

## POSTMODERNIST HOTEL-CASINO COMPLEXES IN NORTHERN CYPRUS

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Recent developments in tourism strongly affect related architecture in Turkish-Cypriot northern Cyprus. Increased investments are made in hotel-casino complexes since gambling was forbidden in Turkey in 1998, and the investments were directed to Cyprus. With the boom of the construction-sector in the northern part of the divided island which started after the reunion plan of UN-General Secretary Kofi Annan in 2003, the number of hotel-casinos increased. The implementation of concept hotels at Vokolida (Bafra) in the Karpas peninsula, is the answer to the challenges and chances of mass tourism. This historical and stylistic-semiotic study on the developments in hotel architecture in northern Cyprus focuses on hotel-casino complexes which comprise postmodernist buildings, the majority of which has been constructed within the last ten years. Today postmodernist complexes exceed the number of hotel-casinos which have been designed in a modernist attitude, or in "International Style". Their design rarely refers to traditional Turkish architecture, but mainly to the western classical heritage.

### INTRODUCTION

Due to its climate, historical wealth, natural beauties and geographical location Cyprus has always been an ideal place for holiday makers. Turkish Cypriots, however, did not play an important role in the tourism sector before the division of the island in 1974. After tourism had gained importance in the overall economy of northern Cyprus since 1974, the government arranged necessary laws and regulations (İnançoğlu, 1995). Because of the lack of natural resources and political embargos, tourism is seen as the best source for increasing national income, for contributing to exchange rate profits and for providing employment opportunities. The official statistics regarding the tourism income prove a doubling of this sector between 1998 and 2007 (Report 1, 2008). However, due to tourism the (architectural) environment is increasingly affected. But a large-scale



Figure 1. Map of Northern Cyprus ([http://www.lonelyplanet.com/maps/europe/cyprus/map\\_of\\_cyprus.jpg](http://www.lonelyplanet.com/maps/europe/cyprus/map_of_cyprus.jpg))

planning and a detailed academic research on tourism and related sectors like 'construction' are still missing (1).

With this study two aims are pursued: firstly to contribute to the knowledge on the development of tourism-related architecture in northern Cyprus, and secondly to supply a stylistic-semiotic definition of the exterior of hotel-casino complexes. The buildings concerned are located in Kyrenia (Girne) on the north coast, in the northern part of the divided capital Nicosia (Lefkoşa), in Famagusta (Gazimağusa) on the east coast and in Vokolida (Bafra) in the Karpas peninsula (Figure 1).

The method of research (2) includes a survey of related buildings, the analysis of scholarly and non-scholarly literature; the analysis of related reports of the Ministry of Economy and Tourism and of a considerable amount of interviews with the Chamber of Turkish Cypriot architects, single architects and authorised hotel staff. The term 'postmodernist' is understood as a style-definition corresponding to the term "modernist" (3). The stylistic analyses refer to classifications proposed in "New Classicism", edited by Papadakis and Watson in 1990. The authors of which suggest basically three classifications of postmodernist architecture, called 'Figurative', 'Abstract' and 'Postmodern Classicism', design tendencies, which are perceivable on other building types in northern Cyprus alike (Kiessel et al., 2008).

## TOURISM AND HOTEL BUILDINGS IN TURKISH-CYPRIOT NORTHERN CYPRUS: AN OVERVIEW

On the basis of the information supplied by İnançoğlu (1995) and the our research, four periods concerning the development of tourism and hotel-buildings are defined: a) 1960-1974 (from the Independence in 1960 to the division of the island in 1974); b) 1974- 1998; c) 1998-2003 and d) after the reunion plan of Kofi Annan in 2003 / after the opening of the borders between north and south, respectively. This study, however, focuses on the periods c and d.

### a) 1960-1974

In a touristic guide book initially published in 1960, Cyprus is described as an ideal holiday destination and it is mentioned that:

"with modern hotels springing up everywhere a new standard of comfort awaits the visitors... There are upwards of a hundred hotels in Cyprus, only a handful of which can be classed as of the international de luxury standard ". (Rüstem and Bro., 1960, 9) (4).

The first hotel belonging to Turkish Cypriots, aiming at tourism business was the Evkaf Hotel in Nicosia (now Saray Hotel), built in 1958-1962 (Figure 2). It was the tallest building within the walled city until then. Designed in the common International Style by the Turkish architect Demirtaş Kamçıl and damaged during the civil war between Greek and Turkish Cypriots (1963-1974), it was restored several times (Rüstem and Bro., 1960; Saraçoğlu, 1984).

### b) 1974-1998

With the reuse of pre-1974 (hotel-) buildings on the coastline, another era in tourism began in 1975. One of the outstanding buildings, the Dome Hotel at Kyrenia, was well known as it had been the oldest in Kyrenia, built in 1935 during British Colonial rule. In northern Cyprus, mainly the

1. Previous master plan studies for northern Cyprus according to the "Development Plan of Tourism in North Cyprus": Draft Master Plan 1996; North Cyprus Master Plan 1997/98; TRNC Tourism Development Plan 1997/98 (Revision in 1999/2000 and 2007), 8-9. Last update: 26-05-2008.

[http://www.ekonomiveturizmbakanligi.com/upload/pdf/2008.05.26\\_20-22-27Turizm-Master-Plan-23-5-08.pdf](http://www.ekonomiveturizmbakanligi.com/upload/pdf/2008.05.26_20-22-27Turizm-Master-Plan-23-5-08.pdf)

2. This study is the result of a symbiosis of the expertise of Yücel Besim (Architecture), Kiessel (Architectural History) and Tozan Kiessel (Architecture, Architectural History). The authors owe special thanks to the Chamber of Turkish Cypriot Architects (and Mr. Bodamyalızade in person) and the Ministry of Economy and Tourism of Northern Cyprus who provided necessary data for this study and who shared their experience during the interviews.

3. Krier (1998, 39).

4. 16 hotels in Nicosia, four in Limassol, three in Larnaka, four in Famagusta, three in Kyrenia, two in Paphos, three in Platres, three in Prodhromos and four in Troodos (Rüstem and Bro, 1960, 91-2).



**Figure 2.** Saray Hotel in 2008, south facade, Nicosia (Lefkoşa),



**Figure 3.** Salamis Bay Conti Resort, casino (west facade) and main hotel building (north facade), Famagusta (Mağusa) .

International Style prevailed, as demonstrated by the pre-1974 buildings of the Salamis Bay Hotel (now Salamis Bay Conti) (**Figure 3**) or the Constantia Hotel (now Palm Beach), both located at Salamis/Famagusta (Rüstem and Bro., 1960, 91; Keshishian, 1985, 106-08; map on page 68).

In Turkey new hotel types with various design concepts emerged since the 1980s as tourism began to be economically supported by governmental institutions. Especially the south and south east coast of Turkey were transformed into places of mass tourism. Some of the new hotel buildings displayed traditional and/or classical architectural elements; others even imitated certain historical buildings, named as 'concept hotels'. Most of them are stylistically classifiable as postmodernist (5). A mediate effect on the architectural development in northern Cyprus is assumed by the authors of this study, resulting in the construction of the postmodernist buildings of the City Royal, the Oscar- and Pia Bella Hotel (all dating to the early 1990s; **Figure 8**; **Figure 9**). However, hotel construction in northern Cyprus developed slowly in these years, as tourism generally suffered at the beginning of the 1990s in the Eastern Mediterranean due to the first Gulf War. In northern Cyprus the economic collapse of the influential Turkish-Cypriot investor Asil Nadir additionally affected the touristic and economic development (İnançoğlu, 1995).

#### c) 1998-2003

A new era in tourism and naturally a new type of hotel, however, began after 1998. 'Gambling tourism' gained popularity since gambling was and is forbidden by law in Turkey (6). On the one hand several already existing hotels of average capacity were equipped with casinos (Report 1, 2008; Report 2, 2007), like the modernist Dee European Hotel (former Sema Hotel) at Famagusta, or the postmodernist Oscar Hotel at Kyrenia (**Figure 9**). On the other hand, capital was increasingly invested into the construction of new luxurious five star hotel-casino complexes (Report 1, 2008; Report 2, 2007) like the postmodernist Colony (**Figure 4**) or Malpas Hotel (**Figure 13 a-b**) at Kyrenia.

5. See the examples: Altun et al., 2005, 186; Altınoluk, 2001, 20, 62, 69, 90, 96, 106, 110, 134. Postmodernism in Turkey can be traced back at least to the 1980s, even as early as the 1960s, if the 're-historicized', 'vernacularized' works of Sedat Hakkı Eldem and others are considered as postmodernist (Yücel, 2005, 141), a term which is apparently avoided to be used in relation with Turkish architects of the 1960s and 1970s.

6. [www.aksam.com.tr/arsiv/aksam/2003/04/01/yazarlar194.htm](http://www.aksam.com.tr/arsiv/aksam/2003/04/01/yazarlar194.htm).

According to a statistical report of the Ministry of Economy and Tourism covering the years 1998-2007 the average stay of Turkish tourists declined steadily from 3,6 to 2,9 days (Report 3, 2008, Table 27, 1998-2007). These numbers support the conclusion that these tourists travel to northern Cyprus mainly for one purpose: to visit a casino.



Figure 4. Colony Hotel, front facade, Kyrenia (Girne).



Figure 5. Rocks Hotel, front and entrance facade, Kyrenia (Girne).

7. Not taking into account the hotels Merit Lefkoşa (Nicosia), Golden Tulip (Nicosia), Colosseum, Pine Bay (Vokolida / Bafra) and Reçacıoğlu (Kyrenia).

8. The Tourism Report (Report 2, 2007) with data from September 2007 lists 20 casinos referring to open hotel-casinos, yet there are four more open complexes, the Malpas, Zodiac and Savoy at Kyrenia and the Merit at Nicosia. Two further buildings are still under construction: the Golden Tulip at Nicosia and the Reçacıoğlu at Kyrenia (Feb. 2009).

9. Many advertisements are observable in local Cypriot media and the *Hürriyet Gazetesi*, a main Turkish newspaper.

10. [www.referansgazetesi.com/haber.aspx?HBR\\_KOD=71878&ForArsiv=1](http://www.referansgazetesi.com/haber.aspx?HBR_KOD=71878&ForArsiv=1)

11. TRNC Tourism Development Plan 1997/98 (Revision in 1999/2000 and 2007). [http://www.ekonomiveturizmbakanligi.com/upload/pdf/2008.05.26\\_20-22-27Turizm-Master-Plan-23-5-08.pdf](http://www.ekonomiveturizmbakanligi.com/upload/pdf/2008.05.26_20-22-27Turizm-Master-Plan-23-5-08.pdf)

12. TRNC New Tourism Development Plan, p.6; 24; 26; 63. Güncelleme tarihi (Last update): 26-05-2008. [http://www.ekonomiveturizmbakanligi.com/upload/pdf/2008.05.26\\_20-22-27Turizm-Master-Plan-23-5-08.pdf](http://www.ekonomiveturizmbakanligi.com/upload/pdf/2008.05.26_20-22-27Turizm-Master-Plan-23-5-08.pdf)

#### d) 2003 to date

After the 'Annan Peace Plan' of 2003 finally, the construction sector has experienced a remarkable boom and the number of hotel (-casino) complexes at Famagusta, Nicosia and especially at Kyrenia increased, thus resulting in a decrease of the occupancy rate despite of a doubling of tourist numbers between 1998 and 2007 (Report 3, 2008). According to the records of the Ministry of Economy and Tourism, in 2007 the total number of certificated hotel complexes in northern Cyprus reaches 130 with a bed capacity of 15832 (Report 4, 2008) (7). A hundred and one of these hotel complexes are situated in the Kyrenia region; Nicosia is equipped with three hotels only, Trikomo (İskele) with 13, Famagusta with ten and Morphou (Güzelyurt) with three complexes.

There are currently 24 open hotel-casinos in northern Cyprus (Report 2, 2007) (8), which are mainly visited by Greek Cypriots and Turkish citizens whereas access is forbidden to Turkish Cypriots. The casino-tourism is being discussed critically (Anon., 2007). However, these luxury hotels provide space for social activities of the local community as well. The relevance of the casinos is proven by the circumstance that contemporary signboards and newspaper advertisements display a stronger emphasis on casinos than on the hotels (9). The beginning construction of eleven concept hotels (including casino) at Vokolida (Bafra) in the Karpas-area is the answer to the chances of mass tourism. Those resort-projects, named Noah's Arc Resort, Babylon Resort, Colosseum etc. are supposed to attract it to the north of the island (10). Their design is originally owed to Turkish architects, but signed by Turkish-Cypriot architects due to local rules and regulations (Anon., 2007; Adanur, 2008, 5-6). Emphasizing the regional differences and introducing the concept of sustainability are the main objectives of the new Tourism Development Plan of 2007, published by the Ministry of Economy and Tourism (11). Its strategy contains a strong criticism of the apparent environmental pollution (especially of the Karpas peninsula) which is seen partially in relation with the uncontrolled construction boom; the Plan further criticizes the insufficient infrastructure, the lack of a representative, symbolical architecture for the capital city Nicosia, and last but not least: the casino-image of the coastal city Kyrenia. It includes a call for an increase of vernacular and traditional architecture and a general intention to develop mass tourism (12). The latter, however,

obviously contradicts the mentioned critics regarding environmental (visual) pollution and uncontrolled construction. Additional difficulties arise from the circumstance that no authority exists which would play a responsible role in controlling or consulting on architectural design (Anon., 2005).

### THE POSTMODERNIST HOTEL-CASINO COMPLEXES IN NORTHERN CYPRUS

In addition to the 24 open hotel-casinos, four complexes have been counted which are still in planning stage or under construction. Among those four are two complexes at Vokolida (Bafra) in the Karpas peninsula. Eight of the 28 hotel-casinos display a modernist style and are therefore not part of the following discussion on postmodernist design (**Table 1-2**)(13).

#### Figurative Classicism

Figurative Classicism is closely comparable with the eclecticism of the 19th century when European and American cities were dominated by facades varying from Neo-Romanesque to Neoclassicism (Stern, 1990, 163-4; Jencks, 1987, 218-23): This group, for which Stern suggests the term "Canonical Classicism" (1990, 162-85), includes buildings which display historical facade-ornamentation and proportions, symmetrical plans and elevations. Essential for the definition of "Figurative Classicism" is not only the usage of figurative elements but also the nearly "canonical" combination of these elements (Stern, 1990, 163-4). The ornamentation in detail, the structure of the facades, even the complete building imitates historical prototypes. As example can be mentioned the "Three Brindleyplace Office Building" at Birmingham (England), designed by Porphyrios Associates in 1998 (14).

*The Colony Hotel and Casino, Kyrenia (Girne)*

City centre; 200 beds; 1998-2002; architect: Ziya Necati Özkan.

The facade of the four-storey Colony Hotel (**Figure 4**) imitates the architecture of a Renaissance palazzo. The horizontal differentiation of storeys by means of differing rustication and window types or sizes is typical for representative Italian city residences. The arched windows in the fourth storey refer back to Quattrocento (Florentine) palazzi like the Palazzo Medici-Ricardi and Palazzo Rucellai (Murray, 1980, 48,62, fig. 34-41; McLean, 1994, 120-5). The balustrade on top of the facade, however, relates the building with Cinquecento palazzi like the Palazzo Branconi dell'Aquila (design by Raffael) or the Palazzo Canossa at Verona (Murray, 1980, 116, 49). Whereas the flat hipped roofs of the Italian palazzi are hidden behind the balustrade, the Colony is provided with a modern(ist) roof terrace. Despite this and although slight abstraction is employed now and then (e.g. on the arcades of the ground floor), the overall impression that the Colony conveys is figurative (15).

*Rocks Hotel and Casino, Kyrenia (Girne)*

Kordon Boyu Street, 314 beds; original building: 1974; postmodernist restoration: 2001; architect of postmodern part: Yücel Köken.

The elevation of the four-storey Rocks Hotel shows a classical horizontal differentiation of base, body and head. Base and body are separated by a cornice (**Figure 5**). This structure is completed by a vertical subdivision: pilasters - carrying the cornice - on the ground level, colossal pilasters, covering three storeys, above the cornice. The 'head' is represented by a high architrave which is visually carried by the pilasters. The "figurative"

13. Interview (2008a), Interview (2008b), Report 5 (2008).

14. Dowling (2004, 166-169).

15. The Colony does not belong to the grouping 'Postmodern Classicism' in contrast to the similarly figuratively decorated Dogmersfield Park of Robert Adam in Hampshire. Stern (1990, 214-15) defines this building with his equivalent term as 'Modern Traditionalist', basically due to the lack of mullion-and-transom windows.

	Name of the Complex	Location	Address	Class/Bed Capacity	Construction Date of Hotel	Opening Date of Hotel	Architect	Seperate Casino Building	Name of The Casino	Opening Date of Casino	Style Definition
1	Liman Hotel	Kyrenia (Girne)	Harbour		Pre-1974	1975		Yes		2008	Figurative Detailing
2	Salamis Bay Conti Resort	Famagusta (Magusa)	Salamis (Yeni Boğaziçi)	***** / 960 beds	Pre-1974	1975		Yes	Salamis Casino	?	International Style hotel/postmodernist casino building: Figurative Detailing (Casino)
3	Rocks Hotel	Kyrenia (Girne)	Kordon Boyu Street	***** / 314 beds	original building: 1974; postmodern part: 2001	1975	(postmodern part): Yücel Köken	No	Rocks Casino	2004	Figurative Classicism
4	Pia Bella /Zodiac Hotel	Kyrenia (Girne)	City Center	**** / 180 beds		1992		Yes	Green Zodiac Casino	2008	Figurative Detailing
5	Club Zeus Hotel	Kyrenia (Girne)	City Center	** / 156 beds		1997		Yes	Club Z Casino	2004	Figurative Detailing (Casino)
6	The Colony Hotel	Kyrenia (Girne)	City center	***** / 200 beds	1998-2002	2003	Ziya Necati Özkan	No	Colony Casino	2003	Figurative Classicism
7	Kaya Artemis Resort	Vokolida (Bafra)	Seaside	***** / 1484 beds	?-2007	2007	Hasan Erdem Ocakci	Yes	Kaya Artemis Casino	2007	Figurative Classicism
8	Savoy Hotel	Kyrenia (Girne)	City Center	***** / 274 beds	2007-2008	2008	Ibrahim Portalci	Yes	Viola Hill Casino	2008	Figurative Classicism
9	City Royal Hotel	Nicosia (Lefkoşa)	19 Kemal Aşık Street	*** / 160 beds	?-1991	1991	Osman Sarper	No	City Royal Casino		Abstract Classicism

10	Kyrenia Oskar Club	Kyrenia (Girne)	16 Hasan Esat Işık Street	**** / 454 beds	original building: before 1974; rebuilding: 1980ies	1988; Yuni Palace added in 2001.	original building's architect: Lordos Burhan Atun	No	Galaxy Casino	?	Postmodern Classicism
11	Merit Crystal Cove Hotel	Kyrenia (Girne)	Seaside of Karavas (Alsancak)	**** / 632 beds		2000; postmodernist annex: 2007.	Ziya Necati Özkan	No	Merit Casino	?	Postmodern Classicism
12	Mercure Accor Hotel	Kyrenia (Girne)	Ağios Georgios Ker (Karaoglanoglu)	**** / 606 beds		2007	Özcan Tuğun	No	Mercure Accor Casino	2007	Postmodern Classicism
13	Malpas Hotel	Kyrenia (Girne)	Ağios Epikritos (Çatalköy)	**** / 268 beds		2007	Osman Sarper	No	Malpas Casino	2008	Postmodern Classicism
18	Recaioglu Resort Hotel	Kyrenia (Girne)	Ağios Georgios Ker (Karaoglanoglu)	**** / 252 beds	2003-under construction		Okan Recaioglu	No			Postmodern Classicism
16	Golden Tulip Nicosia Hotel	Nicosia (Lefkoşa)	Mehmet Akif Street	**** / 270 beds	2009	2009	Deniz Aybars	No	Pasha Casino Nicosia	2009	Postmodern Classicism
15	Merit Lefkosa Hotel	Nicosia (Lefkoşa)	Bedrettin Demirel Street	**** / 250 beds	2007-2009		Abdullah Erencin	No	Merit Lefkosa Casino	2008	Postmodern Classicism
14	Collosseum Hotel	Vokolida (Bafra)	Seaside	****	2008- under construction			?			Abstract/ Postmodern Classicism
17	Pine Bay Cyprus Resort	Vokolida (Bafra)	Seaside	****	2008- under construction			?			Abstract/ Postmodern Classicism

Table 1. Postmodern-style Hotel-Casino Complexes in North Cyprus.

Name of the Complex	Location	Address	Class/Bed Capacity	Construction Date of Hotel	Opening Date of Hotel	Architect	Seperate Casino Building	Name of The Casino	Opening Date of Casino	Style Definition
Saray Hotel	Nicosia (Lefkoşa)	Atatürk Square	*** / 120 beds	1959-62	1963	?	No	Saray Casino		International style
Celebrity Hotel	Kyrenia (Girne)	Lapta	*** / 180 beds	Pre-1974	1975	?	No	Celebrity Casino		International style
Dome Hotel	Kyrenia (Girne)	City Center	**** / 320 beds	Pre-1974	1975	?	No	Dome Casino		International Style (postmodern transformation by facade restorations)
Palm Beach Hotel	Famagusta (Mağusa)	Seaside	***** / 216 beds	Pre-1974	1975	?	No	Palm Beach Casino		International style
Acapulco Beach Club and Resort Hotel	Kyrenia (Girne)	Agios Epiktitos (Çatalköy)	***** / 930 beds	Pre-1974	1982	?	No	Acapulco Casino		International style
Merit Cyprus Gardens	Famagusta (Mağusa)	Iskele	** / 198 beds		1982	?	(Moved to)	Salamis Casino		Contemporary modern
Şerif Apart Hotel	Kyrenia (Girne)	Agios Georgios Ker (Karaoğlanoğlu)	A / 48 beds		1988	?	Yes	Soncino Casino		Contemporary modern
Kyrenia Jasmine Court Hotel	Kyrenia (Girne)	Naci Talat Street	***** / 392 beds	Pre-1974	1990	?	Yes	Jasmine Casino		International Style hotel/postmodernist casino building
Olive Tree Dedeman Resort and Hotel	Kyrenia (Girne)	Agios Epiktitos (Çatalköy)	**** / 250 beds		1990	?	No	Viva Casino		Contemporary modern
The Dee European Hotel	Famagusta (Mağusa)	City Center	** / 80 beds	Restauraton in 2007-2008	1992	?	No	Dee European Casino		Contemporary modern

Table 2. Modern-style Hotel Complexes in North Cyprus.





**Figure 6a.** Kaya Artemis Resort, main hotel building, east (seaside) facade, Vokolida (Bafra). **Figure 6b.** Kaya Artemis Resort, constructional landscape element (Ephesos-library), Vokolida (Bafra).

facade of the Rocks hotel refers rather to Baroque than to neoclassical architecture (Kiessel et al., 2008).

*Kaya Artemis Resort and Casino, Vokolida (Bafra)*  
Seaside; 1484 beds; 2007; architect: Hasan Erdem Ocakçı.

The main building of this complex is inspired by the younger Artemision of Ephesos, dating back to the 3rd-2nd century BC (**Figure 6a, 6b**). This is conveyed by the relief decoration on the lowest drums of the Ionic columns and by three rectangular, window-like openings in the pediment, as depicted on ancient coins. The Artemision was originally a Dipteros with two rows of columns around the cella – the inner row has not been imitated at Vokolida (Akurgal, 1987, 74-6, fig. 82-3). The eclectic relief-sculpture of the pediment refers to three battle-topics in ancient Greek relief sculpture: Amazonomachy, Kentaumachy and the Illias (Trojan war) (16). Two other buildings within that complex copy the facade of the Roman Celsius-library at Ephesos dating to the second century AD (Akurgal, 1987, 130-1, pl. 47). The niches of the imitation at Vokolida are decorated with imitations of Roman copies of original Greek art works, for example the so called “Herakles Farnese” (Boardman, 1995, fig. 37). The apartments are designed in a ‘figurative’ style reviving the architectural language of neoclassical facades (Kiessel et al., 2008). Despite the modern roof structure and the hotel windows around the ‘cella’, the main impression that the building conveys is ‘figurative-classical’.

16. The Gigantomachy is missing. For themes in Greek (Attic) sculpture compare generally: Boardman, 1993, 212-22. In the two corners of the pediment at Vokolida are depicted all together four single figures in relief-technique which were originally placed as fully sculpted figures in the two corners of the eastern pediment of the temple of Aphaia in Aegina (Greece), amongst them Herakles. The topic of that pediment dating back to around 500 BC was a mythic battle against Troy. Another relief-figure at Vokolida (Bafra) is a copy of the south-metope Nr. 30 of the Parthenon at Athens (Boardman, 1995, fig. 91.9.) showing a battle against a Kentaure. Another group of four figures shows a battle of Herakles (with club) and Theseus (with sword) against the mythic tribe of the Amazons. Compare for Greek temple architecture in general and on Ephesos (Gruben, 1986, 348-359, fig. 296-7).

17. The new Caesar’s Palace Tower Addition is designed in a stronger figurative style than the older parts of that complex (Henderson, 1999, 34-9). A comparable accumulation and imitation of historical buildings is demonstrated by the Venezia Palace at Antalya-Kundu, Turkey (<http://www.veneziapalace.com>).

A kitschy effect results from the huge dimensions of the ‘temple’ - building and from the complex’s “fragmentary nature and provocative eclecticism” (Krier, 1990, 33). In so far the Artemis complex is part of an international development of concept-hotels in a Las-Vegas-style, best represented by the Caesars Palace at Las Vegas which includes a casino as well and in regard to which R. Venturi writes:

“The complex program of Caesars Palace (...) is also a combination of styles (...) The agglomeration of Caesars Palace and the Strip as a whole approaches the spirit if not the style of the late Roman Forum with its eclectic accumulations” (Venturi et al., 1977, 50-51; fig. 54-6) (17).

Correspondingly, the extravagant architecture of the Kaya Artemis-complex might suggest extraordinary and unique experiences to the audience. In relation to the comparable extravagant architecture of Las Vegas R. Venturi has written:



Figure 7. Savoy Hotel, north facade of casino, Kyrenia (Girne).



Figure 8. City Royal Hotel, main facade, Nicosia (Lefkoşa).

“For the architect or urban designer, comparisons of Las Vegas with others of the world’s “pleasure zones” (...) suggest that essential to the imagery of pleasure-zone architecture are lightness, the quality of being an oasis in a perhaps hostile context, heightened symbolism, and the ability to engulf the visitor in a new role: for three days one may imagine oneself a centurion at Caesars Palace, a ranger at the Frontier, or a jetsetter at the Riviera (....)” (Venturi et al., 1977, 53).

The Kaya Artemis complex is surely to be added to those pleasure-zones, and its architecture apparently communicates this to the public (Kiessel et al., 2008).

*Savoy Hotel and Casino, Kyrenia (Girne)*  
City Center; 274 beds; 2008; architect: İbrahim Portalcı.

The facades of the Savoy refer to classical Anatolian architecture (Figure 7). Their design, including wooden oriels and projecting eaves, borrows from traditional Turkish (Ottoman) house architecture (Küçükerman, 1991), although the symmetry of the street facade might be influenced by western classical architecture. The wall surface around the central portal, however, is decorated by flat, ornamental, non-figural reliefs, typical for Seljuk architecture, especially around Konya and Kayseri in Turkey (Gierlich, 2005, 370-81, 379-80). Without doubt, the Savoy is an example of a ‘figurative’ revival of Anatolian architecture.

The revival of Turkish architectural elements - may they be figurative or rather abstract - can be regularly observed in Turkey since the 1980s (considering the architecture of Sedad Hakkı Eldem they can be traced back even to the 1960s) (18) The Klassis Hotel complex at Silivri by Şefik Birkiye, for example, combines western and eastern historical details that go back to Roman (or Renaissance-) and to Turkish architecture (Turizm Yapıları, 1994, 9-14). The Soyak Sitesi at İstanbul-Göztepe and the Platin Konutlari at İstanbul-Ulus, both designed by Behruz Çinici, display a similar architectural reference to Turkish architecture (Çinici, 1999, 78-9, 110-3).

#### FURTHER EXAMPLES SHOWING ‘FIGURATIVE’ DETAILING

The hotel-casinos Pia Bella / Zodiac (hotel-opening: 1992/ casino-opening: 2008), Liman (pre-1974 building; opening: 1975; postmodernist restoration is unknown) and Club Zeus at Kyrenia (Girne) display “figurative” neoclassical facade design. Regarding the Club Zeus, it is mainly the separate casino building which has been decorated in a neoclassical style five to six years ago (opening: 2004), the other parts of the complex, dating to 1997 and earlier, have been only slightly affected by the “renovation”.

The facade of the separate casino building of the Salamis Bay Conti (Figure 3) may imitate the typical Byzantine alternation of ashlar stone- and brick-layers (Yerasimos, 2000, 134 (Tekfur Seray)). The row of paired arcade windows in the second storey enhances its Byzantine character.

The buildings amongst these eight complexes whose design might thoroughly convince through sophisticated workmanship and carefully applied figurative detailing are the ‘Italian palazzo’ Colony hotel and the ‘Turkish mansion’ Savoy hotel.

#### Abstract Classicism

Buildings of this group show a restrained classical architectural language: Plans and elevations are also dominated by classical symmetry but the detailing of architectural elements on facades is strongly reduced, as Stern defines it for his equivalent classification ‘Latent Classicism’ (1990, 62,

113, 131). Instead of the usage of one of the three classical column orders the undecorated pillar is preferred; instead of a decorative window- or doorframe, shaped like a classical *aedicula*, a simplified rectangular frame or no frame at all is employed. The classical Roman or Renaissance wall structure, the alternation of arches and engaged columns, is replaced by a row of undecorated arches. The widespread motive of the temple front lacks the usual classical ornamental details of the entablature and pediment (faceted architrave, frieze, *tympanon*, *sima* and *geisa*). The authors refer to the example: M. Campi, Casa Maggi, Arosio, Switzerland, 1980 (Stern, 1990, 124-5).

Buildings which Stern (1990, 62, 131) attributes to a second equivalent group, termed 'Fundamentalist Classicism', exhibit an even stronger abstraction and a reduction to simple geometric forms. Their facades obtain an 'ascetic' character, by the combination of symmetry, geometry and a repetitive pattern of unmoulded, rectangular or square windows, as Aldo Rossi's Cemetery building at Modena proves (Stern, 1990, 132-3).

*City Royal Hotel and Casino, Nicosia (Lefkoşa)*

19 Kemal Aşık Street; 160 beds; opening: 1991; architect: Osman Sarper.

The facade of the nine-storey building is divided horizontally into a two-storey base, a six-storey body and a one-storey head. The storeys are marked by differing surface material and window shapes (**Figure 8**). Vertically a central, 'colossal' glass curtain, ending in a glass barrel vault, is flanked by rectangular blocks which are structured by regular rows of separate, moulded windows. The arch of the barrel vault, together with the adjoining blocks, refers to the 'Palladiana' or 'Serliana' as Mario Botta's 'latent classical' facade of a residence at Viganello does (Stern, 1990, 126-7). The Serliana itself goes back to Roman monuments like the temple of Hadrianus at Ephesos (Akurgal, 1987, 129, pl. 223). The combination of 'abstract-classical' details, a modernist glass curtain and a modern high-rise structure displays an eclecticism which is comparable to the one shown by the municipality building at Corpus Christi, Texas, built by Taft Architects and partners between 1984-1987 (Stern, 1990, 116-119).

### Postmodern Classicism

Postmodern Classicism is a term which was developed in 1980 and later also coined 'Freestyle Classicism' by Charles Jencks (Jencks, 1987, 32-6; Papadakis and Watson, 1990, 156-60). According to Stern's definition of his equivalent group 'Modern Traditionalism' a strong pluralism and eclecticism are the characteristics of "Postmodern Classicism" (19). Historical styles are either modified, authentically applied or combined, either abstracted or displayed in a figurative manner, integrating also the aesthetic heritage of Modernism. Stern admits a certain arbitrariness of this trend of 'Classicism', however expecting it to play an important integrating role in contemporary architecture (Stern, 1990, 63, 187).

As examples are often mentioned: J. Stirling, Staatsgalerie Stuttgart, Stuttgart 1977-84 and M. Graves, Portland Public Service Building, Oregon, 1980-1982 (Papadakis and Watson, 1990, 156; Jencks, 1991, 138-43).

*Kyrenia Oskar Club and Casino, Kyrenia (Girne)*

Seaside/harbour; 454 beds; original building: pre-1974, architect: Lordos; rebuilding: 1980s, architect: Burhan Atun (opening 1988); facade design: beginning of 1990s (20) (designer of facade is unknown); Vuni Palace added in 2001.

19. Buildings which are shown as "postmodern classical" by Papadakis and Watson (1990, 156-83) coincide with Stern's definition of "Ironic Classicism" (1990, 64-111) and of "Modern Traditionalism" (1990, 186-237). However, it has to be considered that the interpretation of the specific design approach of postmodern buildings varies slightly from author to author. Therefore the above mentioned group-classifications and their content are not exchangeable one-to-one.

20. Date of facade design according to the memory of Burhan Atun.



**Figure 9.** Kyrenia Oskar Club, main (south) facade, Kyrenia (Girne).

**Figure 10.** Merit Crystal Cove Hotel, main (west) facade of annex building, Kyrenia (Girne).



**Figure 11.** Recaioglu Resort Hotel, main (east) facade, Kyrenia (Girne).



**Figure 12.** Mercure Accor Hotel, entrance facade, Kyrenia (Girne).

21. Although Western (Baroque) schemes had already been adopted during the later Ottoman Empire (Yerasimos, 2000, 344-349; 355-74).

22. Compare the 'Modern Traditionalist' Dogmersfield Park by Robert Adam (Stern, 1990, 214-5).

23. Compare: Kluckert (1998, 184-273; 264-5; 269; 272).

At first sight this four-storey building (**Figure 9**) displays a "Figurative Classicism" which is characterized by a "canonical" imitation of classical or historical forms (Stern, 1990, 163-164; Papadakis and Watson, 1990, 43-113; Kiessel et al., 2008). The origins of the detailing of its facade, however, lack a precise definition, which is partially based on the poor (abstract?) detailing. The facade apparently consists of a mixture of influences. Rather to western classical tradition belongs the differentiation between base, body and head, the rustication, the balusters and the colossal arcades topped by segmental arches (21). The pointed arches of the slightly projecting, central entrance, however, do not refer to Gothic, but to classical eastern architecture. This eastern tradition is recognizable in the rectangular foyer alike, which is surrounded by pointed arches and covered by a dome on abstracted muqarnas in the center, reminding of the interior of early-Ottoman mosques like the Orhan Gazi Cami at Bursa (Yerasimos, 2000, 158-160).

This eclecticism or non-"canonical" application of 'figurative' architectural details, however, contradicts the concept of 'Figurative Classicism' or Stern's definition of 'Canonical Classicism' (1990, 62, 163-164), whereas it demonstrates characteristics of "Postmodern" or 'Freestyle Classicism'. Whether a theory-compliant 'figurative' facade had initially been intended but not realized, due to a lack of stylistic knowledge, or whether the present mixture is the result of a deliberate eclecticism, can not be ascertained. The result is, anyhow, a 'postmodern-classical' building.

*Merit Crystal Cove Hotel and Casino, Kyrenia (Girne)*

Seaside of Karavas (Alsancak); 632 beds; opening: 2000; architect: Ziya Necati Özkan; postmodernist annex: 2007.

The recently finished six-storey annex building to the seven years old Merit Hotel refers 'figuratively' to the traditional Turkish house (Küçükerman, 1991), by projecting eaves, oriels, the pretence of wooden architecture and the ornamentation of parts of the wall surfaces with patterned and coloured ceramic tiles (Figure 10). 'Postmodern-classical' is the combination of these figurative details with a multistorey structure, iron staircase and modern panorama-windows without a mullion-and-transom structure (22).

*Recaioglu Resort Hotel, Kyrenia (Girne)*

Agios Georgios Ker (Karaoglanoglu); 252 beds; under construction since 2003; architect: Okan Recaioglu.

The main building of the four-storey complex is organized on an L-shaped plan (**Figure 11**). The front facade, dominated by a projecting, arcaded central block, is slightly asymmetrical on the left and right corners but emphasizes the entrance. The front is decorated by three triangular gables - two on the right, one on the left side of the centre, without *sima* or *geison* and showing each a "broken" peak. Additionally five onion-spires crown the building, the biggest of them on top of the entrance. The onion spires might refer to Austrian and especially eastern European Baroque (23). The superimposed pillars at the corners of the central projecting block are abstracted versions of columns. Moulded frames with keystone are attached on small 'modernist' strip windows at the left side of the front facade. The building demonstrates a kitschy and 'non-canonical', 'postmodern-classical' eclecticism based on 'figurative' detailing which is best understandable by the pavillion-architecture and the landscape elements in the courtyard.



**Figure 13a.** Malpas Hotel, north (seaside) facade, Kyrenia (Girne).



**Figure 13b.** Malpas Hotel, north (seaside) facade detail, Kyrenia (Girne).

*Mercure Accor Hotel and Casino, Kyrenia (Girne)*

Seaside of Agios Georgios Ker ( Karaoğlanoğlu); 606 beds; opening: 2007; architect: Öztan Tuğun.

The four-storey building consists of three connected blocks (**Figure 12**). The tripartite complex presents a slight overall asymmetry due to site conditions. It is characterized by a differentiation between ground and upper storeys, by the symmetry of the single landside facade elevations which consist of a repetitive pattern of windows and by a monumental, central and four-storey high entrance covered by a glass curtain. The massiveness of the building conveys the impression of (Venetian) fortress architecture (**24**).

Although looking homogeneous at first sight, the building doubtlessly features an eclectic composition: The abstraction of classical facade elevations, the glass curtain of the entrance, the concrete *brise-soleil* applied in the fourth storey, the functional asymmetry of the central seaside facade, all these elements relate the Mercure Accor Hotel more with 'Postmodern' than with 'Abstract Classicism'.

**Figure 14a.** Merit Lefkoşa Hotel, south east elevation, Nicosia (Lefkoşa).

**Figure 14b.** Merit Lefkoşa Hotel, detail from ground floor underconstruction, Nicosia, (Lefkoşa).





Figure 15. Golden Tulip Lefkoşa Hotel, west facade, Nicosia (Lefkoşa).

*Malpas Hotel, Kyrenia (Girne)*

Agios Epikitos (Çatalköy), 268 beds, opening: 2007 (casino 2008); architect: Osman Sarper.

The exterior of the four-storey Malpas Hotel (**Figure 13a, 13b**) is the postmodernist version of the modernist exterior of the Grand Azur Hotel at Marmaris (Turkey) (25). The similarities between these two complexes are even recognizable in their landscape design. The curvilinear forms of the buildings can be traced back to the more expressive examples of the International Style of the 1920s. Rows of circular windows refer to portholes and to the ocean-liner which used to be a widespread symbol in modernist architecture since the 1920s (26). In contrast to the Grand Azur the Malpas displays a symmetrical entrance facade which is almost hidden at the backside of the building. Whereas the grid pattern of the elevation of the Grand Azur emphasizes (in a modernist manner) the horizontal, the grid of the Malpas is topped by abstract arches which emphasize the vertical and symbolize an arcade. The attribution of the Malpas Hotel to "Postmodern Classicism" is due to the combination of its modernist and 'abstract-classical' characteristics.

*Merit Lefkoşa Hotel and Casino, Nicosia (Lefkoşa)*

Bedrettin Demirel Street; 250 beds; 2007-2009 (casino opening in 2008); architect: Nadir Hasbora; facade designer: Abdullah Erencin.

The elevation of the 12-storey tower-like hotel-building is differentiated between base, body and head (**Figure 14a, 14b**). The moulding of the figurative pointed arches of the base and the abstracted trefoil arches which decorate the top of all four facades, prove that the intended architectural reference is the Gothic style. The medieval heritage of Nicosia (and of the island) is surely the background of this decoration. The Gothic character, however, is much weaker than, for example, the one of the figurative Chicago Tribune Tower (1922-24) (27), designed by Raymond Hood. The Merit Lefkoşa Hotel displays abstraction of historical details, figurative decoration and a modern roof structure, all of which contribute to a ,postmodern- classical' eclecticism.

*Golden Tulip Nicosia Hotel and Casino, Nicosia (Lefkoşa)*

Mehmet Akif Street; 270 beds; 2006-2009; architect: Deniz Aybars.

The elevation of the circular-shaped high rise building is characterized by a horizontal differentiation of base, body and head, by an alternation of horizontal and vertical decorative elements and the colours white, black and red (**Figure 15**). The square windows are arranged in groups of two within white horizontal rows. The different rows are separated from each other by a white, framed horizontal band. Black and red storey-overlapping rectangular frames contribute to the pictorial quality of this building.

Plan and elevation of the rotunda which complete more than a half-circle make this hotel complex extraordinary. The circle was thought to be an ideal geometric form since antiquity. Circular or centralized plans were adopted for Pagan temples, Christian baptisteries and memorial churches, used as well during Renaissance and later for plans of ideal cities, churches and villas (McLean, 1994, 116-9). The plan of the hotel building might come out of this tradition. Through its height the building conveys the impression of a tower-like 'Stadtkrone' (28); through its shape it resembles a circular building of an Italian Quattrocento painting which displays the centre of an ideal city (McLean, 1994, 118, fig. at bottom). The strong

24. Enlart (1987, 416-27 (Kyrenia); 444-53 (Famagusta)).

25. Altınoluk (2001, 7-19).

26. Compare Hans Scharoun's Hostel for Single People and Newly-married Couples (Breslau 1929) in Syring and Kirschenmann (2004, 32-7). On the ocean-liner, see: Kähler (1981); Curtis (1987, 108-109; 175; 182; 191; 287).

27. See: Khan (1998, 118).

28. On the concept of towers and the 'Stadtkrone' during the 1920s compare: Pehnt (1994, 57-62).

29. The pictorial quality is comparable with Michael Graves' Portland Public Service Building from 1980-82 which has been associated with Art Deco alike (Stern, 1990, 82-3).

30. Interview (2008 b), Ministry of Economy and Tourism. Images of the projected outlook of the coastline provided to the authors.

31. Compare: Stierlin (1996, 160-81; especially 161; 176-7).

abstraction of classical details, colour contrasts and modern materials, finally the Art Deco-like decoration of the facade (29) relates this building to a freestyle 'Postmodern Classicism'.

These seven hotel-casino buildings demonstrate a broad variety of postmodernist design. However, only three of them might convince the audience due to balanced, non-kitschy architectural details and a thoughtful figurative application or abstraction of historical references. These are the 'Turkish mansion' annex of the Merit Crystal Cove Hotel, the 'postmodernized ocean-liner' Malpas Hotel in Kyrenia, and the 'ideal' central-plan building of the Golden Tulip hotel in Nicosia.

#### **Other Planned 'Pleasure Zones' at Vokolida (Bafra)**

Apart from the Kaya Artemis which had been discussed under 'Figurative Classicism', ten other concept-hotels/resorts (including casino) are planned on the coastline of Vokolida, few of them are already under construction (30). Besides the 'kitschy-figurative' Artemis Resort at least two more complexes will display a postmodernist design like the rather 'abstract' Colosseum Hotel which will feature the superimposed facade structure of the famous amphitheatre in Rome. The projected Pine Bay Cyprus Resort at Bafra will refer in a highly abstract, maybe even 'fundamentalist' manner to the Roman emperor Hadrianus, namely to his Villa Hadriana at Tivoli, imitating the Villa's deliberate asymmetrical arrangement of building complexes and including an "abstract" version of Hadrian 'Teatro Marittimo' (31).

#### **CONCLUSION**

Eighteen out of 28 hotel-casinos in northern Cyprus consist of buildings exhibiting a postmodern style (Table 1-2). The earliest postmodernist hotel design is represented by the rebuilt Oscar Hotel and the City Royal Hotel dating back to the early 1990s, succeeded by the Colony Hotel (1998-2002) and the Rocks Hotel (2001).

At Kyrenia the majority of eleven postmodernist complexes can be identified. The famous Dome Hotel, in its modernist origins dating back to 1935, is not exactly classifiable due to postmodern restoration(s). Three hotels are identifiable as postmodernist in Nicosia. A postmodernist facade-redesign of a formerly existing casino building can be observed on the site of the international-style Salamis Bay Conti, located close to Famagusta. At Vokolida at least three complexes belong to the focus of our study. The number of 18 hotel-casino complexes which include postmodernist buildings clearly outnumbers the ten complexes which are composed of "modernist" buildings (Table 2).

The significance of the casinos is proven by local signboards and newspaper advertisements which display a stronger emphasis on casinos than on the related hotels. It may be assumed that the general postmodernist-design trend in northern Cyprus affected hotel-casino design at least partially due to the very establishment of casinos. This hypothesis may be supported by the examples of three hotel-casinos, the Club Zeus and the Jasmine Court Hotel in Kyrenia and the Salamis Bay Conti Resort at Salamis. In the latter two cases only the casino was 'decorated' by a postmodernist facade, whereas the pre-1974 modernist hotel building has not been redesigned. In the case of the Club Zeus a modern-style complex has been partially transformed into a postmodernist



32. On contextuality: Jencks (1989, 22).

'something', initiated by the addition of a postmodernist casino, at a time when the borders between north and south had been opened in 2003.

Noteworthy is the fact that generally the design of postmodernist buildings in Turkish-Cypriot northern Cyprus most rarely refers to the architectural past of the Ottoman period or to Cypriot vernacular architecture, but mainly to the western classical heritage. Postmodernism began as a wide social protest against the destruction of local culture by rationalisation and by the International Style (Jencks, 1987, 27-9). Northern Cyprus, however, demonstrates postmodernist architecture which has obviously become as international and non-'contextual' as the International Style (Kiessel et al., 2008) (32).

The amount of eight 'figurative' hotel-casino buildings in northern Cyprus almost equals the seven complexes which display an "Abstract" or 'Postmodern Classicism' (not taking into account two projected complexes at Vokolida (Bafra)). Not clear to analyse is, however, the profile of people who have been influential on the design of the buildings: the operators of the hotels or the operators of the casinos, who do not coincide in all cases with each other.

Although these (casino-equipped) hotels are considered to be more unique and attractive in comparison to other primarily function-oriented types, their enforced development in northern Cyprus might raise questions concerning design-taste and environment. Obvious is the strong increase and influence of postmodernist design in hotel-casino buildings in recent years, although all building-types are under the trend. Due to the ongoing trend in hotel-casino construction, modern-style solutions are not expected to play a dominating role in the coming years either. The postmodernist hotel-casino complexes represent just the visible peak of a general tendency which is severely changing the outlook of the country's architectural environment. Although a beginning awareness of and a discussion on design-quality and semiotics of contemporary architecture exists among related institutions, an eclectic, often non-contextual accumulation of styles is very likely to be the architectural future of northern Cyprus.

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## KUZAY KIBRIS'TA POST-MODERN OTEL-KUMARHANE YAPILARI

Kuzey Kıbrıs'ta turizm sektöründeki yeni gelişmelerle birlikte mimari yapı da değişimler göstermiştir. 1998'de Türkiye'de alınan kumar yasağı kararından sonra, bölgedeki turizm yatırımları özellikle 'otel-kumarhane' komplekslerine kaymış, dolayısıyla bu yapı türlerinin sayısı artmıştır. Birleşmiş Milletler Sekreteri Kofi Annan'ın hazırladığı 2003 tarihindeki birleşme planından sonra kontrolsüzce gelişen yapılaşmayla 'otel-kumarhane' türü yapılar daha da çoğalmıştır. Özellikle Karpaz / Bafra bölgesinde başlayan tema oteller, kitle turizmine yanıt olarak ortaya çıkmıştır. Konuyu üslupsal-semiotik ve mimarlık tarihi açısından ele alan bu çalışma, Kuzey Kıbrıs'taki turizm mimarlığının gelişimi üzerine kurgulanmış; Girne, Lefkoşa, Gazi Mağusa ve Bafra'da inşa edilen ve özellikle postmodern üslupta olan 'otel-kumarhane' türü yapılar üzerine odaklanmıştır. Çalışmada sayıları hızla artan bu tür otel yapılarının çoğunlukla son on yıl içinde inşa edildiği ve modernist- Uluslararası Üslup

eğilimi barındıranlardan daha fazla sayıda olduğu görülmüştür. Sözü edilen postmodern yapıların çoğunlukla batı kökenli klasik öğelerden oluşan, nadiren de geleneksel Türk mimarisi öğelerini anımsatan ve yansıtan yaklaşımlar içinde oldukları saptanmıştır.

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