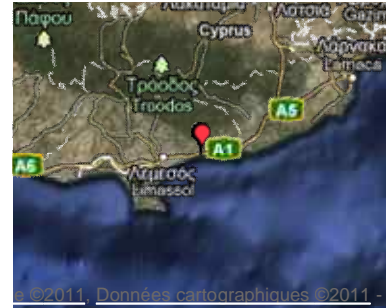


Cyprus - Amathus

The city of Amathus is located in the northern coast of Cyprus, 10 klm. east of the city of Limassol, in an area with intense urban and touristic development. The area around was the territory of the homonymous classical kingdom. A walled hill that overlooks the whole area, hosted the ancient administration center, a temple of Aphrodite and habitations. The city was moved to the northeast of the hill after Hellenistic times. To the south a small silted natural gulf, was probably the first city's port. At the end of 4th century B.C. a closed harbour, which is now totally submerged, was built at its southern side. Human presence in the area is testified by archaeological findings from the 11th century B.C. Native Cyprian populations took refuge in the kingdom of Amathus after the island's conversion to Greek civilization in the 12th century B.C. The city reached its peak during the Iron Age, being a stop post on the seaway connecting the Aegean with Egypt, Syria and Palestine through Cyprus. The discovery of imported goods from these destinations provides evidence to these affairs. The city was razed and finally abandoned in the 7th century A.C. as a result of Arabian raids.



Figures 

Main features

Region	Cyprus
Use	Military
Prosperity period (centuries)	4th B.C. - 3rd B.C.
Existence of contemporary port	No
Findings on site	Yes

General description

The remains of the ancient port of Amathus are today visible underwater. Three moles form a closed quadrilateral harbour basin. The entrance, about 20 meters wide, is located in the northeastern corner of the eastern side. The northern mole is 130 meters long, while the eastern and western are both 100 meters long. The city walls extend on the moles, creating a "limen kleistos" - enclosed harbour. The piers were built using eight layers of plinths, seven of which are preserved. The blocks were used in the facets while the internal space was filled with rocks and rubble. Protective stones were placed to the external side. Tenons can be seen in the two small sides of the plinths, which were obviously used for lifting and placing them with a crane. The preceding natural gulf in the northern side of the basin was obviously included to the new harbour's plan.

Technical features

Construction period (centuries)	4th B.C. - 3rd B.C.
Port configuration	Artificial Harbour, Outer Harbour
Port basin size	13000 m ²

Main wind direction	S
Port land area	km ²
Port entrance	
Change of sea surface elevation	1 m
Sedimentation	
Outer port structures	Moles
Inner port structures	Basins, Wharves
Land facilities	Defence Structures
Construction method	
Neotectonic history	Sink
Shore line displacement	Silting

Function and operations

The ancient "closed" harbour of Amathus was built at the end of the 4th century possibly for supporting the warfare of Demetrios Poliorketes or Ptolemy Soter and it was abandoned, maybe even before its completion, when Ptolemy Soter reseeded Cyprus at 294 B.C.

The naval trade and the war fleet of Amathus were stationed until then in the natural gulf north of the Hellenistic closed port. The basin of this natural port, which is today located under the old national road of Limassol - Nicosia, has been investigated with electromagnetic methods by the French Archaeological School of Athens that excavated the outer harbour from 1984 to 1986.

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Related researches	Archeological, Geological
Findings in museums	No
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Protection
regime

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