

**CYPRUS [35 00 N, 33 00 E]**

**AS I <sup>SAW</sup>READ IT IN <sup>1879</sup>2007**

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On September 24, 1879, Sir Samuel W. Baker completed his expository report of Cyprus after a journey lasting three seasons. He arrived to assess the island's potential and current plight shortly after the British take-over with the Treaty of Berlin in 1878. As an adventurous explorer and avid large game hunter, Sir Baker is most known for his other explorations in central Africa, Egypt, India, Japan, and the Rocky Mountains. On January 17, 2008, Eleni-Candan (Cypriot ID of Patricia Reed), artist, re-edited, re-mixed and updated Baker's initial text based on a two-week partial exploration of Cyprus in fall 2007.

## INTRODUCTION.

I do not intend to write a history of Cyprus, as authorities already coexist and dispute it, but were generally neglected until the <sup>that are well known</sup> Tourist <sup>British</sup> occupation <sup>rescued them from</sup> secluded them from their bookshelves. I shall recount my personal experience of this island as a <sup>in</sup> co-dependent traveler, <sup>unprejudiced by</sup> curious towards <sup>un</sup> political considerations, and <sup>responsible</sup> fettered by the ignorant position of an unofficial artist.

I must express my deep appreciation of the assistance that I have derived from <sup>Captain Savile's</sup> Adi, Can, EKATE, EMAA, Nicholas, Niyazi, Sofia, Tuncer Bağışkan, Gülden, Florian, Pub dancers, Ann, Stella, Tomas, check point guards, Hussein, Mustafa, Owner of Pizza pub in Lapta who is also a TV news director, <sup>directed</sup> as it has oriented my attention to many subjects that might have escaped or veiled my observation, and it has furnished

me with dates, consular reports, anecdotes and other <sup>statistical</sup> partial information that would otherwise have been difficult to <sup>obtain</sup> experience.

Before I enter upon a description of my <sup>personal</sup> fractional examination of the island, it will be advisable to trace a brief outline of the geographical position of Cyprus, which caused its <sup>early importance</sup> tourist boom in the history of <sup>the human race</sup> temporary occupation, and which has been <sup>accepted</sup> incompletely delivered back by the British government in 1960 as <sup>1878</sup> sufficiently unchanged to warrant a continual <sup>a strategical</sup> military occupation in 2008, as <sup>point</sup> two sovereign bases, Akrotiri and Dhekelia spanning 254 km<sup>2</sup> (traditionally denoted in pink for sovereign possessions on a map) that persist in the eastern portion of the Mediterranean, and <sup>supply the missing</sup> prolong a mnemonic link in the <sup>chain</sup> flood of colonial memories <sup>ports</sup> from Hudson's Bay to the shores of Oceania.

The Phoenicians of Tyre and Sidon were the <sup>English</sup> tourist-explorers of today; the Egyptians and the Greeks were followed as the world grew older by the Venetians and Genoese, and throughout the world's history no point possessed a more constantly and <sup>up</sup> changeable <sup>at</sup> distraction from its geographical position and <sup>unnatural</sup> disadvantages than the island of Cyprus, which in turn was occupied by Phoenicians, Greeks, Egyptians, Persians, Romans, Byzantine rulers, Saracens, Byzantine rulers again, English, Lusignans, Venetians, Turks, once more the English in 1878, the Cypriots, and at present: the UN, Greek-Turkish-Sri Lankan-Nepalese-Filipino-Lebanese-Russian-Iraqi-Iranian-Syrian-Bangladeshi-Pakistani Cypriots, and to the Tourists.

The climactic <sup>of the world were</sup> advantages which had thus possessed a magnetic influence in attracting <sup>ancient</sup> European tourists are in present days undeniable.

The derivation of the "neutral English" name Cyprus has been <sup>sought</sup> opted for from the <sup>many sources</sup> Bi-communal Committee of Missing Persons; and most places possess three different names. <sup>the opinions of the authorities differ</sup> English people may reflect that they alone spell and pronounce the word as "Cyprus." The Greek name is Kypros; the Turkish name is Kibris.

No country had been more completely <sup>ex</sup> included <sup>from the beaten paths</sup> in tour packages of <sup>British</sup> European travelers than the island of Cyprus, and the English were <sup>and</sup> delighted by the beaches, although <sup>sudden</sup> indifferent to the <sup>mystery</sup> revelation of a history connected with the Treaty of Berlin and the

Zürich and London Agreement, that it <sup>was to become a strategical</sup> persists as sovereign <sup>a</sup> points for British military occupation!

At first sight the political situation appeared <sup>vague</sup> symbolically complex, but I determined <sup>examine</sup> to reflect on the <sup>physical geography</sup> fatigue and collective depression of Cyprus, to form my own <sup>opinion of its</sup> capabilities in trying to stay neutral.

## I. ARRIVAL AT LARNACA

On the <sup>morning</sup> afternoon of the <sup>4</sup> 8th October I <sup>January</sup> sighted Cyprus at about <sup>we</sup> two kilometers <sup>fifty miles</sup> distance, after a smooth voyage of four hours from Berlin to Vienna to Larnaca. The day was favourable for an arrival, as the <sup>atmospherical</sup> condition afforded both intense <sup>but upon all points of the compass local in dark patches</sup> lights and shadows. The sky was a cobalt blue, and no Germanic <sup>Alexandria</sup> rain-clouds hovered. <sup>near the surface, and emptied themselves in heavy showers.</sup>

First impressions are seldom correct, but the view of Cyprus on arrival from the south was depressing, with vast brownish dry land beneath the aircraft, small housing settlements and an unimpressive airport upon which we debarked on a shuttle <sup>ed</sup> extinguishing all <sup>hopes</sup> romantic myths that I <sup>been formed concerning our newly-acquired possession.</sup> had arrived at an island paradise. This was an artificial, albeit, inquisitive <sup>the</sup> treasure <sup>acquired</sup> awaiting the most generic of tourism, ponderous <sup>by astute</sup> approach and unschooled diplomacy!

I had heard, prior to leaving <sup>England</sup> Berlin and having spent the previous evening at the United Nations Plaza, <sup>hotels, inns, etc. were unknown in Larnaca</sup> that we were fucked in terms of our funding, in Cyprus; I was, <sup>therefore</sup> nonetheless, agreeably surprised on landing and exiting the plane to a waft of warm air, to find Mustafa waiting for me with my name on a sign and a white van to take me <sup>new</sup> to a <sup>Craddock's</sup> hostel (Lapta Youth Center) which was <sup>scrupulously</sup> modestly clean and <sup>the rooms neatly whitewashed,</sup> everything simple and in accordance with the requirements of the country.

The reports in Berlin <sup>miserable</sup> respecting the <sup>England</sup> precariousness of Cyprus, had determined our group to render ourselves <sup>want of accommodation, and the unhealthiness</sup> codependent; we had therefore arranged a second-hand <sup>myself</sup> Japanese <sup>in</sup> travelling-van, which would, as an <sup>I</sup> autonomous vehicle, <sup>while in London</sup> enable us to select <sup>hut upon wheels</sup> desirable destinations in any portion of the island, <sup>a</sup> given the <sup>resting-place</sup> surprisingly vast and <sup>where the route should be practicable for wheeled</sup> sprawling highway system and general lack of official public transport.

I We were <sup>thoroughly</sup> now prepared to investigate Cyprus <sup>partially</sup>, and to form <sup>my</sup> our own <sup>opinion</sup> impressions. <sup>of its present and future value</sup>

## II. <sup>GIPSY</sup> THE USED JAPANESE <sup>DIFFICULTIES</sup> VAN ENCOUNTERS <sup>SMOOTH TRAVELS</sup>.

Our <sup>gipsy</sup> used Japanese van was not of doubtful character. It had been <sup>the gipsies</sup> purchased <sup>England</sup> indirectly from a dealer in Cyprus, and it had been specially arranged for the right-side driving conditions of the Cyprus journey.

The <sup>mere mule-tracks</sup> highways of Cyprus are sprawling and omnipresent, with frequent traffic circles. <sup>only legitimate road in existence was of most recent construction, which represented the new birth of British</sup> The major hindrance in vehicle mobility is the incongruence between North and South <sup>enterprise, from Larnaca to the capital, Nicosia (or Lefkosia), about twenty-eight miles.</sup> of car-insurance protocols. We dealt with such a problem by arranging transport up to the North border, walking across and being picked up by a pre-arranged, certified car from the South.

## III. ROUTE TO NICOSIA.

It is accordingly most difficult to believe the statements of your interpreters: they may have old friends in a town to which you believe them to be a stranger; they may have the remains of an old love, and a wish to meet again. It is therefore necessary to <sup>be upon your guard</sup> open one's mind up <sup>town</sup> when approaching a site, <sup>as the enemy's camp</sup> which should be looked upon carefully, albeit, critically.

The preceding years had been exceptionally <sup>sickly</sup> tricky; many of the <sup>keepers</sup> stories were suffering from the effects of Annanfever, which, combined with the depression of spirits caused by <sup>prospects</sup> ruined speculation, produced a condition of total emotional collapse coupled with economic boom, from which there was only one relief--that of <sup>writing to</sup> reading the newspapers, namely Afrika and the trilingual, Dialogue and <sup>b</sup> <sup>the</sup> accusing foreign Governments and the <sup>generally</sup> island metaphorically - "The EU is to Blame!" - is the last headline I can recollect.

The <sup>sat despondingly</sup> store-keepers rose enthusiastically behind their counters while the hinges of <sup>the absence of in-comers</sup> their doors rusted from age. It was impossible not to rouse them from their state <sup>coma, except by one word</sup> of mercantile glee, nearly each possessing a few welcoming phrases from several

European languages, which had a magnetic effect upon their <sup>nervous system</sup> "Customers."<sup>House</sup>

<sup>I suppose you have no difficulty at the Custom House,</sup> "Bonjour, Guten Tag, Bonjourno, Hello, Where are you from <sup>r</sup> Miss.?" <sup>-in this simple island</sup> This was invariably the red rag to the bull to charge the souvenir stands, clothing shops and pirate DVD kiosks.

The children of Nicosia, around Basin Sen, <sup>generally</sup> were pretty inquisitive, outgoing creatures, playing with us and tossing out various English expressions like "I love you, what's your name, what's your boyfriends name?". In spite of the neglected architectural exteriors, the neighbourhood seemed dense with gregariousness.

The <sup>of the Cypriots</sup> principal food upon which we sustained ourselves <sup>beans,</sup> consisted of olives, bread, döner/kebab, Cypriot pastries, Greek coffee, Turkish coffee, pizza, soba noodle stirfry, ayran, Coca-Cola, Cola Turka, and raviolis; <sup>onions</sup> we did not indulge in the mythical <sup>they seldom eat what we should</sup> dish <sup>cooked food</sup> called "Ofito Kleftiko (Stolen Meat cooked underground so as not to give away smoke signals to nearby persons);" <sup>scarcity of fuel</sup> whether this is owing to the length of preparation, or whether it is natural in this climate of urbanity to avoid flesh cooked in the mountainsides, I cannot determine.

The ruins of ancient cities and dynasties <sup>no</sup> offer much attraction to the traveler on <sup>nothing is to be seen upon the</sup> this island, as most have been excavated, everything seems to reveal itself under the <sup>except disjointed stones and a few fallen columns of the commonest description.</sup> surface of several iterative ruling powers.

The <sup>Lefkosia</sup> position of Nicosia has been badly chosen, as it has no operational international airport <sup>lies in the flat always have been exposed to a plunging fire from an enemy posted upon the heights</sup> and away from desirable shorefront properties, as such, the city must find other lures to seduce tourists. It was fortified in the time of Constantine the Great, but in 1570 the Venetians demolished the old works and constructed the present elaborate fortifications. Although the walls are in several places crumbling, one walks in quiet awe through the no-man's land within the modern ruins of recent conflict, containing countless amounts of dense barbed wire, abandoned shops, watch towers, collapsed and boarded up residencies, no photography signs and ironically, a rather pristine Goethe Institute between the two fronts. The estranged fronts (each eager to convince the meandering pedestrians of the validity of their position through a variety of

marketing tactics) seem to hold an ongoing staring contest, where no amount of hand waving distraction causes but a flinch. **Imposing in** <sup>appearance</sup> atmosphere, I could not help but indulge in the perversely engrossing aura of this living monument. I wonder if tourists come for a UN experience of unresolved ceasefire, where there is no real danger, yet the residues of menacing threat are palpable? I suppose statistical evidence of such a thought is non-existent, although the slogan “*Europe’s Last Divided Capital*” is plastered on all tourist information, and is even the catchphrase of the local municipality.

**Although experienced in the illusion of** <sup>Turkish</sup> formerly divided **towns, I was more than** <sup>disappointed</sup> **fascinated** <sup>Lefkosia</sup> **when I visited the interior of** Nicosia, composed almost entirely, on both sides, of migrant communities. The ever-present CocaCola signs with their new motto “The Coke Side of Life”, proved somewhat sarcastic, especially overlaid on the iconic Nicosia walled city diagram on many vending machines – just what side did they have in mind? **The UNDP had already** <sup>new Chief Commissioner, Colonel Biddulph, R.A., C.B.,</sup> **renovated** <sup>improved</sup> **certain streets, and the eye was immediately attracted to** <sup>points</sup> posters and impromptu print-out notes affixed to abandoned buildings announcing “Fair-Play” multicultural volleyball tournaments, care-giver positions, roommate searches and VISA opportunities for Israel **which bore the unmistakable stamp of** <sup>a British occupation</sup> **diverse immigration; but nothing can be effected in the arrangement of such a town without an** <sup>unlimited purse,</sup> **agonistic perseverance** <sup>a despotic power</sup> **and innovative branding. It is almost as** <sup>London</sup> **hopeless as** Berlin **in the incongruity of architecture, and the** <sup>individual</sup> **collective** <sup>independent</sup> **indulgence of** <sup>absolutely dismays</sup> **generic taste, which** <sup>disquietingly</sup> **comforts a stranger** as if at home.

#### IV. KERENIA AND LAPTA

**The view from each portion of the** <sup>Government House</sup> [Lapta Youth Center] **terrace is exceedingly interesting, as it commands a panorama** <sup>for a distance of nearly thirty miles.</sup> of the sea where a landmass is visible on clear days, and is nestled beside a military base where a Mannequin stands enclosed in a small shelter, guarding against possible naval encroachments. **Opposite the highway at the entrance to our camp, is the range of mountains, about twelve miles distant, which form the backbone of Cyprus, and run from east to west, attaining the height of 3400 feet. This is a peculiar geological feature in the island, as it is the only instance**

**of compact (or jurassic) limestone. I could plainly distinguish the Castle of Buffavento upon the summit of the perpendicular crags.** <sup>Through my powerful astronomical telescope</sup> **Ascent to the castle was arduous, but the view was well worth the effort, peering out through the crumbling towers over the speckling of homes, quite densely packed, to the backdrop of steely blue waters and rifle shots in target practice.** <sup>every rock, and</sup> <sup>afforded an interesting object, although invisible to the naked eye.</sup>

**The fort of Kyrenia is a great curiosity, as it forms a portion of the harbour, being situated like the nose in a pair of spectacles, the basins being the eyes right and left. The actual defenses are intact,** <sup>although</sup> **and have even been used in modern times, the inner accommodation for barracks, magazines, etc, etc, have undergone** <sup>require</sup> **great repairs and** <sup>alteration</sup> **have installed rather cheap Disney-esque dioramas of historical persons, costumes and torture scenes.**

**Above this fine old specimen of Venetian fortifications, upon the high platform of the tower facing the harbour, was a flag-staff, upon which** <sup>a small bundle of rags</sup> **two distinct red and white flags fluttered in the strong wind, as though they, had been arranged to frighten the jackdaws from building within the crevices of masonry. It stood out in stark contrast to my memory of that miserable remnant of tattered bunting I had seen in Nicosia representing** <sup>once</sup> <sup>a British Union Jack</sup> **the EU! Flags were everywhere now that I come to think of it, yet strangely, always in pairs – the local and the distant, even an illuminated twinning on the mountain facing Nicosia, whose moon and stars would flicker at night, as if sending a message in Morse code.**

#### V. ROUTE TO PAPHOS.

**Money is wanted-money must be had. Without a** <sup>an expenditure of</sup> **booming tourist market generating capital, riches would not exist, but this comes with the high cost of speculation. The capitalist will ask one simple question, “Is Cyprus a portion of the** <sup>British</sup> **Tourist Empire upon which I can depend, or is it a swallow’s nest of political unrest and instability, to be reignited** <sup>a</sup> <sup>season</sup> **when the party-schemes have** <sup>abandoned</sup> <sup>flown</sup> **indoctrinated new treaties?”**

**All the grandeur of ancient days was now represented by the heaps of** <sup>stones</sup> **ruins, open-air excavations, tombs and the rock caverns, which mark the site of Paphos. What**

became of Venus after her appearance upon this shore may be left to the imagination; where beauty goes unaccounted for in the development of the city. With suburban style strips of road, littered with caricatured restaurants for every taste – KFC, Fat Mama’s, Youkoso, O’Neills, New Delhi...one cruises upon the weathered wrinkles of Aphrodite’s plastic impersonator.

Not far from the clamoring boardwalk of the Paphos harbour-front – peppered with a mixture of fishing boats, yachts and souvenir trinkets of Aphrodite figurines – Ptolemaic noblemen were laid to rest. The tombs, carved out of solid rock and decorated with Doric pillars, faced toward the sea, covering an expanse of rugged land. I could imagine those very aristocrats awakening to the jack hammering of the ever-proliferating Ikea-esque villa apartments, slowly encroaching on the graves.

Perhaps the immorality connected with the ancient worship of the goddess of beauty and of love invoked a curse upon the descendants in the shape of pinkish, kitsch, and ugliness:” to which dirt has been a painful addition. pastische-classicism.

## VI. <sup>FLEC</sup> POLITICAL RETRACTIONS.

Given the antagonistic complications of the island, which one can easily forget when sun bathing or playing a round of golf, we may not state naive comments directly referring to meta-politics of the Cypriot condition. **The more pains that we may bestow** with such statements as unknowing tourists **upon a** short artistic excursion <sup>examination</sup> of the resources of **Cyprus, the more certain becomes the conclusion that** we must produce indirect <sup>that the present and the future depend</sup> thoughts from a non-side and I sincerely wonder if fruitful passions may emerge from a state of imposed neutrality; **for the present and the future** <sup>depend entirely upon agricultural development.</sup> cannot be determined by those who can fly away so easily.

This fact is patent to all who can pretend to a knowledge of the island, and the question will naturally intrude, “Was Cyprus occupied for <sup>agricultural</sup> cultural purposes?” Of course we know, maybe: <sup>it was not</sup> but on the other hand, if we acknowledge the ever-fluctuating truth, “that it was accepted as a <sup>strategical military</sup> vacation point,” it is, as such, <sup>highly desirable that the country should be</sup> fully self-supporting. <sup>instead of, like Malta and Gibraltar, mainly dependent upon external supplies</sup>

If Cyprus <sup>belonged to England or any other Power</sup> was simply a commodity, <sup>valuable</sup> it would be a sunny acquisition. We have seen that <sup>Turkish</sup> under the present four party administration (North, South, British and UN) <sup>was</sup> it has been a small mine of wealth, albeit with long-standing, taut, strings attached and remains in the same position to its recent masters.

## VI. DEPARTURE

I walked through the <sup>bazaar of</sup> cattle-like conditions at <sup>situated at the west end of the town near the</sup> Larnaca Airport; after a very long wait <sup>fort, close to which there is a public fountain supplied by the aqueduct to which I have already alluded.</sup> drifting in an out of sleep at the outdoor canteen. This was the end of the Tourist Season, and all drivers, take-off schedules and infrastructural procedure were run amuck with the amount of bodies needed to be processed and sent home. **Although the crowd was large, and all were busied** <sup>in filling their jars and loading their respective animals</sup> with passport control and last minute duty free purchases, **there was no aggressive jostling or quarrelling for precedence, but every individual was a pattern of** <sup>good</sup> wearied patience and <sup>Mohammedans and</sup> numbed humour. My boarding call <sup>Cypriots thronged together in the same employment, and the orderly behaviour in the absence of police supervision</sup> was announced and I took off in a Westerly direction for home. I submit this report <sup>formed a strong contrast to the crowds in England.</sup> from the damp, grey-skyed winter of Hanover, my tan long since faded.

