities aimed at rescuing and preserving the Cypriot tombstones. It was during these years that most of the slabs were moved

36 Nicolaou, “The Diaspora,” 274–79.

37 Sir George Hill, “Report on the Conditions of Antiquities in Cyprus,” CSA, ANTQ1/39.

38 Brunehilde Imhaus, *Lacrimae Chypriae*, ed. Imhaus, vol. 1, *Catalogue et planches photographiques* (Nicosia: Département des Antiquités, 2004), plates nos. 158–212. The majority of the tombstones are currently preserved in the Cyprus Medieval Museum in Limassol.

39 Document of 23 April 1935 by the Colonial Secretary, CSA, ANTQ1/39; Rupert Gunnis, Personal Diary, 29–31 January 1935, 4–10 February 1935, Leeds, Henry Moore Institute Archive (hereafter cited as HMIA), 2011.0218/B, Box 19.

40 Brunehilde Imhaus, “Présentation du Matériel,” in Imhaus, *Lacrimae*, vol. 2, *Études et commentaire: Planches des dessins* (Nicosia: Département des Antiquités, 2004), 25–45, at 34.

from mosques to the Bedestan. Due to the unsuitability of this site for such fragile material, a separate building was erected, named the Gravestones Museum.⁴¹ After independence in 1960, Cypriot museum authorities were once more engaged in the delicate task of moving these and other tombstones to more secure locations: the Cyprus Medieval Museum in Limassol and the Larnaca Castle. To conclude, one can say that the birth of Cypriot museums for the preservation and display of medieval funerary slabs was made possible thanks to individual initiatives and to a shifting legal frame that tried to keep up with its time. A sometimes uneasy mix of a new general sensibility toward medieval heritage combined with colonial propaganda led to a troubled and never entirely resolved institutional organization of the Cypriot medieval heritage.

Colonial Rivalries and the Shifting Attitude of the British toward Cyprus's Medieval Cultural Heritage

Andrekos Varnava has recently coined the expression “inconsequential possession” to refer to the era of British rule in Cyprus.⁴² He argues that the initial imperialist interests quickly declined to the point that the island became a burden for British foreign policy. But even if the political and strategic importance of Cyprus as a colony was diminishing, support for local heritage preservation improved as a result of growing calls for the protection of buildings and artworks around the world. Yet in the context of power relations in the eastern Mediterranean between 1878 and 1960, archaeology also became increasingly politicized as a nonmilitary outlet for rivalries between the great powers.⁴³

During the first phase of British domination, until the 1891 implementation of the Famagusta Stones Act banning the removal of stones from the old town's ruined buildings, the Gothic abbey of Bellapais was used as a firing range by British troops. Likewise, a number of buildings in Famagusta were used as quarries for Port Said, the city founded in 1859 to serve as entry point to the Suez Canal. Chamberlayne condemned these kinds of abusive removals. He blamed modern culture, botched restorations by the numerous archaeological societies founded during the nineteenth century, the ways in which Western countries attempted to “protect” cultural heritage, and the carelessness of modern Cypriots toward those medieval monuments that did not belong to

⁴¹ Imhaus, *Lacrimae*, 1:82.

⁴² Varnava, *British Imperialism*, 3.

⁴³ Christopher Entwistle, “‘Lay not up for Yourselves Treasures upon Earth’: The British Museum and the Second Cyprus Treasure,” in *Through a Glass Brightly: Studies in Byzantine and Medieval Art and Archaeology presented to David Buckton*, ed. Entwistle (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2003), 226–36, at 232–33; Ulbrich and Kiely, “Britain and the Archaeology,” 334.

their faith.⁴⁴ Enlart's aforementioned book on Gothic art and Cyprus reinforced the idea that the Gothic monuments were part of the national French heritage. That very "annexation" gave ammunition to international protests about the failure of the British colonial administration to protect them.⁴⁵ It bears stressing that while European powers competed with each other, scholars cooperated across borders to save monuments and antiquities, whether in Europe or the Middle East. Even before the arrival of the British, a friendly network existed between Cerruti, Mas Latrie, and Chamberlayne; later, one developed between Chamberlayne, Enlart, and Jeffery. Such networks prove that political and strategic agendas did not always overlap with intellectual pursuits.

A first shift in colonial cultural policy regarding Gothic and Renaissance heritage took place between 1908 and 1935. Because of the pressure exerted by France and its interests in the area as well as Italy's growing imperial ambitions in the Aegean region, George Jeffery included the Venetian-era legacy in his efforts to preserve the Cypriot medieval patrimony.⁴⁶ The deficiencies in colonial cultural management were apparent to all.⁴⁷ As early as 1904, the High Commissioner to Cyprus, Sir William Heynes Smith (1898–1904), timidly expressed his desire to engage voluntary societies in Britain to support Cypriot heritage preservation. British newspapers, however, continued to criticize the general negligence and the destructive practices followed until the mid-1930s by the colonial administration, pointing out the lack of adequate resources for the protection of the island's cultural heritage.⁴⁸ Over time, France's archaeological campaigns and numerous publications regarding Cypriot history, as well as the successes encountered by the Italian regime in managing the cultural heritage of the Knights Hospitallers in Rhodes, prompted the British to take more effective measures.

Thus, the new secretary of state for the Colonies, William Ormsby-Gore, wrote in June 1936 to Sir Herbert Richmond Palmer, Governor of Cyprus, insisting on the need for the local government to support the director of antiquities. His argument was eloquent: "We must show that we are not less civilized or progressive in this sphere than the French and the Italians. Recent events have brought home to us acutely the need for upholding our prestige in the Mediterranean against the Italians."⁴⁹ Documents pre-

⁴⁴ Chamberlayne, *Lacrimae Nicossienses*, 4–5.

⁴⁵ Frank C. Sharp, "Exporting the Revolution: The Work of the SPAB outside Britain 1878–1914," in *From William Morris: Building Conservation and the Arts and Crafts Cult of Authenticity, 1877–1939*, ed. Chris Miele (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 2005), 187–212, at 204. For a comparable British neglect of cultural heritage in Malta during the nineteenth century, see Astrid Swenson, "Crusader Heritages and Imperial Preservation," *Past and Present* 226, suppl. 10 (2015): 27–56, at 31–39.

⁴⁶ Swenson, "Crusader Heritages," 40–41; Ilia Xypolia, "From *Mare Nostrum* to *Insula Nostra*: British Colonial Cyprus and the Italian Imperial Threat," *The Round Table* 105 (2016): 287–96, at 288.

⁴⁷ As pointed out by Jeffery in letters to Thackeray Turner, 7 October 1900, 15 June 1901 and 21 October 1904, London, Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (hereafter cited as SPAB), "Cyprus."

⁴⁸ *Daily Express* 14 May 1934, quoted from Roueché, "Prehistory," 155–59.

⁴⁹ Quoted from Roueché, "Prehistory," 163. For the British concerns in eastern Mediterranean politics, with an emphasis on cultural heritage, see Nikolas Bakirtzis, "Fortifications as Urban Heritage:

served in the archive of Rupert Gunnis (1899–1965), who was both private secretary to the earlier governor of Cyprus, Sir Ronald Storrs, and Inspector of Antiquities for the Cyprus Museum from 1932 to 1936, make clear how the British followed the growing presence of Italy in the eastern Mediterranean with concern. Gunnis's museum position led him to form his own views about Italian cultural politics in Rhodes and beyond. In particular, seeing how the Italians were utilizing the restoration of Western artistic remains in the Dodecanese as a tool for legitimizing their presence there, he concluded that the British inertia vis-à-vis the Cypriot cultural heritage increased the potential for other colonial occupations.⁵⁰ With the start of the Spanish Civil War in 1936 and the strengthening of Francoist forces, Gunnis was moved to observe that "if Spain becomes a Fascist State, Italy and Spain would make England's position in the Mediterranean quite untenable."⁵¹ In his eyes, it was imperative that Britain show a broader interest in its colonies beyond the military-strategic point of view, so that it could not be challenged by any rival in the changing European political circumstances of the interwar years.

By the 1930s, then, the conditions were right for the creation of a museum that could host the medieval tombstones of Cyprus in a way that fit the British narrative while demonstrating that the colonial administration did its job of heritage preservation. By developing a more hospitable environment for the funerary slabs, the British could present themselves as rescuers of Cyprus's medieval past and, therefore, solidify their presence on the island. In addition to intra-European political factors, the 1930s was also the time when the British tried to prevent the Greek Cypriots from pursuing their plans to seek a union with Greece. Promoting the tombstones as artifacts to be preserved, conserved, and exhibited showed to everyone how the British were custodians of the island's cultural heritage, as opposed to members of the Greek community who had spoken out against caring for the remnants of the island's medieval past.⁵²

The archival evidence—mostly letters and diaries—shows that Gunnis was interested in the ancient heritage. Yet during the period in which he was inspector of antiquities for the Cyprus Museum, he closely supervised and authorized the intensive displacement of medieval tombstones from churches and mosques either to newly

The Case of Nicosia in Cyprus and a Glance at the City of Rhodes," *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome* 62 (2017): 171–92; Bakirtzis, "From Fortification to Monument: The Walls of Nicosia," in *Hybrid Heritagescapes as Urban Commons in Mediterranean Cities: Accessing the Deep-Rooted Spatial Interfaces of Cities*, ed. Georgios Artopoulos (Nicosia: The Cyprus Institute, 2018), 29–36, at 34–36; Lawrence R. Pratt, *East of Malta, West of Suez: Britain's Mediterranean Crisis, 1936–39* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008); Xypolia, "From Mare Nostrum," 287–96.

⁵⁰ Samy Cavass to Gunnis, 19 July 1928, HMIA, "Correspondence from [Private] Samy Cavass to Rupert Gunnis," 2011.0218/A/5, Box 8.

⁵¹ Rupert Gunnis, "Rupert's visit to Olympic Games in Berlin 1936," 8 August 1936, HMIA, "Account of the events at the Olympic Games, Berlin, Germany, August 1936. Written by Rupert Gunnis," 2011.0218/C, Box 13, 1–29, at 20.

⁵² Georges Chacalli, *Cyprus under British Rule* (Nicosia: Phoni tis Kyprou, 1902), 152.

created museums or to storage facilities. His activities were not only consistent with the shift in British policy regarding Cypriot medieval heritage in the 1930s, but also with the emerging desire to turn the island into a Middle Eastern tourist resort that would be attractive to citizens of the Commonwealth.⁵³ His publications (some co-authored with the archaeologist Theophilus Mogabgab) were primarily aimed at promoting Cyprus abroad.⁵⁴ In the same promotional spirit, he never failed to take high-ranking visitors and tourists on a tour of the island's medieval monuments.⁵⁵ This kind of promotion was done in close cooperation with the senior British administration, both in Cyprus and abroad, through social events and exchange programs supporting Cypriot students.⁵⁶

Conclusion

The cultural narrative that flourished in the 1930s implied that the Greek and Turkish populations were responsible for the neglect of Cyprus's historic monuments; the British, by contrast, were presented as responsible, preservation-minded rulers. In other words, preservation was framed as a civilizing mission, one that contributed to legitimizing British rule in Cyprus. Local communities were accused of being interested only in art that corresponded to their own understanding of the island's history, an understanding that was perceived to be colored by ethnic identity. The British positioned themselves as guardians of the heritage these communities had neglected, and sometimes even destroyed: works dating to the Latin period of Cyprus.⁵⁷ The British, rather than engaging with contemporary Cypriot society as dynamic, depicted it as static and underdeveloped. This image emerges from newspaper articles and touristic posters as well as from private records, such as the Gunnis and Jeffery diaries. Ac-

53 We thank Professor Niki Sioki (University of Nicosia) for information on the Empire Marketing Board's posters of the 1920s and 1930s; Sioki, "Posters of Cyprus."

54 Rupert Gunnis, *Historic Cyprus: A Guide to its Towns and Villages, Monasteries and Castles* (1936; repr., London: Orage, 2014); Gunnis and Theophilus Mogabgab, *Famagusta: A Short Guide for the Use of Visitors* (1934), rev. ed. (Nicosia: Government Printing Office, 1936). McCormick-Goodhart to Gunnis, 17 December 1936, HMIA, "Correspondence from [Leander] McCormick-Goodhart to Rupert Gunnis," 2011.0218/A/5, Box 8; Contract between Rupert Gunnis and Methuen & Co. Ltd, 5 December 1935, HMIA, "Correspondence from Peter Wait, W.W. Bate . . . , and E.V. Rieu of Methuen & Co Ltd Publishers to Rupert Gunnis," 2011.0218/A/5, Box 8.

55 Rupert Gunnis, Personal Diary, 29–31 January 1935, 4–10 October 1935, HMIA, 2011.0218/B, Box 19.

56 Extracts from the newspaper *Eleftheria*, 25 July 1928, 8 August 1928, and 29 August 1928, HMIA, "Correspondence from [Samuel] to Rupert Gunnis" and "Correspondence from Alexis [?] to Rupert Gunnis," 2011.0218/A/5, Box 8; Rupert Gunnis, Untitled article, 16 July 1927, HMIA, "Untitled article about Cyprus, written for the Italian magazine 'Sul Mare,'" 2011.0218/L, Box 13.

57 Bakirtzis, "From Fortification to Monument," 33; Bakirtzis, "Fortifications as Urban Heritage," 171–79, 180–81.

according to this argument, it was thanks only to the British presence that true social evolution was set in motion, a shift that linked the historical phases of the island to the protection of its heritage against the alleged stasis and indifference shown by the ethnic communities inhabiting it.⁵⁸

As we have argued, the museumization of medieval funerary monuments removed from Cypriot churches and mosques was integral to that endeavor. This process also offers an excellent example of how knowledge about antiquities, including efforts for their preservation, was both the object of government regulations and the result of the successive, enlightened actions of specific individuals. Around the middle of the nineteenth century, when the French tried to gain a foothold in Cyprus, their interest in the wider eastern Mediterranean was conceived as a “civilizing mission” closely tied to hegemonic intentions that reached deep into the Ottoman Empire. Likewise, during the almost hundred-year-long British rule, medieval Cyprus was considered—by the British—to be a Western entity, just as French scholarship had done. Modern Cyprus, a former province of the Ottoman Empire, was, by contrast, presented as an uncivilized Other whose antiquities needed to be “saved” and whose inhabitants needed to be educated according to “progressive” European standards.⁵⁹ Moreover, although during this period Cyprus was cast as a model of good colonial governance, one that allowed colonialists to experiment with concepts such as citizenship, sovereignty, and participation, the liberal rhetoric was never transformed into real political equality between the foreign ruling class and the people they ruled.⁶⁰ This is why cultural interests did not always align with political ones.

Despite ongoing national rivalries, Italian and, especially, French and British antiquarians worked together in Cyprus and ended up creating similar accounts about medieval tombstones that minimized the non-Western archaeological evidence. A different picture could have emerged, one of a much more multicultural medieval Cypriot society. Nationalistic themes projected onto Cypriot medieval communities and their art say more about imperial cultural attitudes after the Congress of Berlin than they do about medieval society. Whereas the French dealt with the whole Cypriot affair through intellectual interventions, showing their interest in and connection to Cyprus and its history, the British openly engaged with the island’s medieval past only when facing a political threat in the region. In the twentieth century, we see the emer-

58 Swenson, “Crusader Heritages,” 55–56. See also: Unknown sender to Gunnis, 20 November 1929, HMA, “Correspondence (incomplete) from unknown sender to Rupert Gunnis,” 2011.0218/A/5, Box 8.

59 David G. Hogarth et al., “Excavations in Cyprus, 1887–1888: Paphos, Leontari, Amargetti,” *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 9 (1888): 147–271; Margarita Díaz-Andreu García, *A World History of Nineteenth-Century Archaeology: Nationalism, Colonialism, and the Past* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 99–130.

60 Robert Hamilton Lang, *Cyprus: Its History, Its Present Resources and Future Prospects* (London: MacMillan and Co., 1878), 191–212, 270–72; David Scott, “Colonial Governmentality,” *Social Text* 43 (1995): 191–220; Maria Photiou, “Rethinking the History of Cypriot Art: Greek Cypriot Women Artists in Cyprus” (PhD diss., Loughborough University, 2013), 72–89.

gence, at first timidly and then, from the 1930s onward, in a more sustained and perhaps more aggressive manner, of a new narrative geared explicitly toward political objectives. As we have seen, this new narrative was attributable to the pressures that the British administration faced from home and abroad. The British commitment to cultural heritage can therefore be divided into two phases: a first linked to the activity of scholars and a second, in the 1930s, during which the colonial administration engaged in institutional reforms aiming to preserve Cypriot monuments. The rescue and museumization of medieval tombstones were part of this new British policy, one that used culture as a political weapon through which the colonizer could claim the role of mediator between the modern communities it ruled and the medieval past. In the end, whatever the intentions of political and intellectual actors, the result was that Cyprus's medieval funerary slabs were saved.

