

## **St. Dominic church waiting to be explored in the oldtown of Famagusta**

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### **1 Abstract :**

The names and identities of the Antique Monuments, with in the oldtown of Famagusta, Cyprus, are determined according to the historical documents or to word of mouth. Most of the times, due to lack of official records or original documents, names originating from the history were adopted. With in the city walls of Oldtown, the name “Ayia Photou Church” is given to two side by side antique monuments, 20 m. apart, which both are now in ruins. These two ruins are situated at the north east sector of the town and are very close to the midpoint of Torrion del Diamante (Karpaz Tabya) and Torrion del Mozzo (Köpük Kulesi). According to my dense researches, the name of the antique monument on the south should be “Ayia Photou Church” and the name of antique monument on the north should be “St. Dominic Church”. In Famagusta, once a very rich town of Medieval, were two Bishoprics and seven churches of different [Christian] religious orders. One of them was the famous “St. Dominic Church” of Franciscan order. In the gravure of Stephan Gibellino, dated 1571 named “Citta di Famagosta”, the “St. Dominic Church” was clearly drawn with the belfry and back-garden encircled with high walls and marked with No.5 and footnoted as “St. Dominic Church”. It was located on the north east part of the town and close to the midpoint of Torrion del Diamante and Torrion del Mozzo. On the east part of the church, hippodrome “loro di trar al palio” was drawn, which till 1950’s this area served to the similar purpose. Unfortunately the “St. Dominic Church” suddenly disappeared from the papers, documents, registries, records, archives and even from memories after the conquest of the town by the Ottomans on 1571 although the Ottomans tried their best to preserve the antique monuments of Christian religion for almost 300 years and handed over the town to British on 1878 same as it was on 1571.

## 2 Location of the church in gravures and maps

### 2.1 S. Gibellino's three dimensional birds eye gravure dated 1571

Just before the conquest of the town by the Ottomans on 1571, which was one of the richest towns of Medieval, there were two Bishoprics and seven churches of different [Christian] religious orders. One of these churches, which was ranking the fifth in the order of importance, was the "St. Dominic Church". The position of this church was very clearly pin pointed in the Stephan Gibellino's 1571 dated gravure map titled "Citta di Famagosta"[1]. The map shows even the smallest detail concerning the siege of Famagusta, including the number of troops, cannons, horses, tents, streets, houses, churches and cathedrals.

The church, with its unique belfry and walled back garden, is drawn approximately in between the Torrion del Diamante (Karpaz Tabya) and Torrion del Mozzo (Köpük Kulesi) and close to midpoint, to the south of intersecting point of the city walls, forming a rigid corner called "Beş Parmak Mazgalı" by the locals. The church is marked with letter 5 and footnoted as "St. Dominico". On the east of church is the hippodrome "loro di trar al palio" marked with number 13.

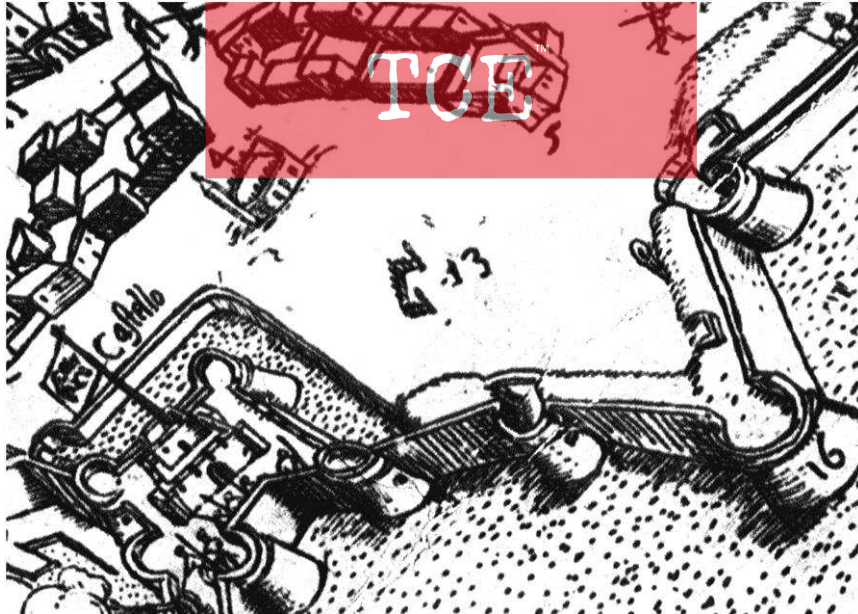
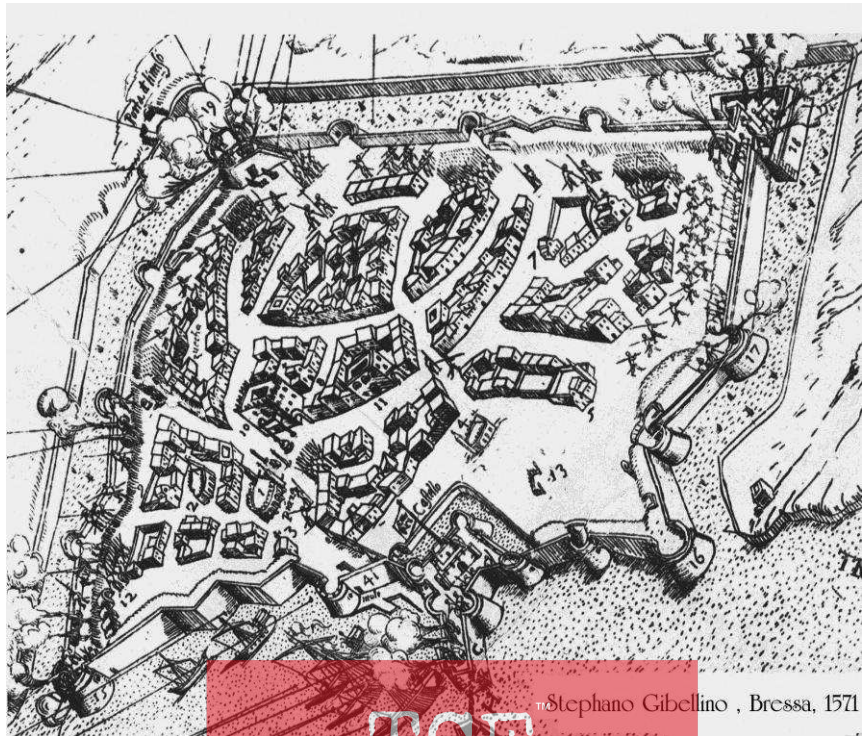


Figure 1 : Part of the S. Gibellino's gravure detailing the siege of Famagusta. St. Dominic church is marked with letter 5 and hippodrome 13.



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|---|--|
| 1. S. Nicolo Domo di Franchi<br>damati al qual glielarca di<br>Venere posta fra due colonne | 10. Palazzo del Clar. Cap. di<br>Famagosta |
| 2. S. Giorgio Domo di Greci   | 11. Palazzo del la Regnina                 |
| 3. S. Antonio   | 12. <i>L'arsenale</i>                      |
| 4. S. Gioralgeii  | 13. Loro di trar al palio                  |
| 5. S. Dominico  | 14. Porta de mare                          |
| 6. S. Carmine (St. Catherina)   | 15. Torion del Arsenale                    |
| 7. S. Anna  | 16. Torion del Diamante                    |
| 8. S. Pietro et Paulo   | 17. Torion del Mozzo                       |
| 9. S. Bar (St. Barnabe)   | 18. Baloardo Martinengo                    |
|   | 19. Torrio et cavalie de Limiso            |

Figure 2 : Part of the S. Gibellino's gravure detailing the siege of Famagusta.  
Town of Famagusta with in the walls.

## 2.2 Karl Baedeker's Map of Famagusta dated 1914

In the map drawn by Karl Baedeker [2] and printed in Leipzig, dated 1914, the above mentioned Church, namely St. Dominic, shown under the title "St. Clara" approximately in between the Torrion del Diamante (Karpaz Tabya) and



Torrion del Mozzo (Köpük Kulesi) and 90 m. to the south of intersecting point of the city walls, forming a rigid corner called “Beş Parmak Mazgalı” by the locals.

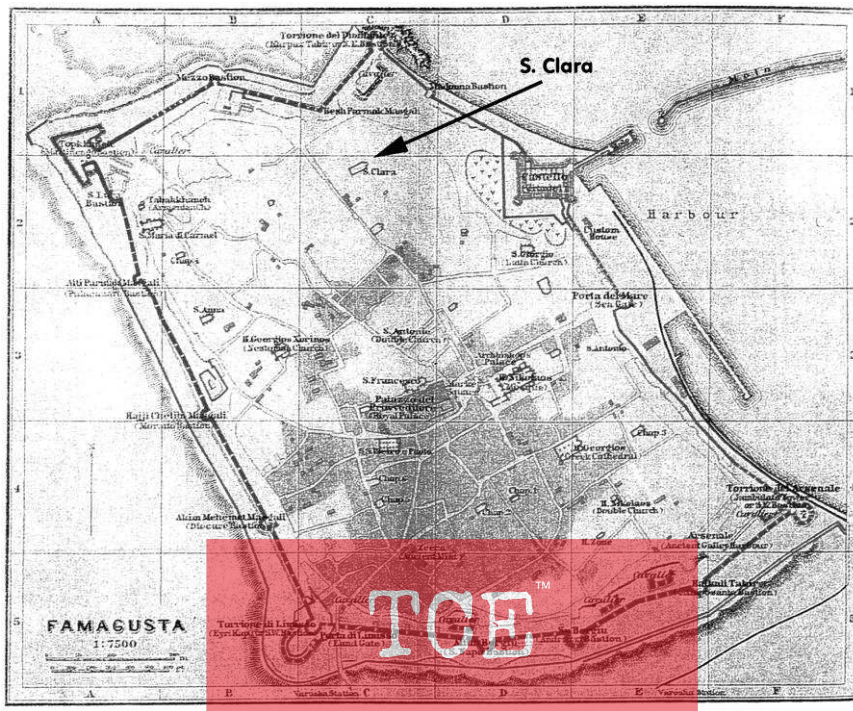


Figure 3 : Karl Baedeker’s map of Famagusta, printed in Leipzig, dated 1914

From Signoria (Halkali Mazgal), if a parallel line is drawn to the straight line connecting the Torrion del Diamante (Karpaz Tabya) and Torrion del Mozzo (Köpük Kulesi), this line will pass from the St. Clara Church, exactly after 140 m. from the Signoria (Halkali Mazgal). See Fig 4.

### 2.3 Map drawn by Land Registry and Survey Department on 1928 & 1930 during British era

During the British Colonial rule in Cyprus a survey map [3] to the scale 1:1000 and 1: 2500 drawn up by the Land registry and Survey Department to show the building sites, fields and plots in detail. In this survey map of Cyprus drawn in the years 1928-1930, the above mentioned church is shown under a new name “Ayia Photou (In Ruins) A.M.” in Sheet/Map 33/4.5.1&2, Block A, City/Town/Village : Famagusta, Plot 47. In this map the church is located 110 m. north of KIBATEK Foundation building. See Figure 5.

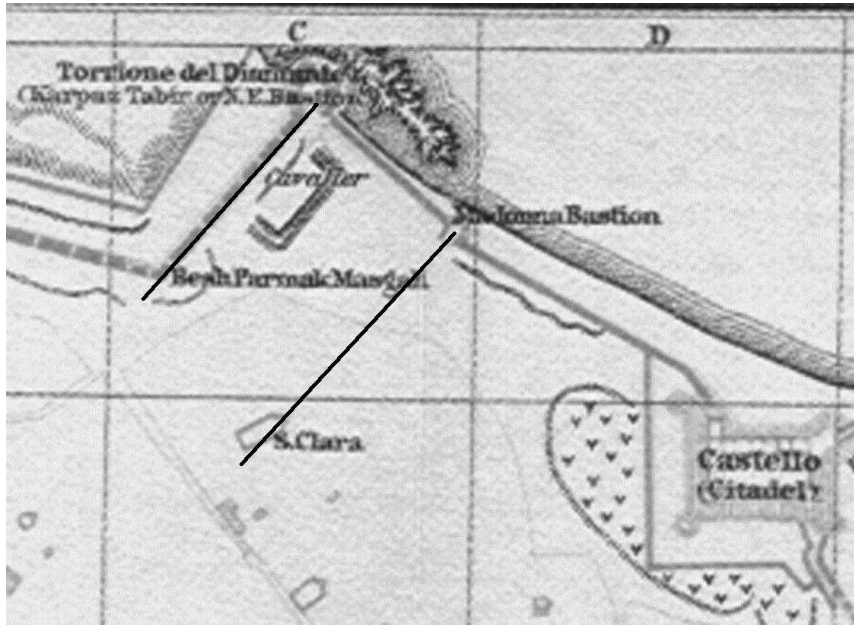


Figure 4 : Parallel line passing through St. Clara Church

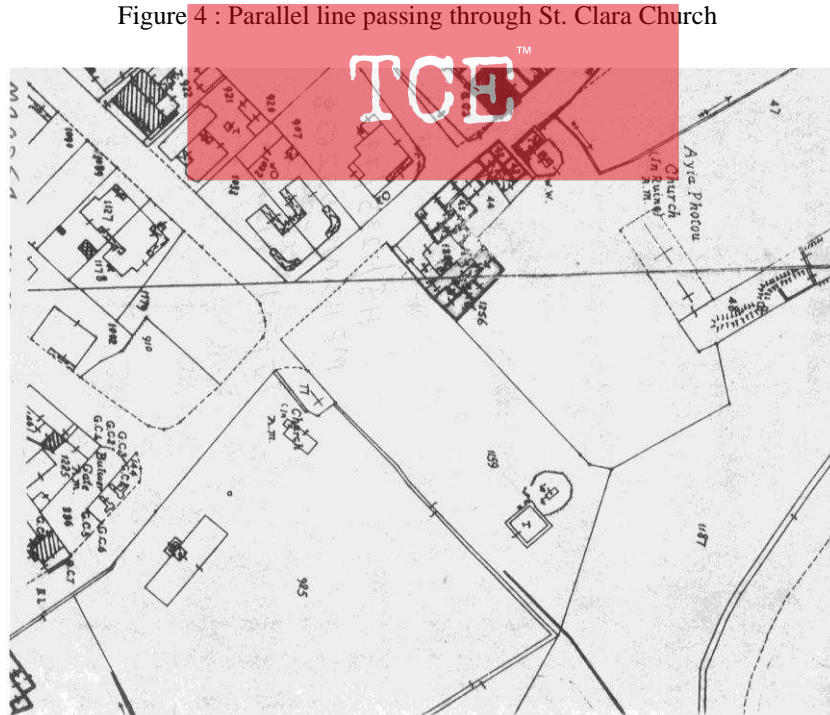


Figure 5 : Ayia Photou Church in Land registry and Survey Department's map



#### 2.4 Map drawn by Housing and Rehabilitation Department of TRNC on 1995

In the map drawn by Housing and Rehabilitation Department [4] of Turkish Republic of North Cyprus, printed in Nicosia on 1995, the above mentioned church was located 30 m. to the north west of Türk Gücü Sports Club main building under the name “Ay. Photou Kilisesi (Hb)” [Church A.M.]. See Figure 6 below.

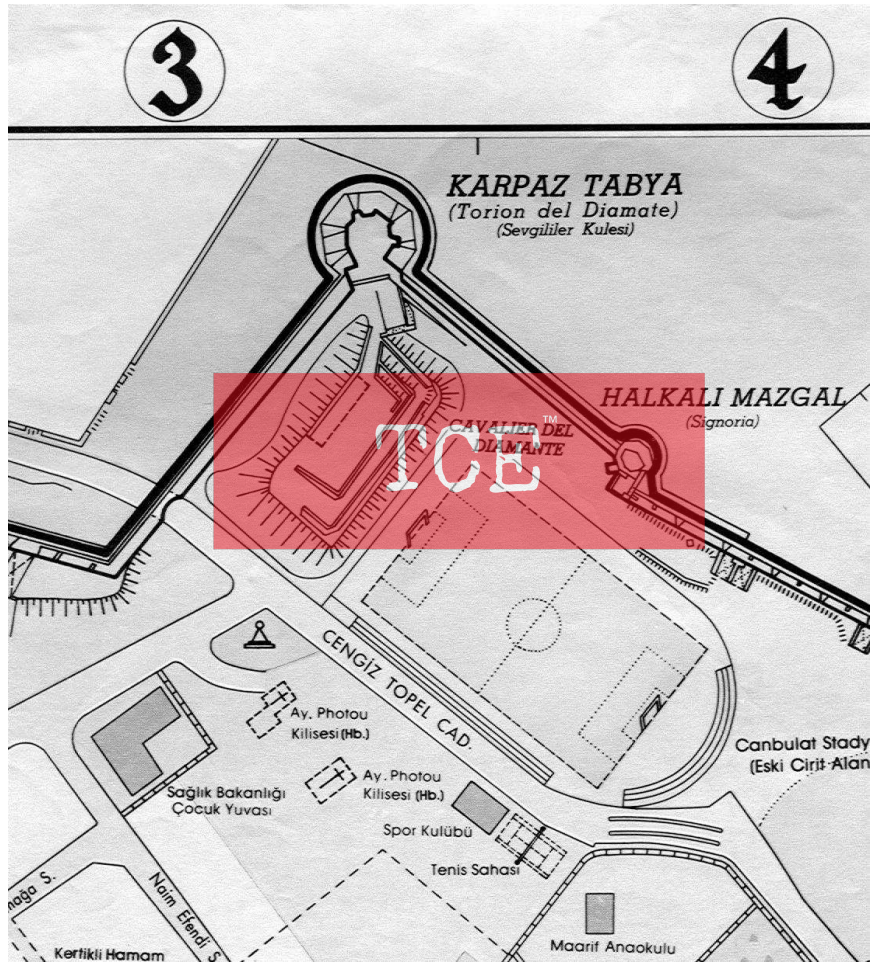


Figure 6 : Ay Photou Church in the map drawn by Housing and Rehabilitation Department of Turkish Republic of North Cyprus, 1995

## 2.5 Guiseppo Rosaccio's Map of Famagusta dated 1597

In the map drawn by Guiseppo Rosaccio [5], detailing the siege of Famagusta in the year 1571, printed in Venice on 1597, the church with a belfry can be seen very clearly in between the Citadel and Torrion del Diamante (Karpaz Tabya) right under the four soldiers with a lance in hand. See Figures 7 and 8



Figure 7 : Guiseppo Rosaccio's Map of Famagusta dated 1597



Figure 8 : Location of church in detail

There is no footnote in this map detailing where is what. In the maps drawn up on 16<sup>th</sup> century, the custom was to show the most outstanding churches in gravures. Comparing this church with a similar belfry as in the map of Gibellino, which definitely is a Catholic church rather than an Orthodox, it is obviously clear that it's name should be St. Dominic also. The location is the same, the position is matching and in both maps, Gibellino and Rosaccio, the shape of church and the belfry is exactly the same.

### **3 Exact location of the church**

If the maps issued by K. Baedeker, Land Registry and Survey Department of the British Colonial Government and Housing and Rehabilitation Department of Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus were placed on top of each other, it will be clearly seen that The churches named “St. Clara” and “Ayia Photou” are exactly on the same spot and their locations coincide.

The church marked with number 5 and detailed as “St. Dominic” in the footnote of the map drawn by Gibellino and the church drawn in between the Citadel and Torrion del Diamante (Karpaz Tabya) in the G. Rosaccio's map are also the same churches. Their location and position are the same and in matching places in both maps.

When the map drawn by Gibellino is studied in detail and the rules of perspective drawing is taken in to consideration, the distances from the above mentioned church to Torrion del Diamante (Karpaz Tabya), to Torrion del Mozzo (Köpük Kulesi), to Beş Parmak Mazgalı and to Signoria (Halkalı Mazgal) are exactly the same from St. Clara Church or Ayia Photu Church to the above specified places.

### **4 Conclusion**

As a result of the above matchings and calculations it is clearly seen and understood that the churches detailed in two medieval gravures and three 20<sup>th</sup> century maps, named as St. Clara, Ayia Photu and Ayia Photou are the same churches, and originally is the St. Dominic Church marked with number 5 and detailed as “St. Dominic” in the footnote of the map drawn by Gibellino.



## References

- [1] Gibellino, S., Map titled “Citta di Famagosta”, Bressa, 1571.
- [2] Baedeker, K., Map of Famagusta (144 x 148 mm) and Nicosia (146 x 179 mm), Leipzig, 1914.
- [3] Map of Land Registry and Survey Department on 1928 & 1930, British Colonial Government
- [4] Map of Housing and Rehabilitation Department of Turkish Republic of North Cyprus , printed in Nicosia on 1995
- [5] Guiseppo Rosaccio’s Map of Famagusta dated 1597

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