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The North Cyprus Palace at Vouni

By Jan Korfanty

On this mountain in North Cyprus, overlooking the village of Vouni below, stands a palace. As you look at the fragmentary walls, let your guide be a figure from 483 B.C., when Persia and Greece fought to dominate the island. Cyprus is divided into several small kingdoms. Your guide is Himilcar, elder statesman and advisor to Doxandros, King of Marion. Marion is a city not far away, and the Persians built this palace for Doxandros, who has sworn loyalty to them.

Come to the old entryway on the southwest side of the building. Can you hear Himilcar mumbling to himself as he approaches the palace?

"It's been fifteen years since the Greeks of Ionia began the Great Revolt. Did they learn nothing from defeat?"

"Oh, greetings, stranger. I did not see you there. Come here, under the porch. Our hot Cypriot sun will bake your brains otherwise. What is the Great Revolt, you ask? In what cave have you been living? The Greek cities of Ionia in Asia Minor rebelled against our Persian King of Kings. The Cypriot kings who favored Greece, in cities like Soli, also rose in revolt.

"But the revolt was doomed from the start. The domains of the King of Kings stretch from Egypt to India and his army is beyond counting. He crushed the revolt on Cyprus in a matter of days.

"But come in, come in. I am Himilcar, chief adviser to King Doxandros of Marion. Have you ever been in a Persian palace? Yes, it really is Persian, Persian designed and Persian built.

"How did that happen, you ask? During the Great Revolt King Doxandros remained loyal to the Persians. As a reward, the King of Kings built this palace for him.

A pair of guards, their round shields slung across their back and their long swords sheathed, stands in front of the doorway.

In a corner of the room a scribe sits cross-legged on a cushion, his writing board across his knees. At

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his side are sheets of papyrus paper, sharpened reeds he will use as pens, and a clay jug of ink.

"Come down the stairs here on the right. These are living quarters for the senior officials, and for me.

"Across the hallway from our living quarters are the palace storerooms. Here the king keeps stores of food, of cloth, of precious herbs and dyestuffs. See how the large vases, the amphorae, are sunk into the ground. Back toward the front of the palace are the guard rooms. You can hear the guards laughing over a dice game. No, they don't live there. They are on duty, passing time until they are needed.

"Come through into the reception rooms. The ordinary people wait here. On the right is the king's official recorder. On the left is the queen's. People come here to have land transfers recorded, to pay taxes, to bring a case before the court.

"Come, come, don't be shy. The people you see in this third room are the wealthy and the noble. You can tell by the lavish embroidery on their robes. The rich have threads of gold and silver; the noble can wear Tyrian purple, most precious of dyes.

"My own office is on the right side of this last waiting room. Just take a peek and see the jumble of scrolls on my desk. Every day I fall farther behind. Now we go straight ahead into the throne room.

"Come up these seven steps. The steps are broad to announce that the king will receive all his people. Of course he sees mainly the important ones. See the brightly painted columns and the thrones. There the king and queen receive petitioners and well-wishers. The rich and the noble stroll about here, seeking favor, always plotting for favor.

"The queen's apartments are on the left. The king and his son have rooms on the right. Magnificent as these rooms are, with their painted walls and the pots of lilies and roses, I will show you the real wonder of the palace.

"See here behind the King's chamber? Two bathrooms with toilets and beyond them, a hot bath. The water comes from our own cisterns and is heated and piped in. You'll find nothing like it between Crete and Persia.

"We can go through here to the large courtyard. The rooms all around are storerooms and garrison rooms for the troops. Armor and weapons are stored here, along with food supplies. See the well? It goes into a cavern we have cut into the very mountain. It serves as one of many cisterns that hold winter rain for us to use all year long.

"Excuse me, please. I must speak to that fellow over there. You may look through the storerooms and staff quarters that surround this central court."

The courtyard is filled with activity. Muscular men in kilts are polishing armor in the shade. In one corner a smith is putting a new cutting edge on a pile of swords. The cook and her assistants are plucking chickens across the way, singing softly as they work. But here is Hamilcar returning.

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"Who is he? The man I spoke with? No harm in telling you, I suppose. He is one of my spies.

"King Xerxes is preparing to march on Greece. He needs to know which cities will support him, and which might try to stab him in the back. Soli rose against Persia once, and might do so again. So, I have spies in Soli.

"I must return to my work. But you feel free to wander about. May Anat bless you in your comings and goings."

So farewell to the old ghost, from a time long ago when Asia and Europe held Cyprus in a tug-of-war and bitterness divided city from city.

Find out what happened to the Palace by reading the longer version at

<http://www.cyprus-sea-terra.com/articles/vouni.html>

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have any North Cyprus questions feel free to visit the site.

Reasons Why You Should Attend University in North Cyprus

By Jan Korfanty

Whether you are looking to spend one semester abroad, or you want to receive a complete education in a country other than yours, it would be hard to find a better place to attend university than North Cyprus.

First inhabited around 8,500–8,000 B.C., North Cyprus is an enchanting Mediterranean island located 40 miles from Turkey, 60 miles from Syria, and 250 miles from Egypt. At nearly 100 miles long and 40 miles across the widest section, North Cyprus is the third largest island in the Mediterranean.

Although Turkish is the official language of North Cyprus, English, French and German is widely spoken and welcomed by the local inhabitants. Students will have no problem communicating with their professors and fellow students in this cosmopolitan country.

Here is a summary of the five major universities in North Cyprus. Each one is fully accredited and supervised by the Ministry of Education.

½ Eastern Mediterranean University (EMU)

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This is the oldest university in North Cyprus. EMU typically attracts over 15,000 students per year from around the world. The campus is located in the town of Famagusta where there are plenty of resources and night life to keep any student happy.

½ Near East University (NEU)

Located in the North Cyprus capital city of Nicosia, NEU is also a foreign student magnet. The university is known for having made an unusual investment in quality of life and recreational amenities for the student body.

½ Cyprus International University (CIU)

As the name indicates, CIU welcomes foreign students. It is proud to be known as the newest university in North Cyprus and it has formal working relationships with many of the world's finest universities to facilitate student exchange programs and international off-campus learning programs. CIU is located between the towns of Famagusta and Nicosia.

½ Girne American University (GAU)

Definitely a university for American students to consider, GAU is widely known for its challenging and modern curriculum. It is located in Girne which is one of the most interesting and fun places to be in North Cyprus.

½ Lefke European University (LEU)

Established in 1990, LEU is also a relatively new North Cyprus university. LEU has developed an innovative educational model which has been attracting international students who are seeking a well-grounded but somewhat more exciting educational experience. LEU is located in the town of Lefke.

Visit each of these North Cyprus university web sites for complete details.

North Cyprus University Student Accommodations

North Cyprus is less expensive for university students than many countries and this is definitely reflected in the housing prices. All of the North Cyprus university campuses have dormitory rooms available which are available in one, two, three or four-person configurations.

Typical dormitory furnishings include beds, desks, chairs, bathroom and shower facilities as well as amenities like refrigerators, air conditioning and central heating. You can usually expect to find that electricity, water and housekeeping services are included in the annual rent. Rents typically range between 1,200 and 2,000 Euros per year. This works out to be about the same in U.S. dollars depending upon the exchange rate at the time.

Living off-campus is possible as well and there are many local property owners who specialize in letting flats and houses to North Cyprus university students. Sometimes living in the actual community can be an education in itself and it is definitely recommended for the more adventurous students.

Student Permit Requirements

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Students who have been accepted to their desired North Cyprus university should contact the International Student Affairs department for information about securing a student permit. Permits are issued for one academic year at a time, running from September through September of the following year, and must be renewed annually.

Off-Campus Student Activities

North Cyprus is a very popular international tourist destination, so you can imagine that there is no shortage of nightlife and things to do on weekends and school holidays.

No matter what you want to do, including sightseeing, sailing, snorkeling or scuba diving, swimming, tennis, golf, or just laying on the beach, you'll find it somewhere in North Cyprus.

There's an active and exciting nightlife available with clubs, movie theaters and more waiting to keep you occupied. Safety is not a big issue in North Cyprus because the government values the contributions to the economy that tourists and international students make, so crime is kept under tight control.

Don't miss the opportunity to shop at the stores and bazaars of North Cyprus. Remember, the citizens share a common heritage with the age-old merchants of Turkey where haggling for the best price is a historical tradition!

So, if you're looking for a top-quality international education, combined with a varied and interesting lifestyle in a beautiful Mediterranean island environment, you need to attend university in North Cyprus.

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