

From Roman to Early Christian Cyprus

Edited by
LAURA NASRALLAH,
CHARALAMBOS BAKIRTZIS,
and ANNEMARIE LUIJENDIJK

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Studies in Religion and Archaeology

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Laura Nasrallah, AnneMarie Lujendijk,
and Charalambos Bakirtzis

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Late Antique Baths of Cyprus by Paraskevi Christodoulou, University of Cyprus

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Abbreviations

| | |
|--------|--|
| ACM | Marvin Meyer and Richard Smith. <i>Ancient Christian Magic: Coptic Texts of Ritual Power</i> . San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1994. |
| ACW | Ancient Christian Writers |
| ActAnt | <i>Acta Antiqua Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae</i> |
| AGAJU | Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentum |
| AJ | <i>Antiquaries Journal</i> |
| AJA | <i>American Journal of Archaeology</i> |
| AJEC | Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity |
| AJP | <i>American Journal of Philology</i> |
| AnBoll | <i>Analecta Bollandiana</i> |
| ANF | <i>Ante-Nicene Fathers: The Writings of the Fathers down to 325 A. D.</i> Edited by Alexander Roberts et al. (Repr. Hendrickson: Peabody, 1995.) |
| ANRW | <i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt</i> |
| APSP | <i>American Philosophical Society Proceedings</i> |
| ARDAC | <i>Annual Report of the Director of Antiquities</i> |
| ASOR | American Schools of Oriental Research |
| BA | <i>Biblical Archaeologist</i> |
| BASP | <i>Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists</i> |
| BCH | <i>Bulletin de correspondance hellénique</i> |
| BGU | <i>Aegyptische Urkunden aus den Königlichen Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin, Griechische Urkunden.</i> |
| BHG | <i>Bibliotheca Hagiographica Graeca</i> |
| BHT | Beiträge zur historischen Theologie |
| BSR | <i>Bulletin for the Study of Religion</i> |
| BZNW | Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft |
| CCSG | Corpus Christianorum: Series Graeca |
| CÉFR | Collection de l'École française de Rome |
| CH | <i>Church History</i> |
| CIant | <i>Classical Antiquity</i> |
| ClAp | Clavis apocryphorum Novi Testamenti |
| ClQ | <i>Classical Quarterly</i> |
| CPG | Clavis Patrum Graecorum |
| CSEL | Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum |
| DOP | <i>Dumbarton Oaks Papers</i> |
| DTA | Richard Wünsch. <i>Defixionum Tabellae Atticae</i> . Inscriptiones Graecae 3.3. Berlin: G. Reimer, 1897. |
| DTAud | Auguste Audollent. <i>Defixionum Tabellae</i> . Paris: Fontemoing, 1904. |
| EstBib | <i>Estudios bíblicos</i> |
| FC | Fathers of the Church |

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| GCS | Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte |
| GRBS | <i>Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies</i> |
| <i>Hesperia</i> | <i>Hesperia: Journal of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens</i> |
| <i>Historia</i> | <i>Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte</i> |
| HTR | <i>Harvard Theological Review</i> |
| JAC | <i>Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum</i> |
| JACErg | Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum – Ergänzungsbände |
| JBL | <i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i> |
| JDI | <i>Jahrbuch des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts</i> |
| JEA | <i>Journal of Egyptian Archaeology</i> |
| JECS | <i>Journal of Early Christian Studies</i> |
| JEH | <i>Journal of Ecclesial History</i> |
| JHS | <i>Journal of Hellenic Studies</i> |
| JJP | <i>Journal of Juristic Papyrology</i> |
| JNES | <i>Journal of Near Eastern Studies</i> |
| JPOS | <i>Journal of the Palestine Oriental Society</i> |
| JRH | <i>Journal of Religious History</i> |
| JRS | <i>Journal of Roman Studies</i> |
| JTS | <i>Journal of Theological Studies</i> |
| <i>Klio</i> | <i>Klio: Beiträge zur Alten Geschichte</i> |
| LCL | Loeb Classical Library |
| LIMC | Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae |
| MAAR | Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome |
| NETS | New English Translation of the Septuagint |
| NGD | David R. Jordan. "New Greek Curse Tablets (1985–2000)." <i>Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies</i> 41 (2000): 5–46. |
| NHS | Nag Hammadi Studies |
| <i>NovT</i> | <i>Novum Testamentum</i> |
| NPNF | <i>Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers</i> . Edited by Philip Schaff, Alexander Roberts, Henry Wace, James Donaldson |
| <i>NTS</i> | <i>New Testament Studies</i> |
| <i>NumC</i> | <i>The Numismatic Chronicle and Journal of the Royal Numismatic Society</i> |
| <i>Numen</i> | <i>Numen: International Review for the History of Religions</i> |
| OCP | <i>Orientalia Christiana Periodica</i> |
| OECT | Oxford Early Christian Texts |
| PGL | <i>Patristic Greek Lexicon</i> . Edited by Geoffrey W. H. Lampe. Oxford: Clarendon, 1961. |
| PO | <i>Patrologia Orientalis</i> |
| RDAC | <i>Report of the Department of Antiquities Cyprus</i> |
| RGRW | Religions in the Graeco-Roman World |
| RQ | <i>Römische Quartalschrift für christliche Altertumskunde und Kirchengeschichte</i> |
| RST | Regensburger Studien zur Theologie |
| SAC | Studies in Antiquity and Christianity |
| SBFCMa | Studium Biblicum Franciscanum, Collectio major |
| SC | Sources chrétiennes |
| SEG | Supplementum epigraphicum graecum |

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| SOAC | Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization |
| <i>Spec</i> | <i>Speculum</i> |
| STAC | Studien und Texte zu Antike und Christentum |
| <i>StPat</i> | <i>Studia Patristica</i> |
| <i>Suppl. Mag.</i> | Robert W. Daniel and Franco Malomini. <i>Supplementum Magicum</i> . Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1990. |
| TLG | Thesaurus Linguae Graecae: Canon of Greek Authors and Works |
| TSAJ | Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum |
| <i>TynBul</i> | <i>Tyndale Bulletin</i> |
| VC | <i>Vigiliae Christianae</i> |
| WGRW | Writings from the Greco-Roman World |
| WUNT | Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament |
| ZAC | <i>Zeitschrift für Antikes Christentum</i> |
| ZNW | <i>Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche</i> |
| ZPE | <i>Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik</i> |

Introduction

(and an Analysis of Religion by Means of the Annex of Eustolios)

Laura Nasrallah

Cyprus is a crossroad of the ancient eastern Mediterranean, an astonishingly beautiful and rich location, providing much data about the world of late antiquity. Egypt, the Levant, Asia Minor, Greece: Cyprus stood and stands in the midst of it all. The mosaics at Paphos, the elusive Barnabas, the role of Cyprus as autocephalous: these buildings, images, figures, and events are intriguing data from late antiquity, to take only a few.¹ Yet the significance of Cyprus has been underappreciated for the study of late antiquity. *From Roman to Early Christian Cyprus* and the conference that preceded it participate in filling this lacuna. This volume takes as its focus Cyprus as a key location between east and west, a location in which Judaism, Greco-Roman religions, and Christianity intersected, and where Christianity came to flourish.

Cyprus is mentioned in the New Testament only in the Acts of the Apostles (ca. 90–120). There we find an account of the apostles Paul and Barnabas in Cyprus. A story of Barnabas, who comes to be closely associated with Cyprus, is recounted in chapters 4, 9, and 11–15 of Acts. The name of Barnabas is mentioned in the letters of Paul (1 Cor 9:6; Gal 2:1, 9, 13), which predate the Acts of the Apostles and the deutero-Pauline Letter to the Colossians (Col 4:10). In later Christian traditions, we find other texts associated with the apostle who is beloved to Cyprus. The Epistle of Barnabas, for example, is an allegorical interpretation that indicates tensions between Christians and Jews over interpretation of Scripture. It likely dates to the period between the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem and the emperor Hadrian's quashing of Bar Kokhba's revolt in 135. The Acts of

¹ Sophocles Hadjisavvas, *Cyprus: Crossroads of Civilizations* (Nicosia: The Government of the Republic of Cyprus, 2010); Nicholas Stampolidis and Vassos Karageorghis, eds., *ΠΛΟΕΣ. Sea Routes: Interconnections in the Mediterranean, 16th–6th c. BC: Proceedings of the International Symposium Held at Rethymnon, Crete, September 29th–October 2nd, 2002* (Athens: The University of Crete and the A. G. Leventis Foundation, 2003). See also Bernard Knapp, whose study focuses on pre-historical Cyprus. He questions whether looking at Cyprus as crossroads of civilizations has focused too little on events and motivations within the island itself; "Prehistoric Cyprus: A 'Crossroads' of Interaction?" in *Multiple Mediterranean Realities: Current Approaches to Spaces, Resources, and Connectivities*, ed. Achim Lichtenberger and Constance von Rüden, *Mittelmeerstudien* 6 (Paderborn: Wilhelm Fink; Ferdinand Schöningh, 2015), 17–30.

Barnabas, which likely dates to the early fifth century CE, details stories of the Cypriot saint.

Stories about other early Christian saints and leaders in Cyprus, such as Herakleidios, Mnason, Epaphras, Tychicos, Auxibios, and Spyridon, not only provide important narratives of Christian saints, but also information about topography and everyday life on the island. In addition, in the late fourth century, Epiphanius of Salamis emerges as an important collator of information about the varieties of early Christianity and as a strong voice in early Christian controversies.

The chapters in this volume treat these various figures, texts, and their material contexts. Other figures from Cyprus, too, come into view: those who used so-called magical texts, for example, and those who worked in a harbor, involved with the transport of building materials. By drawing on literary, archaeological, and art historical evidence from the first century CE to the medieval period, the volume elucidates the diversity of Christianity in late antique Cyprus and relations between Christians, Jews, and participants in Greco-Roman religions.

Our volume is part of a groundswell of studies and publications since 2005 about ancient Cyprus. Since 1995, Theodoros Papadopoulos has been publishing a multi-volume *Ιστορία της Κύπρου*, including a 2005 volume about Byzantine Cyprus.² In the same year, a volume focused Aphrodite in Cyprus appeared.³ Since 2010, monographs and edited volumes treating Cyprus have focused on various other issues. Two recent volumes analyze Cypriot objects in far-flung locations of Sydney, Australia, and Reading, UK.⁴ A richly illustrated volume, *Historic Nicosia*, edited by Demetrios Michaelides, analyses the city and environs from the prehistoric period to 1960.⁵ Another lavishly illustrated volume, *Ancient Cyprus: Cultures in Dialogue*, formed a catalogue to an exhibition hosted in Cyprus and Brussels in 2012 and 2013. The volume reviews the history of Cypriot archaeology and details a historical overview of Cyprus from the Neolithic to the Roman period. In addition, thematic essays treat such topics as natural resources, religion, and language, and the volume concludes with a thematically organized catalogue for the exhibition, including objects classed as part of the “world of the sacred.”⁶ A recent volume titled *Four Decades of Hiatus in Archae-*

² Theodoros Papadopoulos, ed., *Ιστορία της Κύπρου* (6 vols. Nicosia: Hidryma Archiepiskopou Makariou, 1995-).

³ Jacqueline Karageorghis, *Kypris. The Aphrodite of Cyprus: Ancient Sources and Archaeological Evidence* (Nicosia: The A. G. Leventis Foundation, 2005).

⁴ Craig Barker, *Aphrodite's Island: Australian Archaeologists in Cyprus. The Cypriot Collection of the Nicholson Museum* (Sydney: Nicholson Museum, University of Sydney, 2012); Sadie Pickup, Marianne Bergeron, and Jennifer M. Webb, *Cypriote Antiquities in Reading: The Ure Museum at the University of Reading and the Reading Museum (Reading Borough Council)*, *Studies in Mediterranean Archaeology*, XX:30; *Corpus of Cypriote Antiquities*, 30 (Uppsala: Åströms Förlag, 2015).

⁵ Demetrios Michaelides, ed., *Historic Nicosia* (Nicosia: Rimal Publications, 2012).

⁶ Despina Pilides and Nikolas Papadimitriou, eds., *Ancient Cyprus: Cultures in Dialogue* (Nicosia: Department of Antiquities, 2012).

ological Research in Cyprus: Towards Restoring the Balance addresses issues of cultural heritage in a divided island.⁷

Other books offer scientific publication of the archaeological sites of Psematismenos-Trelloukkas and Pyla-Koutsopetria, or focus on metallurgy and pottery in bronze-age Cyprus.⁸ The evolution of the wall paintings and architecture of an originally twelfth-century church is detailed in an edited volume titled *Asinou Across Time: Studies in the Architecture and Murals of the Panagia Phorbiotissa, Cyprus*.⁹ Two recent volumes study religion, politics, and social life in Cyprus in antiquity: Giorgos Papantoniou's *Religion and Social Transformations in Cyprus: From the Cypriot Basileis to the Hellenistic Strategos*,¹⁰ and Takashi Fujii's *Imperial Cult and Imperial Representation in Roman Cyprus*.¹¹ *Les inscriptions de Paphos: La cité chypriote sous la domination lagide et à l'époque impériale*, by Jean-Baptiste Cayla, republishes more than 350 inscriptions, dating from the fourth century BCE to the seventh century CE, associated with the city of Paphos.¹² The publications of an international symposium at the Römisch-Germanisches Zentralmuseum in Mainz have focused on the churches of late antique Cyprus and include chapters focusing on liturgy and baptism, as well as the material stuff of mosaics and textiles, and the larger issue of the place of churches within the sacred landscape of Cyprus.¹³ A project funded by the TOPOI Excellence Cluster in Berlin worked to understand early Christianity in Cyprus and other regions, by collecting epigraphic and literary evidence.¹⁴

⁷ Despina Pilides and Maria Mina, eds., *Four Decades of Hiatus in Archaeological Research in Cyprus: Towards Restoring the Balance. Proceedings of the International One-Day Workshop, Held in Lefkosia (Nicosia) on 24th September 2016, Hosted by the Department of Antiquities, Cyprus*, Κυπριακά – Forschungen zum antiken Zypern 2 (Vienna: Holtzhausen Verlag, 2017).

⁸ Giorgos Georgiou, Jennifer M. Webb, and David Frankel, *Psematismenos-Trelloukkas: An Early Bronze Age Cemetery in Cyprus* (Nicosia: Department of Antiquities, 2011); William R. Caharher, R. Scott Moore, and David K. Pettegrew, *Pyla-Koutsopetria I: Archaeological Survey of an Ancient Coastal Town*, Archaeological Reports 21 (Boston: ASOR, 2014); Jennifer M. Webb and David Frankel, *Ambelikou Aletri. Metallurgy and Pottery Production in Middle Bronze Age Cyprus*, Studies in Mediterranean Archaeology 138 (Jonsered: Åströms Förlag, 2013).

⁹ Annemarie Weyl Carr and Andreas Nicolaïdès, eds., *Asinou across Time: Studies in the Architecture and Murals of the Panagia Phorbiotissa, Cyprus* (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection; Cambridge, MA: Distributed by Harvard University Press, 2012).

¹⁰ Giorgos Papantoniou, *Religion and Social Transformations in Cyprus: From the Cypriot Basileis to the Hellenistic Strategos*, Mnemosyne Supplements: History and Archaeology of Classical Antiquity 347 (Leiden: Brill, 2012).

¹¹ Takashi Fujii, *Imperial Cult and Imperial Representation in Roman Cyprus* (Stuttgart: Steiner, 2013).

¹² Jean-Baptiste Cayla, *Les inscriptions de Paphos: La cité chypriote sous la domination lagide et à l'époque impériale*, Travaux de la Maison de l'Orient 74 (Lyon: Maison de l'Orient et de la Méditerranée Jean Pouilloux, 2018).

¹³ Marietta Horster, Doria Nicolaou, and Sabine Rogge, eds., *Church Building in Cyprus (Fourth to Seventh Centuries): A Mirror of Intercultural Contacts in the Eastern Mediterranean* (Münster: Waxmann Verlag, 2018).

¹⁴ "The Rise of Christianity in Asia Minor and On Cyprus," Topoi: The Formation and

Our volume thus adds to a number of recent studies of and publications about Cyprus. *From Roman to Early Christian Cyprus* makes its own contribution both in its temporal focus and in its scholarly collaboration. We investigate late Rome to early Christian Cyprus, with some essays treating the middle Byzantine period. The contributors to the volume come from different disciplinary backgrounds. Studies of ancient literature, religion, archaeology, and art history are represented. The essays in our volume focus on questions of social, political, and religious life in Roman and early Christian Cyprus and contribute new data and new interpretations to the study of religion in antiquity.

Religion in Late Antique Cyprus

Late antique religion in Cyprus could be caricatured by mapping two theological extremes. The first lies in the area of expertise of Andrew Wilburn, one of this volume's authors: the astonishingly rich find of over two hundred lead and approximately thirty selenite tablets. These were found at Amathous, nearby and to the west of Kourion, and dated by paleography to the late second or the third century CE.¹⁵ The *defixiones* call upon multiple gods and *daimones* of the underworld (as is common) to exact justice and to bring about the result in the context of a law court that the commissioner of the spell requests. One example reads:

I invoke you by ACHALEMORPHÔPH, who is the one god upon the earth OSOUS OISÖRNOPHRIS OUSRAPIO do whatever is written herein. O much lamented tomb and gods of the underworld, and chthonic Hekate, chthonic Hermes, Plouton, the chthonic Eiryne, and you who lie here below, untimely dead and the unnamed.¹⁶

Even in this short portion of a much longer *defixio*, we see that a ritual expert not only refers to “the one god upon the earth,” but also helps the petitioner to call upon *magicae voces* as well as the divinities Hekate, Hermes, Pluto, and the Eiryne. As is typical of *defixiones*, we find a drive to multiplicity: to the supplication of many divinities in the search for help.

Epiphanius of Salamis, the subject of Young Kim's and Andrew Jacobs's chapters in this volume, stands in contrast to this plurality – or seems to. His late fourth-century *Panarion* both discloses and rejects the idea of Christian diversity. In this “medicine chest against the heresies,” Epiphanius states that he will offer remedies for victims of “wild beasts' bites” – that is, those endangered by heresies. Epiphanius draws on the image of eighty concubines in the Song of Solomon to encourage his audience to reject these in favor of the one who is

Transformation of Space and Knowledge in Ancient Civilizations, accessed March 17, 2019, <https://www.topoi.org/event/45492/>.

¹⁵ Andrew T. Wilburn, *Materia Magica: The Archaeology of Magic in Roman Egypt, Cyprus, and Spain* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2012), 170, 172.

¹⁶ Wilburn, *Materia Magica*, 171.

“Christ’s ‘holy bride,’ the Church.”¹⁷ The bishop drives down from the multiple to the one. Both examples – the one a so-called magical text, the other by one of the crankiest and most taxonomically driven “church fathers”¹⁸ – recognize the notion of the oneness of God and the multiplicity of religious practice and divine invocations.

*A Case Study in Religious and Theological Complexity at Cyprus:
The Annex of Eustolios*

Before introducing the contributions within this volume, I want to pause to give the reader a sense of the rich opportunities for thinking about religion, theology, material culture, and social life in Cyprus. The so-called Annex of Eustolios in Kourion brings us to the ground in Cyprus, to an example of such complex theological-philosophical ideas and practices. There, in a floor mosaic, the complexities of theologies and religious identities in late antique Cyprus are laid bare. The mosaics in these buildings briefly illustrate the riches of objects and theological concepts in late antique Cyprus.

Excavations of the so-called Annex of Eustolios were conducted in 1935 and again from 1948 to 1950 and reveal a large, urban complex which includes a bath on its upper terrace. It is located to the northeast of the theater complex, and, in its present form, was probably erected after the destruction of the theater.¹⁹ The complex included a central peristyle courtyard “surrounded by colonnaded porticoes, three of which preserve part of their mosaic decoration.”²⁰ A fragmentary inscription names Eustolios as the owner of the baths; he is otherwise unattested in literary or documentary evidence. The building may have initially been constructed as a grand private residence, which was later renovated with the mosaic floors and the baths as a perhaps quasi-public site.²¹ The origins of the Eustolios complex may predate the construction of the early Christian episcopal basilica

¹⁷ Proem 1.1.1–3; trans. Frank Williams, *The Panarion of Epiphanius: Book 1 (Sects 1–46)*, NHS 35 (Leiden: Brill, 1987), 3.

¹⁸ See Todd Berzon, *Classifying Christians: Ethnography, Heresiology, and the Limits of Knowledge in Late Antiquity* (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2016), esp. 186–217.

¹⁹ The so-called Annex of Eustolios is hard to understand since the University of Pennsylvania excavation has not yet been published. Demetrios Michaelides, “Some Characteristic Traits of a Mosaic Workshop in Early Christian Cyprus,” in *La mosaïque greco-romaine VIII: Actes du VIIIème colloque international pour l’étude de la mosaïque antique et médiévale*, ed. Daniel Paunier and Christophe Schmidt (Lausanne: Cahiers d’archéologie romande de la Bibliothèque historique vaudoise, 2001), 316.

²⁰ Demetrios Michaelides, *Cypriot Mosaics* (Nicosia: Rimal Publications, 1987), 81.

²¹ The complex was first called a palace; see George H. McFadden and John Franklin Daniel, “The Excavations at Kourion,” *Expedition Magazine: Bulletin of the Pennsylvania Museum* 7 (1938): 4–10; John Franklin Daniel, “Kourion: Past Achievements and Future Plans,” *Expedition Magazine: Bulletin of the Pennsylvania Museum* 13 (1948): 12.

in Kourion, located to its northwest, but the Christian basilica and the Eustolios complex also existed contemporaneously.²²

The mosaics of the Eustolios complex have raised questions about whether this is a Christian complex, a so-called pagan one, or something else entirely. Before investigating five of the mosaic inscriptions in more detail, it is helpful to see the range of scholarly opinion, which places us precisely into the conundrum of how to understand the theological ideas and religious practices operative in Cyprus in late antiquity.

In his 1988 discussion of mosaic floors of early Christian cult buildings in Cyprus, Demetrios Michaelides mentions the mosaic inscriptions of the Annex:

The mosaic inscriptions from the 5th century Annex of Eustolios at Kourion illustrate a rather strange ambivalence for such an advanced date. One of these says that the structure has girt itself with the venerated symbols of Christ ... but another tells us ... [about] the return of the benefactor Eustolios to his native Kourion [and] evokes the visits to the city of its former patron, Apollo.²³

David Soren and Jamie James offer a different interpretation, focusing on one inscription in particular:

The references to stone, iron, bronze, and adamant clearly refer to the pagan religion that preceded Christianity; the versifier seems to be saying that pagan superstition oppresses the soul of man as heavily as do these materials. What gives this passage particular significance is that the same person – perhaps the beneficent Eustolios himself – who wrote about Apollo’s protection of the city as though it was not terribly remote in the past, here invokes and venerates the name of Jesus.²⁴

Ino Nicolaou instead sees the mosaic as demonstrating “an atmosphere of tolerance ... which is suggestive of a gradual transition from paganism to Christianity.”²⁵ Terence B. Mitford’s titles for the inscriptions in *The Inscriptions of Kourion* reveal something of what he thinks: “The declaration of the new faith,” “The new spirits by whom the house is tended.” Mitford discusses them in light of a “transition from paganism to Christianity,” but also refers to the “pagan” nature of the reference to the “three sisters,” and sees the mosaic inscriptions as hinting “that the conversion of Kourion was a matter of convenience.”²⁶

²² A. H. S. Megaw et al., *Kourion: Excavations in the Episcopal Precinct*, *Dumbarton Oaks Studies* 38 (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2007), 157–76.

²³ Wiktor Andrzej Daszewski and Demetrios Michaelides, *Mosaic Floors in Cyprus* (Ravena: Mario LaPucci/Edizioni del Girasole, 1988), 83.

²⁴ David Soren and Jamie James, *Kourion: The Search for a Lost Roman City* (New York: Anchor Press of Doubleday, 1988), 23.

²⁵ Ino Nicolaou, “The Transition from Paganism to Christianity as Revealed in the Mosaic Inscriptions of Cyprus,” in *MOSAIC: Festschrift for A. H. S. Megaw*, ed. Judith Herrin, Margaret Mullett, and Catherine Otten-Froux, *British School at Athens Studies* 8 (London: British School at Athens, 2001), 14.

²⁶ Terence B. Mitford, *The Inscriptions of Kourion*, *Memoirs of the American Philosophical Society* 83 (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1971), 353–54; note Bagnall and

Do the Eustolios mosaics reveal an oppressive pagan superstition, as Soren suggests? A period of tolerance, as Nicolaou says? Christianity lite, as Mitford implies? A “strange ambivalence,” as Michaelides suggests?²⁷ What do we mean by “pagan” and “paganism,” in any case?²⁸ Instead of following the rhetoric of early Christian writers who actively distance themselves from others – whether Greeks, so-called pagans, or other Christians, we should look at new modes of cultural production, inflected by the names of venerated figures, whether Christ or Apollo.

The Mosaic Inscriptions

There are six extant inscriptions in the Eustolios complex, one fragmentary beyond any useful reconstruction.²⁹ The remaining five mosaic inscriptions talk about the space of the Eustolios complex. In doing so, they prescribe how the literate viewer experiences the space, providing a kind of running commentary and seeking to persuade the viewer-reader to consider the identity of the building and his or her identity within it. The inscriptions help to assert the agency of the building itself, as it articulates how it should be interpreted.³⁰

The first fairly intact mosaic, with black letters in a red, brown, and gray wreath, greeted the visitor as s/he entered. It reads:

Εἴσα[γε]
ἐπ’ ἀγαθ[ῶ]
εὐτυχῶς
τῶ οἴκῳ

Enter to your good fortune with blessings to the house.³¹

Drew-Bear’s critique of Mitford’s titling of inscriptions (and of Mitford): Roger S. Bagnall and Thomas Drew-Bear, “Documents from Kourion: A Review Article Part I: Principles and Methods,” *Phoenix* 27 (1973): 99–117; Bagnall and Drew-Bear, “Documents from Kourion: A Review Article Part 2: Individual Inscriptions,” *Phoenix* 27 (1973): 213–44.

²⁷ See also his comments regarding “peaceful harmony” between “paganism and Christianity” in Cyprus in the fourth century: Demetrios Michaelides, “Mosaic Decoration in Early Christian Cyprus,” in Horster, Nicolaou, and Rogge, *Church Building in Cyprus*, 216.

²⁸ See the conclusion to Alan Cameron, *The Last Pagans of Rome* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 783: “So when did paganism really, finally, end? This is a question that depends on a series of further questions, of definition, interpretation, and context. Above all, it depends on constantly changing perceptions of paganism.” To rethink terms such as “Christianization” and “pagan survival,” see David Frankfurter, *Christianizing Egypt: Syncretism and Local Worlds in Late Antiquity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2018).

²⁹ Mitford, *Inscriptions of Kourion*, 206.

³⁰ We discover an even more explicitly “talking” building in Nea Paphos, where a mosaic inscription reads χαῖρε | καὶ σύ. On the agency of matter, see Laura Salah Nasrallah, *Archaeology and the Letters of Paul* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), ch. 1, and its bibliography.

³¹ *IKourion* 201 in Mitford, *Inscriptions of Kourion*, 352–53. Mitford states: “The welcome is in fact twofold: Enter to thy good fortune and may thy coming bless this house.” Translation my own.

A second mosaic, found in the northern apsidal room, to the east of the tepidarium and caldarium, contains only one word: ΚΤΙCIC (Κτίσις). The word surrounds the head of a female figure within a roundel. She gazes toward her right, looking at an upright rod marked by two ninety-degree angles at top and bottom, likely a Roman foot measure, which is indeed “almost exactly a Roman foot in length.”³² Since at least two of the other two mosaic inscriptions in the Annex also speak about the building, this image of Κτίσις too must refer to the Annex. With its personification of “foundation” or “creation” it aggrandizes the role of the benefactor who founded the complex.³³

The personification of Κτίσις fits within contemporaneous practices elsewhere. In Antioch, mosaic busts of Κτίσις were found, discovered in lavish domestic settings.³⁴ Images of Κτίσις juxtaposed with *Kosmēsis* (κόσμησις, “adornment”) and *Ananeōsis* (ἀνανέωσις, “renewal”), dating to the Justinianic period, have been found in Cyrenaica.³⁵ This inclination toward personifications is something familiar from late antique writing and iconography. The late fourth- or early fifth-century Nonnus personifies “Night, Day, Dawn, Aion, the Seasons and the Moira, ... Victory and Sleep” in his *Dionysiaca*.³⁶ In Cyprus, the mosaics of Dionysus in the House of Aion in Nea Paphos label *Theogonia* (θεογονία, “birth of the gods”) and *Anatrophē* (ἀνατροφή, “upbringing”), and include personifications of “the gifts of the god to humanity,” namely, Ambrosia and Nektar.³⁷

³² Mitford, *Inscriptions of Kourion*, 358.

³³ I originally thought that this word might best be translated “creation” and that it might hint at some larger notions of theological or philosophical cosmology, as does a similar ΚΤΙCIC at Qasr el-Lebia, as Henry Maguire argues in his *Earth and Ocean: The Terrestrial World in Early Byzantine Art*, Monographs on the Fine Arts 43 (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1987), 44–50, esp. 48. Maguire argues that the Κτίσις of the Eustolios complex must refer to the foundation of the complex itself, especially given the foot marker she holds. He also argues for a double meaning of Κτίσις (foundation and creation proper, in a theological sense) in regard to a mosaic in the East Church of Qasr-el-Lebia. The Κτίσις there may refer to the Justinianic imperial foundation, but multiple scholars have also argued that the mosaic program as a whole refers to God’s creation.

³⁴ Doro Levi, *Antioch Mosaic Pavements* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1947), 1:357–58. In addition, as Kondoleon notes, the “mosaicists of Antioch were especially predisposed to and inspired in the creation of female personifications in order to express concepts such as ΚΤΙCIC (Foundation) ... or GH (Earth) or BIOC (Life).” See Christine Kondoleon, “The Mosaics of Antioch,” in *Antioch: The Lost Ancient City*, ed. Christine Kondoleon (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 63–77.

³⁵ Maguire, *Earth and Ocean*, 44–50. One Κτίσις from Antioch, now at the Louvre, was found among other personifications: Ananeosis, Dynamis, Euandria.

³⁶ As Laura Miguélez-Cavero has shown, in both literature and iconography, the Bacchic court for instance is “densely populated with personifications;” Miguélez-Cavero, “Personifications in the Service of Dionysus: The Bacchic Court,” in *Nonnus of Panopolis in Context: Poetry and Cultural Milieu in Late Antiquity*, ed. Konstantinos Spanoudakis, Trends in Classics Supp. 24 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2014), 175.

³⁷ Miguélez-Cavero, “Personifications in the Service of Dionysus,” 175. So too we find personifications in the House of Dionysus in Nea Paphos, where Ikarios chooses between Temperance and representations of drunkenness.

These personifications exceed our inclination to create boundaries between Christian and pagan.

A third mosaic inscription lies in an eastern hall, near the illegible inscription of the east room. This mosaic inscription is also challenging to read, given its fragmentary state.³⁸ Even if it were whole, its meaning would still be hard to interpret. Perhaps the only thing that can be clearly said of this inscription is that it mentions both Eustolios and Phoibos (Apollo). I offer here Andrea Boskoy's reconstruction:³⁹

[Κουριέας] τὸ πάροϋθε ἐ[ν] ὄ[λβω]! παντὶ πέλο[ν]τας
 [νῦν ἐν δύνῃ ιδ]ῶν ἐκ ποδός Εὐστόλιος
 [οὐ πατέρων χώ]ρης ἐπελήσατο, ἀλλ' ἄρα καὶ τῆς
 [ἐμνήσθη φιλι]ως, λουτρὰ χαρισάμενος
 [αὐτὸς δὴ τότε] δίζετο Κούριον, ὡς ποτε Φοῖβος,
 [γαῖην δὲ β]ρυχ[ί]ην θῆκεν ὑπηνεμίην.

Soren and James translate the inscription thus:

Eustolios, having seen that the Kourians, though previously very wealthy, were in abject misery, did not forget the city of his ancestors but having presented the baths to our city, he was then taking care of Kourion as once did Phoebus [Apollo] and built this cool refuge sheltered from the wind.⁴⁰

Nearly every aspect of this inscription – and note that the translation itself is a guess at how to put together a fragmentary text – is subject to questioning. Does the inscription refer to a disaster, such as an earthquake? (We certainly know that there was a significant earthquake in ca. 365.)⁴¹ What is the significance of the reference to Phoibos (Apollo), given the nearby sanctuary of Apollo Hylates? Does the inscription indicate Christian triumphalism?

Mitford has argued that, despite the difficulties of restoring the poem, its meaning “nevertheless, is not obscure. Eustolios, although he lived abroad – and possibly had risen in Imperial service – when he saw the miseries of Kourion, did not forget the city of his birth. First, he presented these baths; and then, visiting the city in person (as once did Phoebus), built for her this cool shelter from the winds.”⁴² This influential reading and interpretation seems to have influenced Soren and James's translation. They continue by arguing that “the primary message conveyed by this verse (after extolling the generosity of citizen Eustolios, of course), is that the worship of Apollo, while in the past, was nonetheless a re-

³⁸ McFadden and Daniel, “The Excavations at Kourion,” 4–10.

³⁹ Ἀνδρέα Ι. Βοσκοῦ, *Ἀρχαία Κυπριακή Γραμματεία*, vol. 2: *Ἐπίγραμμα* (Nicosia: The Anastasios G. Leventis Foundation, 1997), 126, E52; Mitford, *Inscriptions of Kourion*, 204. Dotted underlining denotes readings which Βοσκοῦ has deemed uncertain.

⁴⁰ Soren and James, *Kourion: The Search for a Lost Roman City*, 20.

⁴¹ Soren and James, *Kourion: The Search for a Lost Roman City*, 3.

⁴² Mitford, *Inscriptions of Kourion*, 357.

cent memory.”⁴³ Roger Bagnall and Thomas Drew-Bear, however, in their strong critique of Mitford’s *Inscriptions of Kourion*, declare that nearly every aspect of this interpretation is fictive, including the assumption that there is an essentially Christian character to the inscription.⁴⁴

What we can tell from the few remaining words in these inscriptions, according to Boskoy, is that we have three elegiac doublets influenced by Homeric language, which mention Phoibos Apollo.⁴⁵ Eustolios is the subject of the inscription and seems to have been the cheerful giver of a bath (*loutra*). The inscription that mentions Phoibos is one of three in the Eustolios complex that are written in dactylic hexameter. Thus, in their very form they gesture toward epic poetry. In addition, their vocabulary alludes to Homer and other classical writers known from the educational system of the Roman period. If the meaning of this mosaic inscription is unclear, what we can know is that this inscription, in tandem with the others, is part of the display of *paideia* on the part of one who commissioned or produced these mosaics.

In addition, we can address the riddle of this particular mosaic inscription by pointing to other evidence of Christ and Apollo together. What has perplexed and fascinated scholars about this annex is the juxtaposition of the phrase ὡς ποτε Φοῖβος, “as at some time Phoibos” with the remaining two mosaic inscriptions, found at the south side of the excavated area, one of which is explicitly Christian. This need not necessarily be surprising. We can think of Constantine himself, famed for his conversion to Christianity, as Eusebius of Caesarea told the story of his seeing a cross-shaped trophy made of light, and subsequently receiving a revelation from Christ (*Vit. Const.* 1.28–29). He was also famed for his worship of the gods, as we see in a panegyrist who insisted: “O Constantine, you saw, I believe, your protector Apollo, in company with Victory, offering you laurel crowns each of which bears the presage of thirty years.”⁴⁶ The light and clarity of an Apollo compare favorably with that of Christ.

A fourth mosaic inscription, disintegrated in its center-right, is located “at the entrance to the southern rooms of the Annex,”⁴⁷ in the eastern part of the excavated complex. This southernmost mosaic inscription reads:

⁴³ Soren and James, *Kourion: The Search for a Lost Roman City*, 20.

⁴⁴ Bagnall and Drew-Bear, “Documents from Kourion 2,” 240–41.

⁴⁵ Βοσκοῦ, *Επιγράμματα*, 410; 409–14 provides a useful commentary on the inscription.

⁴⁶ “But why indeed do I say, ‘I believe’? You really saw the god and recognized yourself in the appearance of one to whom the prophecies of poets have declared that the rule of the whole world should belong.” *Pan. Lat.* VI.21.3–7, translated in J. Stevenson and W. H. C. Frend, *A New Eusebius. Documents Illustrating the History of the Church to A. D. 337* (London: SPCK, 1987), 282 (no. 248). See also discussion in Jan Bremer, “The Vision of Constantine,” in *Land of Dreams: Greek and Latin Studies in Honour of A. H. M. Kessels*, ed. A. P. M. H. Lardinois, M. G. M. van der Poel, and V. J. C. Hunink (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 57–79.

⁴⁷ Mitford, *Inscriptions of Kourion*, 354.

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