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CONTENTS

THE ANCIENT HARBOUR OF AMATHUS: CURRENT PERCEPTIONS AND FUTURE PROSPECTS OF A SUBMERGED LANDSCAPE

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ABSTRACT

The ancient harbour of Amathus is located in the south coast of Cyprus, situated at the west of Ayios Tychonas village in Limassol District. The outer harbour lies at a depth of 4 metres, expanding for 100 metres from the shore and is dated in the 4th-3rd century B.C.. The underwater investigations in the outer harbour were conducted in the 1980s by an archaeological team led by Dr. Jean-Yves Empereur. Several years later, in 2005, the Department of Fisheries and Marine Research published a report on creating an artificial reef that would include the ancient harbour. Ten years have passed since then and the reef was established but imposed great stress on the site. The current difficulties faced and the possibilities of turning the harbour into an underwater park or preserve are discussed, based on underwater heritage management developments. In that regard, the relationship between sustainable development, the stakeholders, the submerged landscape treatment and management were considered to establish the management possibilities and future prospects of the site.

Keywords
maritime landscape, submerged heritage, management plan, marine protected area, Amathus

1. INTRODUCTION

Limassol district is rich in archaeological remains dating to various periods, reflecting its past. One of them is the archaeological site of Amathus, situated on two coastal hills west of Ayios Tychonas village. Amathus had been inhabited since 1100 BCE and by the 5th – 4th century BCE, the Classical kingdom had flourished there (Aupert 1997: 21; Iacovou 2002: 101-122; Catling 1996). The Department of Antiquities and the French mission of the French School of Athens began excavating the site in the 1960s and 1970s respectively, while the submerged harbour was investigated in the 1980s.

1.1. Remarks / Methodology

The research carried out for this paper was based on the available archaeological data and the site assessment carried out by the author. The underwater investigations in the 1980s and the excavation at the coastal basilica in the 1990s were the focal points, followed by a terrestrial and underwater assessment survey in autumn 2015 to contextualise everything and evaluate the current situation.

This elucidated several aspects of the project: a)assessing the possibilities for a submerged heritage site such as the Amathus harbour, b)linking the maritime landscape with the evolving urban setting, and, c)ways to promote maritime culture to the public. The above-mentioned points can only be implemented through the establishment of a management plan. The ancient harbour is part of a marine reserve since

2011, thus the proposed plan incorporates it as it is part of the maritime landscape. Although there are international examples of submerged landscape management, this has not been attempted yet in Cyprus and there is no national management framework regarding submerged cultural heritage. Therefore, the author reviewed current international practises before suggesting the most suitable.

2. LINKING THE MARITIME LANDSCAPE AND THE EVOLVING URBAN SETTING

Landscape is a term first used in the late 16th century by Dutch painters, describing many aspects of Archaeology since the 1980s. David and Thomas (2008: 27) argue that this shift denotes a significant change of perspective, as landscape is treated as a field of investigation in its own right. This is evident in the culmination of the field of Landscape Archaeology, which shares an intrinsic connection with the evolution of the theoretical framework of each Archaeology strand (Seibert 2006: xvi). Issues such as urbanism, population changes and economic development have been studied since the early 20th century, with researchers employing different theoretical approaches and methodologies. It has also been argued that *Landscape Archaeology* is the best approach to analyse and interpret these phenomena in regards to settlement transformation patterns (Bintliff 1999).

Landscape Archaeology has undeniably evolved over the years; human historical landscapes were initially treated as environmental landscapes and archaeologists aimed to understand the social and community organisation (David and Thomas 2008: 28). This changed later, as the development of Cultural Resource Management (CRM) in the late 1960s helped the shifting towards social landscapes (David and Thomas 2008: 33-35). Ford (2011: 1-2) considers that the landscape exists when culture intersects space, and therefore numerous disciplines study it with varying research questions, methodologies and results. Landscape is inextricably connected to the physical environment. Furthermore, any coastal setting is studied in Maritime Archaeology as a coastal landscape, or a maritime landscape which is a broader concept (Ford 2011: 4).

The term *maritime cultural landscape* was coined in the 1970s by Westerdahl and refers to both terrestrial and submerged remnants of maritime culture (Westerdahl 1992: 5; Westerdahl 2011: 733). Such a landscape is complex and includes all the activities that are associated to the coast and the sea, whether those were considered to be close-ranging (e.g., lighthouse maintenance) or far-ranging (e.g., fishing). Westerdahl's seminal studies defined such landscapes as multi-faceted, cognitive, varied, with a profound action radius, and chronologically multi-layered (Westerdahl 1992: 5-6; 2011: 736). His approach includes maritime history and ethnography, which ultimately extends Maritime Archaeology itself beyond the ship or shipwreck with diverse applications and results and includes both tangible and intangible heritage (Flatman 2011: 312-313; Ford 2011: 5-6).

2.1. The Amathus maritime landscape

Amathus is located on two coastal cliffs along the southern coastline and its foundation must be related to the natural harbour located directly south of the cliffs (Hermary, 1999) (Fig. 1). The location offered advantages when defending the site from the acropolis, which served as a landmark for mariners (Péchoux 1996: 9-10). The proximity to the Kalavasos mines was another benefit; after the Kalavasos-*Ayios Dimitrios* and Encomi centres disappeared in the 12th c. BCE, Amathus could expand its area of influence and even control them (Aupert 1997: 22-23; Iacovou 2008: 638).

The systematic excavations of the French mission and the Department of Antiquities revealed extensive parts of the settlement that was established by the beginning of the Cypro-Geometric Period (1050-750 BCE) (Aupert, 1996a: 23-26, 99-107; Satraki, 2012: 269-270). In the 6th c. BC.Cyprus becomes part of the Achaemenid Empire and the Cypriots were required to join the Phoenician fleet against the Greeks during

Fig.1. Southeast view of the Amathus coastal hills (photo Maria Ktori).

the Ionian Revolt (Briant 1996: 61-64; Stylianou 1989: 410-411, 421-422; Christodoulou 2006). Despite the Cypriots' anti-Persian feelings, Amathus did not participate in the 499 BCE revolt against them and continued to develop (Stylianou 1989: 434-436; Demetriou 1993: 57; Briant 1996: 160). By the end of the Cypro-Classical Period (450-325 BCE) it had three necropolises, a defence wall, a sanctuary at the acropolis and an inner harbour (Aupert 1984: 19-21; Satraki 2012: 202-204, 282-283; Aupert and Leriche 1996: 89-98, 110-130).

Another failed revolt followed in 351 BCE and despite that, the Salaminian king Pnytagoras cooperated with Alexander the Great in the battle at Tyre. It was a key move, resulting in the integration of Cyprus into Alexander's empire by 321 BCE. Regardless of Demetrius Poliorcetes' later intervention and the installation of an Antigonid garrison at Amathus (Petit 2007: 97), the Ptolemies were able to regain full control of Cyprus by 295 BCE. Although this signified the end of the Cypriot kingdoms, the urban centre of Amathus develops further as stoas were added to the agora and a *balaneion* was built (Prête 2007).

At that point, Amathus had been established for about 700 years and its coastal hills are focal to the architectural activity of the polity. The buildings and mainly the acropolis, are landmarks that shape the coastal landscape, while the construction of the artificial harbour in the Hellenistic Period further enhanced the city's maritime connections with the Levantine coast (Theodoulou 2006: 98). Although the harbour was short-lived and possibly never completed (Raban 1995: 160-161; Empereur and Verlinden 1987: 8, 15), it forms a dynamic maritime landscape when paired with the road system of southern Cyprus. Specifically, the only natural road connecting east and west Cyprus lies along the narrow coastal plain. Bekker-Nielsen (2004: 194-195) comments that both the modern and ancient road used the natural corridor. The ancient road ran close to the *agora* and possibly curved along the western coastal cliff, exited through the west gate and continued towards Kourion to the west (Bekker-Nielsen 2004: 196) (Fig. 2).

The road network developed further in the Roman Period (58 B.C.- 395 C.E.), reflecting the mobility in Cyprus while adding another layer of complexity in the maritime landscape of Amathus. Amathus was connected to Kourion in the west, Kition in the east, and Tamassos in central Cyprus (Bekker-Nielsen 2004: 194-201). The road connecting to Tamassos is attested in *Tabula Peutingeriana*. It is considered to have existed since the Cypro-Archaic Period and used until the end of the Roman Period, in connection to the trade of metals and timber (Bekker-Nielsen 2001: 252-253).
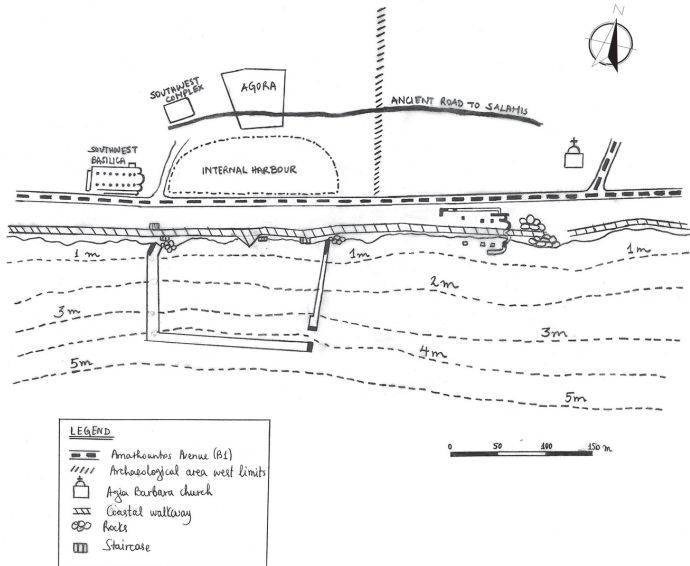
Fig.2. Map showing part of the Amathus coast (map after: Maria Ktori, modified after Aupert, 1996).

Amathus declines with the shift of the administrative centre to Nea Paphos in the Roman Period. It is affected by a series of earthquakes but flourishes sporadically in Late Antiquity and early Byzantine Period (Aupert 1996a: 58-59; Theodoulou 2006: 146). These episodes are reflected in the architectural remains, namely the five Early Christian basilicas. From those, the three-aisled basilica southeast is partially submerged and close to the submerged harbour (Fig. 2, 4). It is the second largest after the basilica of Campanopetra in Salamis, and dates in the second half of the 5th c. C.E. Its destruction in 653/654 CE coincides with the second Arab raid which forced the inhabitants to permanently abandon Amathus (Prokopiou 1996: 164; Aupert 1996a: 66).

2.2. The harbour complex and the coastal basilica: a fragmented landscape

The underwater investigations conducted between 1984-1986 showed that the inner, circular basin located at the southernmost part of the lower city was connected to the submerged harbour complex (Hermary *et al.*, 1985: 984; Empereur and Verlinden 1987: 7) (Fig. 2). This discovery confirmed the 1976 geophysical survey results (Aupert and Hermary 1980: 221). The French team excavated to a depth of 2.5m in the centre of this basin, finding a layer of mud and sea shells that could be dated in the 4th – 3rd century B.C. and corroborated its use until it completely silted by the end of the Cypro-Classical Period (Aupert 1979; Aupert 1996b: 168-169).

Theodoulou suggests that the basin could actually be part of the greater harbour complex. As it had silted, the need for constructing an artificial harbour was even more important as it would facilitate the military forces of the era (Theodoulou 2006: 149, 230-250). The remains of the submerged outer harbour are still visible today (Fig. 3). The three moles form a quadrilateral basin, with an approximately 20m wide entrance located at the north-eastern corner of the east mole. The east and west moles are 100m long while the connecting north mole is 180m long. As the city walls extend over the moles, the harbour is actually enclosed, a *limen kleistos* (Raban 1995: 161) (Fig. 5).

Fig.3. Southwest view of the western semi-submerged mole (photo: author).

Fig. 4. Southeast view of the coastal basilica (photo: author).

This comes in direct contrast to the medieval writers' perspective, as expressed in written descriptions, watercolours and engravings. The 16th century travellers, Florio Bustron and Étienne de Lusignan had visited Amathus and both described it as majestic, noble and charming. All these elements are directly related to the untainted landscape the two travellers had encountered. In his brief description of the coast, Bustron mentions the ruins of the west mole, mosaic fragments that are related to buildings situated close to the foothills. Similarly, Étienne de Lusignan describes the abundance of ancient relics across the coastal landscape, which formed a coherent unit (Hellmann 1984: 79-80). Several more travellers visited Amathus in the following centuries, and their published notes on the visible archaeological remains reflect the original coherence of the landscape, as depicted by Luigi Mayer (Fig. 6).
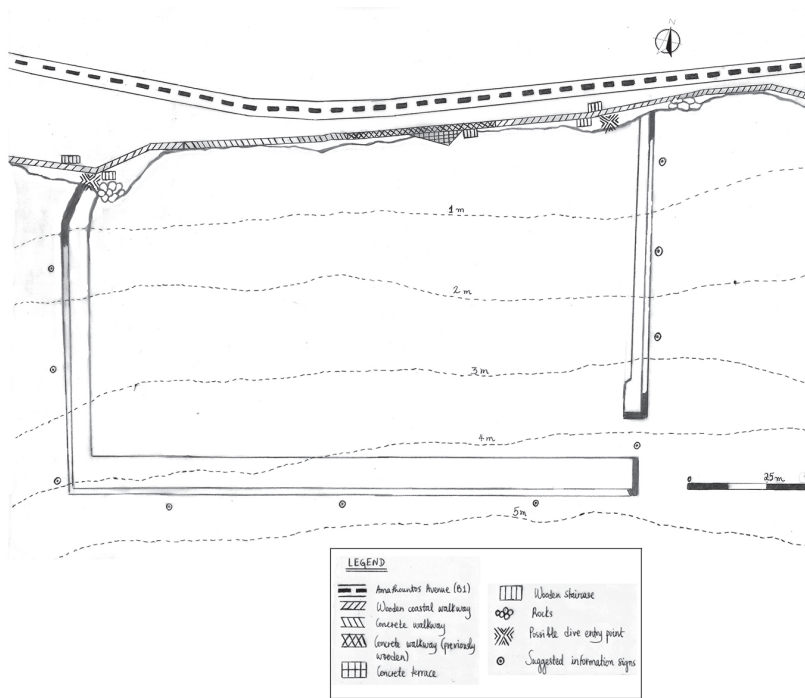
Fig. 5. Map of the harbour area (map Maria Ktori, modified after Aupert, 1996).

Fig.6. Luigi Mayer, Roadstead in the island of Cyprus showing the ramparts of Amathounta and the town of Limassol. 1792, watercolour 36 x 50 cm (Costas and Rita Severis Foundation).

2.3. A submerged landscape in an urban context: problems and prospects

The archaeological evidence from Amathus show that coastal landscapes are areas of intense activity. Any coastal area is a boundary place that attracts humans as it offers more than practical solutions for survival. It broadens the horizon of opportunities and options, which is evident by the development of the modern urban centre of Limassol. The city has expanded significantly and its eastern suburbs are situated as far as Amathus. The urban landscape is connected with the city's history and its post-1974 war economic development. To facilitate the commercial and other needs, a new port was constructed in 1973 and an industrial zone developed between the old and the new port. The industrial zone is also the hub for the leading local wineries such as KEO, ETKO, SODAP and LOEL. Its coastal location enabled Limassol to develop as the island's greatest seaport and tourist resort. This gave another impetus to urban development, while more recently sustainability has become a prominent feature in various projects (Gerasimou and Georgoudis 2011: 112). Considering all the above, and the extensive construction development across the coastline, several issues arise.

Limassol district is very rich in archaeological remains and sites of cultural significance. The development of the city and its suburbs, however, has imposed great stress, especially after the post-1974 war era when Cypriots were trying to recover and rebuild their country. From the mid-2000s onwards, sustainability expanded beyond construction projects into urban development, with a holistic approach that includes the natural and cultural resources of the district.

In an effort to protect the marine resources, the Department of Fisheries and Marine Research published a report regarding the establishment of a Marine Reserve in the Amathus coastal area. The reserve would include the ancient harbour, the *posidonia oceanica* meadows and an artificial reef (Ramos-Esplá 2005: 1). Its main purpose is the preservation, study and protection of the coastal zone marine bottom communities, as well as attract recreational divers.

The design and implementation of the artificial reef focused on the establishment of different protection zones covering a total of 284 ha (Ramos-Esplá 2005: 86-90). According to the proposed plan, all activities at the area should be monitored and regulated; in the case of scuba diving, a permit and quotas should be necessary prior to any diving activities in the artificial reef (Ramos-Esplá 2005: 90).

The implementation of the artificial reef intensified the need for a complete management plan. The absence of legal frame on submerged cultural remains is a problem, and the possibilities presented here are based on the UNESCO 2001 Convention of Underwater Cultural Heritage. However, the *posidonia oceanica* meadows are located at the harbour and complicate the matter, being an important, rare and vulnerable habitat of the Mediterranean Sea (Ramos-Esplá 2005: 25) (Fig. 7).
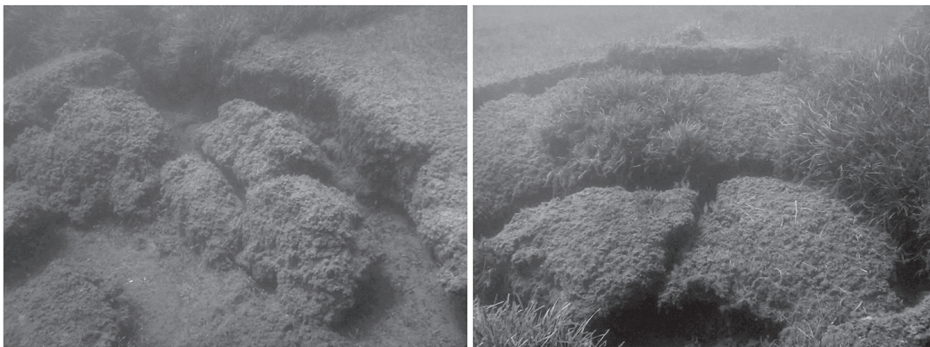

Fig.7a-b. The posidonia oceanica meadows on the harbour structures (photo: author).

As the ancient harbour was never fully excavated, the first step would be to perform a full-scale survey in the harbour area and identify any features of interest. This will ensure that any archaeological features will be documented, excavated and preserved *in situ* prior to opening the site to the public. Thus, the project has the survey and harbour excavation as pre-requisites.

Such activities can take place as early as April, whereas any retrieved will be transferred to the Conservation Laboratory for Underwater Antiquities (Rule 24). The post-fieldwork analysis of the data will provide the project director the necessary information to finalise the proposed management plan. The pending construction of a wooden quay along the harbour remains is another issue that needs to be addressed (Schmidt and Hadjisavva), because it will only damage them.

Several countries have created diving trails, underwater parks or preserves (Cohn and Dennis 2011). Diving trails can always be incorporated in the latter, leading visitors from one area of interest to another and promoting cultural heritage. It could be implemented in the harbour area and provide information to recreational divers. The information offered along the trail should not be limited to the archaeological aspect of things; the harbour has been part of a Marine Reserve for almost a decade now, and all divers should be made aware of the local marine ecology. The promotion of public access to an underwater archaeological site can be achieved with enforcing the appropriate regulations (Rule 7). Hence, the creation of an underwater park would be the ideal solution, given the importance of the site and the sensitivity of the marine environment.

Such integrated approaches have been implemented before, as in the case of Sebastos harbour in Caesaria Maritima. As Raban (1992: 27) notes, the creation of an underwater park was the natural culmination after 15 years of terrestrial and underwater research at Sebastos harbour. The Sebastos underwater park gave significant impetus to the local diving community and enabled the locals to be actively involved in the promotion and safeguard of their cultural heritage (Raban 1992: 27-28). The received feedback allowed them to make the necessary adjustments to successfully establish a 'self-guided and annotated underwater tourist-diver park' (Raban 1992: 35). The Sebastos example is the most relative to Amathus, as the submerged cultural site is in both cases a harbour. Its value lies in the investigation process prior the creation of the park and the later improvements. Cohn and Dennis (2011: 1072-1073) consider it a very effective example because it expands tourism opportunities into one may term as maritime heritage tourism.

The creation of an underwater park is a time-consuming affair both in terms of design and implementation; establishing a dive trail could be a preliminary solution until such a park is established. In autumn 2015, measurements and photos were taken, to explore this possibility further. As seen on the map, there are two possible dive entry points from the beach accessible via wooden staircases (Fig. 5). Divers can always opt for a boat dive along the northern mole. The dive trails can regulate diving traffic and alleviate any stress imposed on the submerged remains. They allow divers to either view the harbour moles externally or explore the basin internally.

Although the coastal walkway adds another layer of fragmentation to the archaeological area, it can be used as a terrestrial trail connecting the harbour and the coastal basilica. Secondly, it can connect the coastal archaeological zone to the greater Amathus archaeological site. A starting point would be the coordinated placement of information signs along the terrestrial and underwater routes, which should be adapted to the different age groups that may use them. There can be several thematic categories: a) brief historical outline of the flourish and decline of Amathus, b) the harbour history, c) the coastal basilica in the early Christian Period, d) the excavations conducted in the two monuments, e) marine biodiversity of the harbour area and the Marine Reserve, f) future plans. One may reasonably argue that the proximity of the two monuments expands the management possibilities exponentially and makes the Amathus coastal archaeological zone unique and very diverse.

2.4. Connecting the dots: from maritime landscape to cultivating 'maritime consciousness'

Raising local and public awareness is crucial in any management plan. Once the underwater survey and excavation conclude, one should consider the promotion of the harbour and its use as an education tool (Rule 35). The harbour can be a teaching tool for primary and secondary school teachers. The use and implementation of Archaeology in a History class makes the class more interesting and helps students contextualise various concepts, understand and use evidence, and develop historic awareness.

There are two different examples developed by Cypriot educators, one focusing on an archaeological collection (Makriyianni *et. al*. 2011a; Makriyianni *et. al*. 2011b), and another focusing on a city as a great archaeological site (Tuğberk, Pachoulides and Makriyianni 2009). The Amathus harbour combines these two approaches, as it is a site where artefacts have been retrieved from. It would be interesting to develop educational material by merging the approaches on one hand, and offering a rather simplified version of that material to be used by divers. This would be a step forward towards cultivating 'maritime consciousness', starting from a young age and resulting to adults respecting and protecting their submerged cultural heritage.

The educational material should include information on the maritime landscape, its original form and explain its current fragmentation. It is also important to convey the evolution process encountered in such a dynamic coastal environment, so the students will further contextualise the tangible and the historical evidence. As a result, *landscape literacy* is integral to the learning process and it will certainly give the educational material a different dimension.

3. CONCLUSIONS

The importance of Amathus makes the ancient harbour a high-profile site by association, while the sensitivity of the marine environment of the area is an additional sign to tread carefully, in the efforts to establish a cultural management plan for the area. Before such an implementation, the full investigation and assessment of the harbour area should be mandatory and the pending problems resolved.

In regards to the future management plan itself, three different practices were examined: underwater parks, underwater preserves and diving trails. There are several international examples promoting each practice, but establishing a regulated underwater park with incorporated diving trails appears to be the optimum solution. The establishment of an underwater park has never been attempted in Cyprus before, and the ancient harbour can be an ideal starting point towards that direction.

The proposed plan should include ways of promoting the site and educating the public. Using the harbour as a teaching tool by both primary and secondary school teachers would be an excellent way of establishing and cultivating a nucleus of 'maritime consciousness,' primarily amongst the youngest members of the society. Other target groups can of course be considered, while the appropriate information material should be prepared accordingly.

The ancient harbour of Amathus deserves attention and promotion at a local and international level. This paper offers a general overview of the current situation and problems and aims to offer alternative solutions and insight to what could later transform into the basis for a complete management plan.

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