

REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS
DEPARTMENT OF ANTIQUITIES
MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND WORKS

European Heritage Label listing – Application Form For

**THE FORTIFICATIONS OF NICOSIA
NICOSIA, CYPRUS**



Nicosia 2007

Country	CYPRUS
Region	NICOSIA
Name of site or cultural artifact	THE FORTIFICATIONS OF NICOSIA
Proprietor of site / property	REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS
Public or Private authorities responsible for the site (control delegation)	DEPARTMENT OF ANTIQUITIES, CYPRUS
Postal address:	<p>A. Department of Antiquities P.O. Box 22024 1516 Nicosia, Cyprus Tel.: +357 22 865 801 +357 22 865 804 Fax.: +357 22 304 408 Email: antiquitiesdep@da.mcw.gov.cy</p> <p>B. The Nicosia Municipality Eleftherias Square Nicosia, Cyprus Tel.: +357 22 797 000 +357 22 797 004 Fax.: +357 22 663 363 Email: municipality@nicosia.org.cy</p> <p>C. Ministry of Education and Culture Cultural Services 1434 Nicosia, Cyprus Tel.: +357 22 800 933 +357 22 800 981 Fax.: +357 22 518 042 Email: eioannou@culture.moec.gov.cy mconstantinou@culture.moec.gov.cy</p>
Geographical coordinates of the site	From 35.1029 N. / 33.21.18 E. To 35.1028 N. / 33.22.21 E.

Reasons for listing	<p>The fortifications of Nicosia were the first point of reference to the European travelers, merchants and visitors who were rushing to enter the great walls before sunset or after sunrise. In fact that the history of the fortifications is so well attested due to the frequent accounts of such European visitors describing this magnificent monument.</p> <p>These Venetian fortifications were designed by an Italian engineer and the three gates constructed were given the names of Santo Domenico, Provveditor, and Giulia Gates. The fact that these fortifications had been attacked by powerful and well-trained armies but fiercely contended, fully justify them as indispensable examples for the study of European stronghold siege and defense artillery techniques.</p> <p>This revolutionary nature of both bastion and stellar city is attested not only in Venetian territories, like Palmanova, but also in the rest of Europe. The bastion front and the stellar city adopted according to the Italian manner in Spain and were to be later successfully perfected by German, Dutch and French theorists.</p> <p>Although at present the fortifications are divided - making Nicosia the only divided city in Europe - in the past they symbolized a spatial unity for the multi-cultural inhabitants of the capital, as well as a means of protection against the turbulent political and military picture of the time.</p> <p>All in all, the experiences of those in Nicosia going back so many years have contributed much to the rest of Europe and proved beyond a doubt to have stood the test of time, a fact still visible today.</p>
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<p>Description of proposed site or cultural artifact</p>	<p>The existing fortifications of Nicosia have a perimeter of less than 5 km with eleven angle bastions in a star shape and three gates which used to open at sunrise and close at sunset. The bastions are pentagonal-shaped with rounded orillons that cover retired flanks (largely resembling the fortifications of Palmanova in Italy, a later work by the same engineer). They stand about 280m apart and have a perimeter of 325m, a face and gorge of 125m and they rise 80m above the curtain walls. The fortifications were surrounded by a deep ditch about 80m wide which at that time was supplied with water from the river Pedieos. Initially the walls were not covered with stone, but the Turks introduced the stone covering after conquering the town.</p>
<p>History of site or cultural artifact</p>	<p>When Nicosia became the capital of the Lusignan kingdom it was only defended by a Byzantine castle. In 1368 king Peter I started the town walls which were continued by king Peter II in 1372 in an unsuccessful attempt to defend the town from the Genoese. Around 1380 king Peter II had the town re-built which was completed by king James I and transformed again by king Janus in 1426. Nevertheless the general appearance of the Nicosia defenses remained the same despite renovations and alterations until the middle of the 16th century.</p> <p>When Venice obtained sovereignty over the island it was decided that a more efficient defense system had to be organized with new fortifications built in more suitable positions. Thus, Giulio Savorgnano was invited with the Proveditore Generale, Francesco Barbaro, to reconstruct the fortification of Nicosia.</p>

	<p>The 16th century fortifications were constructed based on exemplary European renaissance architecture and implemented such innovations in its construction that it formed a standard for military architecture. It reflected the latest military thinking of the day and it converted a cosmopolitan city into a beleaguered fortifications. A ‘Palmanova’ city model, in the Eastern Mediterranean was born, not out of the need for urban planning but the purpose of giving Nicosia besides immediate defense, a definite, organic, enclosing shape, in line with the Renaissance concept of the ideal city form.</p> <p><i>“He [Savorgnano] thought at first to built new walls and raise new forts to the city of Nicosia, about four miles in compass. The Nobility made their usual residence there, the Richest of the inhabitants rendered her the most wealthy and important place of all proved, by reason of its greatness most commodious for a retreat to the country-people in a time of war. Neither did the change, nor difficulty of the enterprise, which had always deterred the preceding governors, discourage Savorgnano”</i> (Lorrini, Venetia 1597 AD).</p> <p>The new wall contained eleven bastions named after Venetian officials and Cypriot nobles and three gates. The heart shape design of the bastion was more suitable for the new artillery and gave better control for the defenders.</p> <p><i>“This enterprise was carried on with such a diligence as surprised all people. For these bastions and the wall were in a short time brought on to a reasonable height, and the Ditch made deep enough to defend itself against a great army. The noise and reputation of this work gave the more joy and hopes to the republic, because it cost her but little and because one of the</i></p>
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	<p><i>magistrates has so happily and speedily finished it” (Graziani, Roma 1627 AD).</i></p> <p>In 1570 the Ottomans arrived on the island and marched towards Nicosia.</p> <p><i>“..they more wisely moved up to the ditches and trenches of the old city, and there by entrenchments got close to the bastions Podocataro, Constanza, Davila, and Tripoli – opposite to each of these they raised at once a royal fort, 80 paces from the ditches, and began to brisk and sustained bombardment” (Serenio, Montecassino 1845).</i></p> <p><i>“..At last after a long struggle on the Podocataro bastion by some mishap many of the enemy got in, and captured the platform and the redoubt... As soon as they heard noise and outcry ... Colonel Palazzo and other gentlemen, ran to help of that bastion, but they were too late.. Then followed the sad and terrible spectacle, the savage slaughter of the poor soldiers who had defended the city, and the nobles, who made a brave stand. ... At last Mustafa Pasha entered the city, and saw the frightful slaughter” (Contarini, Venezia 1572).</i></p> <p>Subsequent to the Ottoman domination in 1570 the walls were covered with stone. However, many European travelers that visited Nicosia refer to its great walls that were breached or decayed.</p> <p>Until the British domination in 1878 the town continued to be confined within the walls with the three gates remaining the sole means of access. Towards the end of the 19th century, when the colonial administrative offices were relocated outside the walls, the first openings above the walls were also constructed with passages in the form of bridges, allowing a</p>
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	<p>more direct connection between these regions and the old town and the moat was partially filled. After the 1974 war the city was divided and now four of the city walls' bastions remain under Turkish military control, while two bastions are in the buffer zone.</p>
<p>System of protection of the cultural property/monument</p>	<p>Governmental (Ancient Monument – First Schedule)</p>
<p>Preservation method for site or, where relevant, cultural artifact</p>	<p>The Department of Antiquities restores and preserves on a permanent basis the part of the monument under its control, including those parts in the buffer zone, systematically monitors and keeps in an excellent condition.</p> <p>The restoration of the fortifications had been one of the priorities of the Department of Antiquities since the 1990s. Systematic restoration plan was launched commencing from the Paphos Gate following a detailed architectural survey of the state of preservation of the walls using a photogrammetry method. Large-scale conservation and restoration work commenced in 1996 with UNHCR funding undertaken by the Department of Antiquities. The two bastions in the buffer zone, the Flatro and Roccas Bastions, were also restored under the auspices of the United Nations between 1996 and 2004 and were funded by first UNHCR and subsequently by UNOPS and USAID.</p>
<p>Policy in regard to the promotion of the site or object (specify both existing and projected programmes)</p>	<p>The entire section of the walls controlled by the Department of Antiquities is well-lighted and is freely accessible with a pavement running adjacent to the walls. Benches are situated at regular intervals both within the moat and across the bastions and steps are found in short</p>

	<p>distances leading to the moat. It offers an enjoyable walk over a partly cobled-pave way with the medieval buildings dispersed on one side and the modern city buildings across the outworks and moat. In addition there are many parking places in the moat, while the main bus stop / taxi stops are found adjacent to the Tripoli bastion.</p> <p>Frequent art exhibitions and other musical performances are organized by the Nicosia Municipality and other organizations that usually take place either adjacent to D’Avila Bastion, where the Municipality and Public Library are located, or at the Famagusta Gate.</p> <p>The Municipality is also organizing weekly walks around the Venetian walls. In particular these walking tours commence from the eastern Flatro Bastion and continue until the western Ledra Palace Crossing and cover a route of approximately two kilometers. These walking tours were established in 1987 and are frequently reorganized in an attempt to present various new aspects of the old city as well as the city outside the walls both to foreign visitors and local inhabitants. They aim to provide a better understanding of the continual cultural development of the city around the walls, especially from the Medieval times to the present. These tours are advertised through the internet and free brochures available at information/help desks.</p>
<p>Cultural exchanges and networking</p>	<p>The first time a traveling exhibition related to Nicosia’s history was organized in 1990. The Dutch museologist Wim Van der Weiden, Director of the Natural History Museum of Holland, visited Nicosia during that period as a member of the European Museum of The Year Award Committee, and soon discovered the long history of the</p>

	<p>city, its relations with Europe and the tragic reality of the present day divided city. In 1991 the exhibition “Nicosia the Divided City” was inaugurated at Famagusta Gate. Since then exhibitions relating to Nicosia and its fortifications traveled to a number of cities in Europe, such as Thessalonica, Athens, Piraeus, Luxembourg, London and Poitiers, as well as Tokyo, Moscow, and New York.</p> <p>Exhibitions such as “The Walls of Nicosia”, organized by the Leventis Municipal Museum as a contribution to the European Cultural Month 1995, aim to promote the framework within which European citizens become fully aware of their common heritage and create stimuli for further engagement of the public in a more dynamic and active manner.</p> <p>In addition other institutions such as ICOMOS Cyprus promotes the protection of our heritage and the spread of its pan-European value.</p>
<p>Heritage and creativity</p>	<p>The moat is used as a ground for sports (football, tennis and basketball courts) and recreation. It includes many shaded gardens and parks that are constantly monitored and cleaned.</p> <p>Frequently cultural events such as fairs and concerts are organized in the moat which make it an excellent place for both children, young and senile adults. In addition the Famagusta Gate is now used a cultural centre. The Gate, which won the Europa Nostra award in 1984 for its restoration, has the ability to function either as a whole or as three centres; the south hall is used as an art or exhibition gallery, the central passageway is used for concerts, theatrical performances, arts and crafts exhibition and receptions, while the north</p>

	<p>hall is mainly used for lectures, conferences, film shows and exhibitions. In recent years, the moat was also used for events organized in respect to the Italian Cultural month, which also included a fashion show.</p> <p>The events that are constantly organized at Famagusta Gate and at the Nicosia Fortifications are advertised through the media, the Municipality and over the internet.</p>
<p>Funding sources</p>	<p>Governmental (Department of Antiquities)</p>
<p>Commitments undertaken to increase the visibility and representativeness of the site</p>	<p>All matters concerning the site is in the responsibility of the Department of Antiquities. The Nicosia Municipality collaborates very closely with the Department and aims in continuing its efforts for the promotion of the fortifications through the walking tours, brochures and guides, posts at the internet and public exhibitions.</p>

Attached:

1. Scientific publication
2. CD-ROM (photographs and Application Form)
3. Map
4. Guide Book and Brochures (five)

SCIENTIFIC PUBLICATION

- Contarini, Pietro. 1572. **Historia delle cose successe dal principio della Guerra mossa da Selim Ottomano**, Archivio Contarini, Venezia.
- Coldstream, J. N. 1993. **Nicosia-Gothic City to Venetian Fortress**. The Anastasios G. Leventis Foundation, Nicosia.
- Graziani, Antonio Maria. 1627. **De bello Cyprio**, Roma.
- Lorrini, B. B., 1597. **Delle Fortificazioni**, Venetia.
- de Lusignan, Etienne, 1573, **Chorograffia**, Bologna.
- Machairas, Leontios, 1483, **Recital concerning the sweet land of Cyprus entitled Chronicle**, Nicosia.
- Molin, K. 1997. ‘The non-military functions of crusader fortifications, 1187-*circa* 1380’ **Journal of Medieval History**, vol. 23: 4, pp. 367-388.
- Parthog, der Gwynneth. 2006. **Medieval Cyprus: A Guide to the Byzantine and Latin Monuments**, Moufflon Publications, Nicosia.
- Salvator, Ludwig. 1881. **Levkosia, the capital of Cyprus**, English edition.
- Sereno, Bartolomeo. 1845. **Commentari della Guerra di Cipro**, Montecassino.
- Walpole, Robert. 1818. **Travels in Various Countries in the relating to European and Asiatic Turkey**, London.