

THE EOKA HIDEOUT 1955-59
AT PALAÏCHORI



THE KARAOULIS COUPLE

THE PERSONAL HIDEOUT OF EOKA HERO GREGORIS AFXENTIOU IN PALAICHORI IS SITUATED IN THE HEART OF THE VILLAGE, NEXT TO THE CHURCH OF PANAYIA CHRYSOPANTANASSA, IN THE BASEMENT OF THE HOUSE OF ANDREAS AND MARITSA KARAOULIS.

IT WAS BUILT ON THE INSTRUCTIONS OF AFXENTIOU HIMSELF IN THE SUMMER OF 1956, FOLLOWING DHIGENIS'S ORDERS THAT HIDEOUTS BE BUILT IN HOUSES IN ADDITION TO THOSE ALREADY EXISTING IN THE MOUNTAIN AREAS. THE REASON FOR DHIGENIS'S ORDERS FOR NEW HIDEOUTS TO BE BUILT WAS TO ENSURE GREATER SAFETY FOR THE FREEDOM FIGHTERS ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GENERAL PLAN "SORTIE TO VICTORY", WHICH WOULD RESULT IN MORE INTENSIVE SEARCHES BY THE BRITISH.

THERE WERE IN FACT TWO HIDEOUTS. ONE WAS INSIDE A TRADITIONAL OVEN AND THE OTHER UNDER A STONE-BUILT STAIRCASE ADJACENT TO THE OVEN. TO REACH THE STAIRCASE HIDEOUT ONE HAD TO GO THROUGH THE OVEN HIDEOUT. STONES WERE STUCK ON TO THE DOOR IDENTICAL TO THOSE ON THE REST OF THE WALL, SO THAT WHEN THE DOOR WAS CLOSED IT WAS NOT VISIBLE. THE HIDEOUT COMMUNICATED WITH AFXENTIOU'S ROOM ON THE UPPER FLOOR OF THE HOUSE VIA A MOVABLE LADDER, THROUGH A HOLE IN THE FLOOR, WHICH WAS COVERED BY BEAMS.

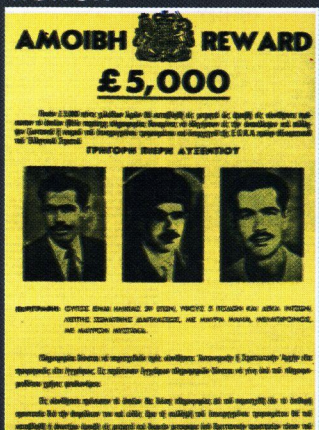
DEPENDING ON THE NEEDS OF THE STRUGGLE, AFXENTIOU OFTEN TOOK REFUGE AT PALAICHORI FROM WHERE HE COMMANDED HIS VAST SECTOR, WHICH INCLUDED LARGE PARTS OF THE DISTRICTS OF NICOSIA, LIMASSOL AND LARNACA.

DAILY COMMUNICATION WITH EOKA HEADQUARTERS IN NICOSIA WAS EFFECTED THROUGH HIS LIAISON, BUS DRIVER CHRISTOFOROS MICHAEL FORIS.

IT WAS HERE THAT AFXENTIOU ELABORATED THE PLAN FOR THE "GENERAL SORTIE" OF HIS SUB-SECTORS WITH ANTONIS PAPADOPOULOS.

AFXENTIOU KEPT HIS HIDEOUT A CLOSELY GUARDED SECRET EVEN FROM THE MORE THAN THIRTY-FIVE FIGHTERS UNDER HIS COMMAND

HEROES WHO MADE USE OF THE HIDEOUT AND WHO WERE KILLED IN ACTION



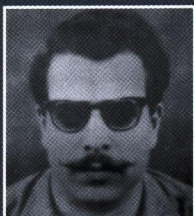
GEORGIOY NIKOS



GIORGALLAS MICHAEL



MATSIS KYRIAKOS



ROTSIDES SAVVAS



TSIARTAS CHRISTOS



CHRISTODOULOU DEMETRAKIS

WHO STAYED AT THE VILLAGE FROM TIME TO TIME.

DURING HIS STAY AT PALAICHORI, AFXENTIOU USUALLY WORKED THROUGHOUT THE NIGHT, EVEN PERFORMING WATCH DUTY. HIS ROOM WAS DIRECTLY BEHIND PALAICHORI POLICE STATION, WHERE BRITISH SOLDIERS WERE ALSO SITUATED, AND HE WAS ABLE TO FOLLOW THEIR EVERY MOVE.

WITH A VIEW TO HIDING THEIR GROUP'S WEAPONS AND AMMUNITION, THE MEN OF EOKA PALAICHORI MAINTAINED CACHES, FOR WHICH THEY WERE PERSONALLY RESPONSIBLE, ON THEIR LAND, IN ANGOULI, ZOUMAS AND VOUNAROS.

ON NEW YEAR'S DAY 1957, AFTER THE BATTLE OF ZOOPIGI, AFXENTIOU ARRIVED WOUNDED AT PALAICHORI WHERE HE WAS TREATED.

THE HIDEOUT'S EFFECTIVENESS WAS PROVED WHEN, ON 7 JANUARY 1957, AFXENTIOU MADE USE OF IT DURING A CURFEW IMPOSED BY THE

BRITISH SOLDIERS AS THEY SCoured THE VILLAGE FOR HIM. HE REMAINED IN THE HIDEOUT WITH HIS FIGHTERS ANTONIS PAPADOPOULOS, AVGOUSTIS EFSTATHIOU, MINAS MINA, ANDREAS STYLIANOU AND FEIDIAS SYMEONIDES FOR 48 HOURS AND THE BRITISH WERE UNABLE TO ESTABLISH HIS WHEREABOUTS DESPITE INTENSIVE SEARCHES.

EVEN THEN AFXENTIOU DID NOT REVEAL TO HIS MEN THE SECRET ENTRANCE TO THE STAIRCASE HIDEOUT, WHICH WAS SITUATED IN THE PLACE WHERE HE WAS IN HIDING, AND THE SECOND HIDEOUT REMAINED A CLOSELY KEPT SECRET.

THE OVEN HIDEOUT WAS TORN DOWN ON AFXENTIOU'S ORDERS, BUT NOT THE ONE UNDER THE STAIRS, WHICH HE INTENDED TO USE AGAIN. HE NEVER DID SO, HOWEVER, AS IMMORTALITY CAUGHT HIM FIRST.

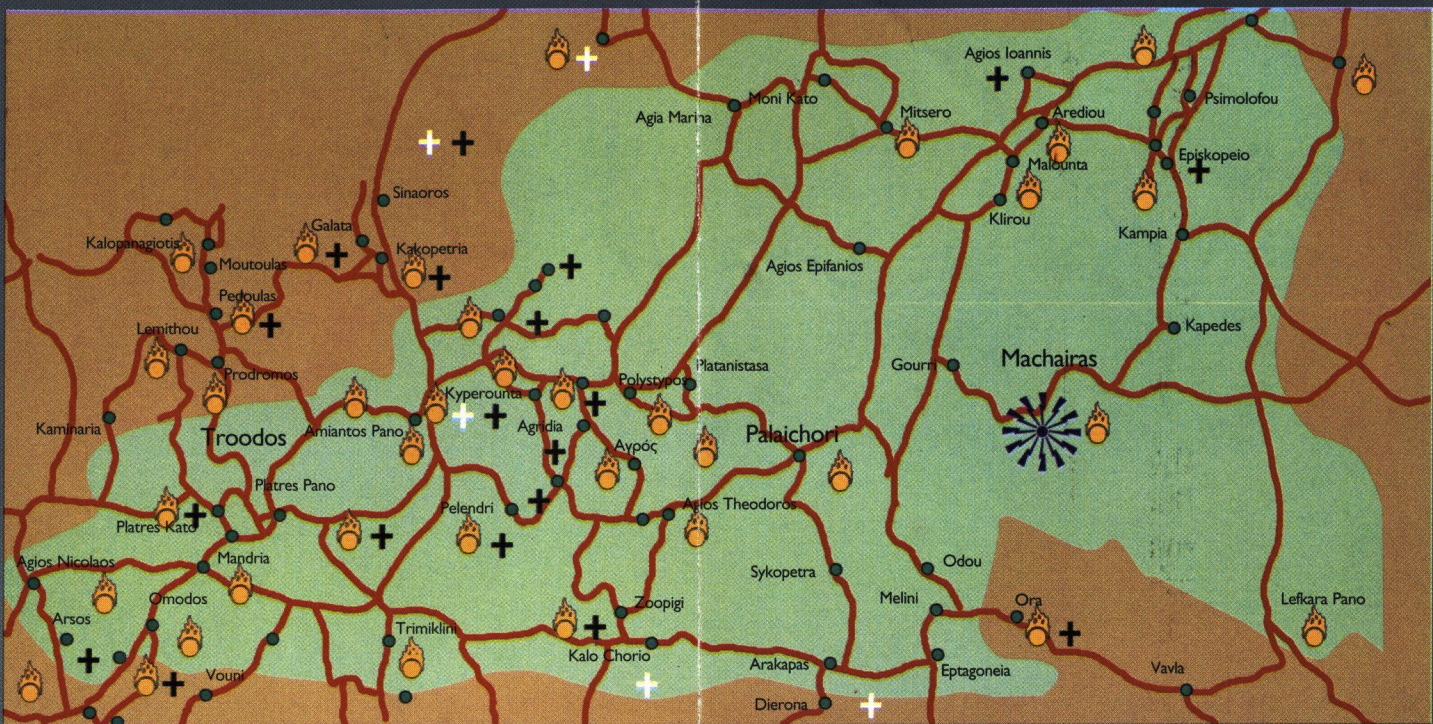


GREGORIS AFXENTIOU

GREGORIS AFXENTIOU WAS BORN IN LYSI, ON 22 FEBRUARY 1928. HE GRADUATED FROM LYSI PRIMARY SCHOOL, FAMAGUSTA GREEK GYMNASIUM AND STUDIED AT THE RESERVE OFFICERS ACADEMY IN GREECE.

HE SERVED IN THE GREEK ARMY UNDER THE RANK OF RESERVE SECOND LIEUTENANT UNTIL 15.11.1953.

HE WAS INITIATED INTO THE EOKA STRUGGLE IN EARLY JANUARY 1955 BY ITS LEADER DHIGENIS HIMSELF, TO WHOM HE GAVE HIS WORD ON HIS MILITARY HONOUR INSTEAD OF THE USUAL OATH OF ALLEGIANCE TO EOKA. HE FOUGHT UNDER THE PSEUDONYMS ZEDROS, REGAS, AJAX, ARIS, ZOTOS AND ANTAIUS.



GREGORIS AFXENTIOU'S AREA OF ACTION

HE SERVED AS SECTOR COMMANDER FOR FAMAGUSTA-VAROSHA IN THE EARLY DAYS OF THE STRUGGLE.

ON 1ST APRIL 1955 HE WAS PLACED ON THE WANTED LIST BY THE BRITISH FOR HIS PARTICIPATION IN THE STRUGGLE AND WAS TRANSFERRED TO KYRENIA DISTRICT, WHERE HE SERVED AS EOKA SECTOR COMMANDER UNTIL SEPTEMBER 1955.

FROM DECEMBER 1955 HE WAS PITSILIA SECTOR COMMANDER, UNTIL 3 MARCH 1957, WHEN HE FELL IN ACTION.

- GREGORIS AFXENTIOU'S HIDEOUT AT PITSILIA WAS BUILT ON HIS INSTRUCTIONS BY HIS MEN GEORGE MATSIS, LEONIDAS STEPHANIDES, AND ANTONIS PAPADOPOULOS IN CO-OPERATION WITH ANDREAS KARAOLIS AND WITH THE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE OF SPYROS MICHAELIDES.
- IT WAS RESTORED IN 1997 BY THE "COUNCIL OF HISTORIC MEMORY OF THE EOKA STRUGGLE 1955-1959". THE ARCHITECT IN CHARGE WAS IOANNIS ARISTODIMOU.
- THE BUILDING CONTAINING THE HIDEOUT WAS DONATED BY ANDREAS AND MARITSA KARAOLIS AND WAS JOINED TO THE HOUSE OF ELENI ANASTASI PAPAMICHAEL, WHICH WAS DONATED BY HER HEIRS.



MAP OF CYPRUS SHOWING THE EOKA FIELD OF ACTION 1955-59



THE COUNCIL OF HISTORY MEMORY
OF THE STRUGGLE 1955-1959

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INFORMATION (FOR PALAICHORI)

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