

EINAR GJERSTAD

MY FIRST ARCHAEOLOGICAL ACTIVITY IN CYPRUS

The question often has been asked me by many persons over a number of years: why was Cyprus chosen by you in preference to other archaeologically interesting countries? The answer is: it was a lucky chance. The following scene took place during the month of March in 1922. Professor Axel W. Persson of Uppsala University was travelling to Greece. In a railway station in Serbia he struck up a conversation with a lively and nervous, Levantine looking man in his fifties. He asked the professor's destination, and was told that Persson was on his way to Asine in Greece to conduct archaeological excavations.

„I am absolutely mad about archaeology” exclaimed this new found acquaintance. „What nationality are you, Professor?” When he learned that Person was from Sweden, he became a volcano of cordiality, embraced him and cried: „Well, then we are about compatriotes. You see I am Swedish Consul in Cyprus! My name is Luke Zenon Pierides. Even my father was Swedish Consul, and when Norway and Sweden separated, he was offered the position of consul for Norway. This he refused and remained faithful to Sweden to his death. What a privilege and pleasure to meet a representative for this noble and high-minded nation!”

After some further conversation, the Consul suddenly asked: „Would you lend me five pounds, Professor Persson? I ran into some bad luck. The Serbian Customs took all my money and I can't get them back until I reach Constantinople”.

Professor Persson made a mental calculation: „Five pounds are five pounds, and quite possibly I will never see them again. Of course there is some chance that this man is telling the truth, and

if he indeed is Swedish Consul, it would be an insult to deny him the loan". Persson thus lightened his wallet by five pounds sterling and gave them to Pierides.

Pierides started to talk about Cyprus, about his home in Larnaca, containing a magnificent collection of antiquities. He further inquired if the Swedes had considered any excavations in Cyprus and urged Persson to persuade a young Swedish archaeologist to come to Cyprus and to start some archaeological research.

After a few more minutes of archaeology and Sweden, Pierides asked if he could borrow another five pounds. He promised that Persson should have the money without fail on arrival in Athens. The Professor, who was not only an optimist but also had a big heart, complied even this time with Pierides' request, but he confessed, that his optimism left something to be desired, when he went to check for his money in Athens. However, the money had indeed arrived, together with a letter from Pierides, again urging Persson to arrange for the Swedes to archaeologically invade Cyprus.

A pleasant summernight in Asine, a night when anything seems possible, Professor Persson discussed the issue with me, who served as assistant at the excavations, and recommended me to accept Pierides' invitation. I really did not know anything about Cypriote archaeology and so I said yes without much deliberation. The unknown beckoned.

In October 1923 my wife and I arrived in Cyprus, where the unknown met me in the form of an enormous mass of new material from the Bronze Age, a material waiting to be studied. The Curator of the Cyprus Museum, Menelaos Markides, was a scientifically trained archaeologist and he had carefully excavated numerous tombs from every period of the Bronze Age, but after having excavated the material the poor man was taken seriously ill with Parkinson's disease and was unable to do scientific work. Generously he handed over all his carefully excavated material to me for archaeological studies. And so it was only to let the tomb-finds tell their historic secrets by bringing order and system in something which seemed to be chaotic but on closer examination formed a meaningful pattern. Some stratigraphic excavations were carried out by me as a supplementary evidence given by the tomb-finds.

I shall describe three of these excavations illustrating settlements of the three main periods of the Cypriote Bronze Age: *Early Cypriote* (c. 2500—1800 B. C.), *Middle Cypriote* (c. 1800—1600 B.C.), and *Late Cypriote* (c. 1600—1050 B.C.).

Near the village Alambra not far from Dhali in the centre of the island a small house from Early Cypriote III was excavated. The house consists of only two rooms with an enclosed court on the front side. The court was enclosed by a wall on a stone foundation for a length of c. 9 m., but of all the other enclosure no traces are left. Most probably there was only a fence made of some perishable material, e.g. white-thorn which at present is very much used in Cyprus as fence material. What may have been the use of this enclosure? Scarcely anything else than to house the sheep and goats, i.e. it was probably identical with what the Cypriotes call a mandra. Behind the house a bake-oven was found. As it was constructed entirely of sundried bricks, nothing was left of it except a hard layer of burnt clay and carbonized matter on the ground. This layer of burnt clay was distinctly limited and thus it was possible to determine the shape and size of the oven. Its ground plan is horizontally conical, with a rounded top. It is 3.40 m. in length and 2.70 m. in width at the base. The opening was at the base where there was a heap of raked-out ashes close by. Some stones found at the base-line may have been used as a pavement of the door-opening. This type of bake-oven is identical with those used in the Cypriote villages in 1924 and they are still existing in Cyprus. The walls of the house were built of sundried bricks, on both sides covered with a cement of lime and fine-grained gravel, on a foundation of rubble-stones with smaller stones as filling in the interstices. One room of the house was used as a store and working-room. Along the back wall was a bench of hard clay bordered by stones. Numerous fragments of storage vessels and a trough of limestone were found on this bench. In the S. W. corner was a semicircular bench of hard clay covered with lime and bordered by flat stones. Four saddle-shaped stone-grinders were found close by this bench. This was the place where the women ground the corn kneeling on the floor and rubbing the corn against the saddle-quern with a stone pestle. Grinding places of the same kind have been found in some of the houses of Tell el Amarna in Egypt

and still survive in Arab houses. Near a bench of hard clay in the N. W. corner of the room there were several spindle-whorls and loom-weights indicating that this was a place for spinning wool and for weaving. Possibly the bench was a seat for the weaver.

In the second room of the house there was a hearth used for cooking but also for heating in the cold winter evenings. In the floor there was a conical hole cut in the rock. At the edge of this hole an oval stone of hard limestone was found. The hole may have been an oil reservoir and the slab might have been used for pressing olives. The cover of the hole must have been of perishable material, probably wood. Along the north wall of the room there was a bench of hard clay. Nothing was found on it. Probably it was used as a seat or as a bedstead. 3.50 m. from the western wall of the room the bench becomes narrower, covered with lime-plaster and the edge bordered by flat stones. Fragments of many domestic vessels were found on this bench; which evidently was a kind of a sideboard. From the arrangements of the room as well as the finds we may infer that it was used as a combined cooking, eating, sleeping and working room.

We thus get a vivid picture of the domestic and daily life of a peasant family in the Early Bronze Age of Cyprus. We see how they ground the corn, baked their bread, pressed their olives, cooked their food, span the wool of their sheep, wove their clothes, and after the day's work slept on a clay bench in their humble cottage. Reproduction of ploughing and harvest scenes on Bronze Age vessels form a supplementary material to that mentioned above.

At the locality Taoudi Chiftlik, between the villages Kalopsida and Kouklia, in the eastern part of the island, near Famagusta, a house from the Middle Cypriote period, with remains of earlier settlements, was excavated. This house fits into a more closely organized urban system than the rustic establishment we learned to know at Alambra. To the east another house joins it and a street runs from east to west along the south wall of the house. It is also of a more complicated character than the house at Alambra, forming a building complex of 11 rooms. West and north of the

house is a court, which had to be left unexcavated, and therefore the boundary of the house is uncertain.

The construction of the walls is the same as in the Alambra house. The house floors consist of a substructure of small rubble-stones or rough gravel and sea-shells, covered with a layer of trodden earth or clay, mixed with lime-gravel. Only in one room there was a covering layer of lime, 3—4 cm. thick. The entire front side of this room opens on an inner court where firemaking and cooking were practised along the walls where a layer of ashes and carbonized matter was found. The smoke has blackened the wall-sides and the heat has baked the underlying clay floor. Several pieces of cooking vessels, blackened by the smoke, give further evidence. Besides the cooking-pots a great number of domestic pottery, such as jugs and jars, were found, together with two saddle-querns. We thus see that the food was prepared in this inner court. It also served as a source of light for the surrounding rooms.

A hearth was found in the room with the front side opening on the inner court. As this court was used as the actual cooking place, the hearth, on which only scanty remains of carbonized matter were found, was probably used as a place to make fire, if the weather was cold and may also have been the religious centre of the house, an altar, where sacrifices and libations to the house-gods were made. On the floor of the room a large amount of pottery was found. The bulk of the vases were lying along the walls of the room. Only a few fragments were found in the other part of the room. It seems, therefore, that the vases have fallen down from shelves, either fixed to the walls, or from cupboards standing along the walls. Many of the vases were of good quality. Apparently the *élie* of the household furniture was gathered in this room, where the inhabitants ate and drank, practised their domestic cult and sat in the evenings round the hearth, singing, talking, and discussing the day's happenings.

The other rooms of the house were sleeping-rooms, store-rooms, work-rooms, sheds, stables, or something of the kind.

The chronology of the house is quite clear. It was inhabited twice marked by two floors, both belonging to Middle Cypriote III.

By stratigraphic digging down to the rock five more house-floors were laid bare, the third — fifth floors belonging to Middle Cypriote I—II and the sixth — seventh floors assignable to Early Cypriote III.

Among the pieces of pottery were great quantities of Syrian ware, large pithoi with pointed base and vertical shoulder-handles, jugs and flasks, etc. giving evidence of intimate commercial relations with Syria. The expression of economic and cultural modifications of a new and advanced period forms an interesting contrast with the simple, pastoral condition of life at Alambra.

It was my intention to excavate a third house, this time of the Late Cypriote Bronze Age, at a place called Nikolidhes, to the north of Dali, but instead of a house I found a fortress with store, commissary, and work-rooms. The area in which remains of an ancient settlement are found is quite small, being only c. 150 sq. m. in extent. It seems therefore most probable that we here have to do with a sort of military station. It is worth while to mention the establishment of a similar military station 3 km. north-east of Nikolidhes, close to the village of Agios Sozomenos. It may be that these fortresses indicate the frontier of a state. Of course that cannot be proved otherwise than by further excavations and research work, but when I am writing these lines the problem has not yet been solved.

The fortress of Nikolidhes forms a square, 19 m. in length and 8.30 m. in width, enclosed on all sides by defensive ramparts. Of these only the foundations are left. They are constructed of unwrought rubble-stones and the upper walls of sundried bricks. The west rampart is particularly strong in construction: it consists of a double wall abreast running ranges at a distance averaging 0.65 m. from each other. The space between the walls was filled with earth and gravel. In the east rampart two gates — the main gate, 1.75 m. wide, and a narrow gate, 0.70 m. wide — give entrance to the fortress. The gates are reinforced at their foundations by large stone blocks. Inside the fortress is divided into several sections by means of walls to admit the roofing of the fortress and also to serve as supports for wooden staircases leading up to the roof, where the warriors met the attack of the aggressors. The fortress was destroyed by an enemy: the ramparts and the

inner walls of the fortress were partly demolished and fire was applied; the layer of charcoal covering the whole floor give full evidence of the conflagration of the wooden fittings.

After the ruin the fortress was rebuilt. The walls were repaired and strengthened. The western rampart was reinforced by three buttresses; the northern and southern ramparts were strengthened on the inside by reinforcing walls, but the eastern rampart was subjected to the most intensive rebuilding activity: the middle of the rampart was leveled, a new rampart was built, an entrance of 2 m. in width was opened in the middle of the new rampart, flanked by large stone blocks taken from the earlier rampart. Both the earlier gates were stopped up and the inside of the rampart was strengthened by reinforcing walls. This rebuilt fortress was not destroyed by force: the walls are intact and there are no traces of conflagration.

The first fortress seems to have been destroyed in the first half of Late Cypriote I. We do not know if the destruction was due to internal feuds raging over the island or to military attacks from abroad. The second fortress seems to have been abandoned peacefully in Late Cypriote II.

Although the subject of my studies was the prehistory of Cyprus during the Bronze Age, it happened that I discovered remains of a pre-ceramic Neolithic settlement near the village of Frenaros in the south-east part of Cyprus. This evidence of a Cypriote Stone Age culture was of course interesting, but the material was too small and historically too fragmentary to be included as an introduction to my studies on the Cypriote Bronze Age, so I preferred to publish the discovery of the Cypriote Stone Age separately in *Svenska Orientaliska Sällskapet's Årsbok*, 1925 and in the *Antiquaries Journal*, 1926.

We know that prehistory deals with the distribution in time and space of prehistoric cultures, together with the causes and the effects of this distribution. To fix the chronology of the culture concerned is therefore the one task of the prehistorian; the other and complementary task is to define and to describe the area where this culture flourished, and to study its external relations, i.e. fit it into the general scheme of culture.

T. B. Sandwith was the first to distinguish between Bronze Age

and Iron Age in Cyprus. After that the different epochs of the Bronze Age were defined by J. L. Myres and M. Ohnefalsch-Richter, and called Early, Middle and Late Bronze Age. This chronology was wholly based on observation of the different classes of pottery found in the tombs. Through stratigraphic excavations in settlements I aimed both to control and complete the chronological scheme yielded by the tomb-finds, and in this way it was possible to trace the history of the Cypriote Bronze Age in 9 successive phases, grouped in the 3 main periods, each of them divided into 3 phases and called Early, Middle, Late Cypriote I—III.

In order to define and to describe the area where this culture flourished topographical research work was needed. On the map of Cyprus in the *Catalogue of the Cyprus Museum* are marked all the prehistoric sites known at the time the catalogue was published (1899). They are 31 in number. All these sites, with a few exceptions (Lapithos at the north coast; Katydhata near the west coast; Enkomi, Kalopsida, and Sinda near the east coast), were confined to two regions: the south coast and the middle of the island. It is evident that this concentration of the sites to a limited area, while all the other inhabitable of the island was archaeologically blank, could not but be due to the fact that only a portion of the sites had been discovered. I therefore determined to find, by traveling in the country, as many of the remaining sites as possible at that time. Cyprus, though small on the map, is rather large if traversed on a mule's back or on a bicycle, and it soon became evident that this project would take a longer time than I had at my disposal. Finally illness forced me to leave Cyprus before I had realized my intention. The new places, 33 in number, are therefore the results of my travels in the central, northern, and eastern parts of Cyprus, including the Karpassos region and a small excursion around Episkopi, while all the other parts of the island were left unvisited.

The question of the relations of the prehistoric cultures one to another, their mutual influences, and the degree and variety of such influences, is one of the most difficult problems for the prehistorian. As a working hypothesis I supposed that there may arise, in the main, three different stages in the relations of one

prehistoric culture to another: the separation of the cultures, their communication, and their assimilation. When one culture separates from another it retains, in the beginning, much that is characteristic of this culture, until the different living conditions bring about a change. In the pottery this is shown by the fact that the early series of shapes and ornaments are similar throughout, although perhaps not identical with the corresponding shapes and ornaments in the place of emanation. The fact that one culture stands in communication with another is shown by the appearance of imported goods. This imported, foreign ware may have an influence on the native products, but only incidentally. When a culture is assimilated by another, differences between the native and foreign elements are eradicated, the parallel lines merge into one and a unified culture arises. The first stage arises when a group or groups emigrate to another country; the second, when two countries are in commercial connection with another; and the third, when a foreign people immigrates and coalesces with the native population. Naturally it may happen that combinations occur between these three stages.

The first and difficult problem was how to explain the origin of the Early Cypriote Bronze Age. The only Stone Age remains found at Frenaros belonged to the pre-ceramic Neolithic period. The Neolithic pottery still being unknown in Cyprus made it of course impossible for me to examine if and to what degree the Late Neolithic had contributed to the origin of the Early Bronze Age. The pottery of Early Cypriote I consisted exclusively of Red Polished ware. Red Polished Bronze Age pottery exists in Asia Minor and for years archaeologists had speculated over the connexion between the Cypriote and Anatolian Bronze Age cultures but without convincing results. As mentioned above, only if there is a fundamental similarity in the early shapes of the pottery, it may be assumed to prove a direct relation between the countries concerned. Such a similarity exists between the early Red Polished ware in Cyprus and that in south-western Anatolia, in the valley of Istanos, where Ormerod collected Red Polished potsherds. These were deposited in the Ashmolean Museum, where I was permitted to study this most interesting material. Even the clay itself, granular and porous, and the scarlet-lustrous slip show such

a similarity to the clay and slip of the early Cypriote Red Polished pottery that the two can hardly be distinguished. Decisive, however, is the agreement in shape: the more than hemispherical bowl with string-hole, the large bowls with pierced ledge-handles, the deep bowl with handle from or near the rim to shoulder, the amphora with handles from neck to shoulder and the oval jug with flat base, narrow and straight neck with spout-mouth. Thus we have the remains of two cultures which exhibit such mutual and fundamental similarity that one is indicated to have separated from the other. The question thus arises: did the Cypriote culture separate from that of S. W. Asia Minor or *vice versa*? As the earliest Bronze Age pottery of Cyprus penetrated from the west coast towards the interior part of the island, the former alternative seems to be the correct one. Most scholars seem now to be convinced that Anatolian groups immigrated to Cyprus and introduced there the Early Bronze Age.

The commercial relations between Cyprus and the Near East already begun in Early Cypriote were continued and developed in the Middle Bronze Age. The trend of the trade-routes is clear: Cyprus stands out in Middle Cypriote as a power directed towards the Orient, especially Syria, Palestine and Egypt. Her trade-routes run from Central Syria, along the coast-land past Gezer in Palestine down to the Nile valley, and from Fayum on down to Abydos. The relations with the West, i.e. the Aegean, are still sporadic.

The foreign relations of Cyprus during the Late Cypriote were varied, far-reaching and important, making the island a veritable place of exchange for different cultures, and leading up to its prehistoric period of greatness. Already in Late Cypriote I the relations with Syria, Palestine and Egypt received a great impetus, but they reached their optimum during Late Cypriote II. Turning to the West we find that in Late Cypriote a new epoch opens in the foreign relations of Cyprus: a definite orientation towards the Aegean. The Cypriote pottery found in the Aegean is not very numerous. In pottery Cyprus could not compete with the Aegean. What Cyprus gave in return for the products of the Aegean art was presumably raw material — the copper. The number of Mycenaean objects found in Cyprus is well in excess of a thousand. Of these not only the pottery, but also most of the gold and silver

hand-work and a considerable amount of faience ware, shows the close relations with the Aegean. Like the spider in its web sits Cyprus; the knots in the meshes consisting of the find-places around Syria, Palestine, through the Nile valley to Nubia, and around the region of Aegean culture, including the mainland, the Cyclades and Crete. The West supersedes the Orient.

Until the end of Late Cypriote II the Mycenaean pottery was imported. In Late Cypriote III the first Mycenaean pottery made in Cyprus is found. Towards the end of that period an unified product arises from the combination of Mycenaean and Cypriote cultures and it is no longer possible to distinguish them. This combination signifies the Greek colonization of the island and we have reached the third stage of cultural relations mentioned by me: the stage of assimilation. Through this colonization Cyprus retained the Greek language and culture which, in spite of all foreign admixtures, have been preserved to the present day.

During my sojourn in Cyprus from October 1923 to December 1924 I understood that there were several big gaps in the ancient history of Cyprus from the Stone Age to the end of the Roman period. The only way to fill up some of these gaps would be to organize an archaeological expedition working for some years in different parts of the island, excavating remains of every kind and every period of ancient Cyprus. I discussed this plan with H. R. H. Gustaf Adolf, at that time Crown Prince of Sweden. He had studied archaeology at the University of Uppsala and was known for his profound and extensive knowledge of archaeology. The Crown Prince suggested to form a committee as a support for the expedition and he very kindly promised to be in the chair. As other members of the committee he proposed S. Curman, King's Custodian of Antiquities, Martin P. Nilsson and Axel W. Persson, professors of Classical Archaeology and Ancient History at the universities of Lund and Uppsala, and Joh. Hellner, Supreme Court Judge, serving as the treasurer of the committee. As soon as the public examination of my doctor's thesis, „*Studies on Prehistoric Cyprus*“, had taken place in February 1926 I started to form a satisfactory economy for the expedition by collecting contributions from wealthy persons with archaeological interests, to prepare the material equipment for the expedition and to choose

my collaborators, Mr. John Lindros as architect, Messrs. Erik Sjöqvist and Alfred Westholm as archaeologists. It took some time as I also had to fulfil my university duties, but in August 1927 the members of the expedition including my wife and our two small boys landed in Cyprus where we lived until March 1931. Our „two small boys” are now 55—59 years old and of the other members of the expedition only my wife and Westholm are alive.

JOACHIM ŚLIWA

EGYPTIAN AND NUBIAN POTTERY IN THE CRACOW COLLECTIONS

Almost all of the Egyptian and Nubian ceramic material presently found in Cracow was previously listed by K. Bulas in one of the fascicles of the „Corpus Vasorum Antiquorum”¹. However, a large number of objects, especially the oldest items from the Archaic Period, have not been properly classified; some information concerning the provenience of many relics is incomplete or misleading and thus a significant number ought to be re-studied and identified anew.

Most Egyptian and Nubian ceramic objects may be found today in the collection of the Archaeological Museum²; about a dozen items belong to the Czartoryski Collection (now a branch of the National Museum)³ while only a few vessels are in the collection of the Department of Mediterranean Archaeology of the Jagellonian University⁴.

Studies relating to the provenience of these objects has led to some interesting conclusions. Due to the bringing to light of some archival material heretofore unknown, the original finding places of several vessels from the Czartoryski collection have been confirmed and related to the purchasing activity in Egypt of Stefan Marusiński, an agent of Władysław Czartoryski⁵.

¹ K. Bulas, *Corpus Vasorum Antiquorum, Pologne 2, Collections de Cracovie*, Varsovie—Cracovie 1935.

² K. Bulas, *op. cit.*, pp. 55—57, pls. 1 (90)—3 (92).

³ K. Bulas, *op. cit.*, pp. 5—6, pls. 1 (55)—2 (56).

⁴ K. Bulas, *op. cit.*, p. 29, pl. 1 (74) 1, 2.

⁵ K. Moczulska, J. Śliwa, *Identyfikacja zabytków egipskich ze Zbiorów Czartoryskich z wykazami zakupów z lat 1884 i 1885* [in:] *Prace Archeologiczne* 14, Kraków 1972, pp. 85—104; H. Szymańska,