

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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and Charalambos Bakirtzis

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Laura Nasrallah, born 1969; 2003–19 Professor of New Testament and Early Christianity at Harvard University; since 2019 Buckingham Professor of New Testament Criticism and Interpretation at Yale Divinity School and Yale University Department of Religious Studies.
orcid.org/0000-0003-3232-9487

AnneMarie Luijendijk, born 1968; 2006–12 Assistant Professor, 2012–14 Associate Professor and since 2014 Professor of Religion, Princeton University, Department of Religion.
orcid.org/0000-0003-3736-9904

Charalambos Bakirtzis, born 1943; Ephor emeritus of Byzantine Antiquities of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace, and of Thessaloniki and Central Macedonia; currently Director of the Foundation Anastasios G. Leventis in Nicosia, 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
NTS	<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 Maltomini. <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., *ΠΑΟΕΣ. 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 Herakleidos, 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 Psemmatismenos-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, *Psemmatismenos-Trelloukkas: An Early Bronze Age Cemetery in Cyprus* (Nicosia: Department of Antiquities, 2011); William R. Caraher, 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 Eirynes, 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 Eirynes. 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 Pautner 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* (Ravenna: 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:

Εἰσα[γε]
ἐπ’ ἀγαθ[ῶ]
εὐτυχῶς
τῷ 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 1: 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 πάροιθε ἐ[ν] ὄ[λβω]! παντὶ πέλο[ν]τας
[νῦν ἐν δύηι ἰδ]ὼν ἐκ ποδὸς Εὐστόλιος
[οὐ πατέρων χώ]ρης ἐπελήσατο, ἀλλ' ἄρα καὶ τῆς
[ἐμνήσθη φιλι]ως, λουτρά χαρισάμενος
[αὐτὸς δὴ τότε] δίζετο Κούριον, ὥς ποτε Φοῖβος,
[γαίην δὲ β]ρυχ[ί]ην θῆκεν ὑπηνεμῖην.

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. Βοσκού, *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 Βοσκού 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 Βοσκού, *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.

ἐξέδρην θάλαμόν τε θυώ[δεα τοῦτο]ν [ἀδ]ελφαὶ
Αἰδῶ(ς) Σωφροσύνη τε καὶ [Εὐσεβίη] κομέουσιν

The sisters Reverence, Moderation, and [Piety]
tend the exedra and this sweet-smelling inner hall.⁴⁸

The third term, or the third “sister,” is contested. Mitford’s *Inscriptions of Kourion* contradicts his earlier reconstruction of *eusebiē*, preferring *eunomē*, a reading that Soren and others follow, while Bagnall and Drew-Bear do not.⁴⁹ My reasons for preferring *eusebiē* will become clear below.

The inscription employs the language of the *Odyssey* and the *Hymn to Demeter* in its reference to θάλαμόν τε θυώ[δεα τοῦτο]ν.⁵⁰ Its references to Reverence, Moderation (sometimes translated modesty or purity), and Piety likely emerge from popular philosophical-theological conversations of the day. *Sophrosynē*, or self-control, was a principal philosophical virtue in antiquity,⁵¹ just as the virtue of *eusebeia*, or piety, was important in political and philosophical writings from the Roman period.⁵² In the case of the Eustolios mosaic, these virtues may be gendered not only in their grammatically feminine sense, but also in their application to women, since the term *thamos*, translated here “inner hall,” also means “women’s quarters.”

This inscription may allude to terminology found in the early Christian text of 1 Timothy. First Timothy, compared to other texts of the Christian Testament,

⁴⁸ *IKourion* 203; I have edited the Greek to substitute Εὐσεβίη for Εὐνομίη; see arguments below. Soren and James, *Kourion: The Search for a Lost Roman City*, 21, offer a different translation: “The sisters Reverence, Temperance, and Obedience to the law [of God] tend the platform and this fragrant hall.” The term *thamos* is associated with women’s quarters, and thus perhaps a more private space; the term *exedra* seems to point to the public location of the house. I am grateful to AnneMarie Luijendijk for pointing out this contrast.

⁴⁹ Bagnall and Drew-Bear, “Documents from Kourion 2,” 239 n. 99. They question the relevance of the reading *eunomiē*, “the ‘justice’ of governors and high officials,” for the *thamos* or women’s quarters.

⁵⁰ Bagnall and Drew-Bear, “Documents from Kourion 2,” 239 n. 98: “*Od.* 4.121 θαλάμοιο θυώδεος; *Hymn to Demeter* 244, 288 θυώδεος ἐκ θαλάμοιο.”

⁵¹ The third term, or the third “sister,” is contested. Mitford’s *Inscriptions of Kourion* contradicts his earlier reconstruction of *eusebiē*, preferring *eunomē*, a reading that Soren and others follow; see in contrast the reconstruction of Drew-Bear and Bagnall. In addition, a TLG search reveals no juxtapositions of *eunomiē* with *sophrosynē*. Mitford’s original reconstruction of *eusebiē*, rather than his later reconstruction of *eunomiē*, must be the correct one, as others too argue. I too would reconstruct *eusebeīē*, based upon my finding, using a Thesaurus Linguae Graecae search, that the roots of *sophrosynē* and *eusebeia* occur together six times more frequently (eighty-eight hits altogether) within five words of each other than do the roots of *sophrosynē* and *eunomia*. See also the argument below about 1 Timothy as an intertext for this mosaic – and 1 Timothy is a text particularly concerned about *eusebeia*.

⁵² See T. Christopher Hoklotubbe, *Civilized Piety: The Rhetoric of pietas in the Pastoral Epistles and the Roman Empire* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2017). We find *eusebeia* extolled in a text like 1 Timothy within the Christian Testament and juxtaposed with other virtues in writers such as Clement of Alexandria, *Paed.* 2.12.131.4.3: Ἀνθρώπου δὲ ἀρετὴ δικαιοσύνη καὶ σωφροσύνη καὶ ἀνδρεία καὶ εὐσέβεια ...

extols and mentions *eusebeia* most frequently by a significant margin.⁵³ The juxtaposition of *aidōs* and *sophrosynē* in the Eustolios mosaic inscription may allude to the proximate use of these terms in 1 Tim 2:9, in which women are instructed to adorn or to order/arrange themselves with reverence and modesty (ὡσαύτως [καὶ] γυναικας ἐν καταστολῇ κοσμίῳ μετὰ αἰδοῦς καὶ σωφροσύνης κοσμεῖν ἑαυτάς). In addition, the root of the verb *kosmein*, with its overtones of order and arrangement, is used twice in the passage from 1 Timothy. The inscription uses the verb *komein* (“to tend”). Nevertheless, the words sound similar and might have been easily confused in transmission. The sorts of philosophical-theological virtues of restrained adornment, of ordering oneself with virtues, and even of arranging or tending, are common both to philosophical-theological literature and to the building complex. Indeed, the mosaic KTICIC is herself neatly attired, simply adorned with one bracelet, and with her hair nicely coiffed focuses attentively to the right, gazing upon the measuring stick that helps her to order and arrange the building. She can be interpreted as embodying these virtues.

Finally, the mosaic inscription located nearby in the southern part of the east hall is the best preserved and perhaps the most contested of them all. In the words of Bagnall and Drew-Bear, it is the “only inscribed mosaic [in this complex] with an unequivocally Christian text.”⁵⁴ It reads:

ἀντὶ λίθων μεγάλων, ἀντὶ στερεοῖο σιδήρου
χαλκοῦ τε ξανθοῖο καὶ αὐτοῦ ἀντ’ ἀδάμαντος
(οἷ)δε δόμοι ζώσαντο πολὺλλιστα σήματα Χριστοῦ.⁵⁵

Mitford’s translation is florid: “this house, in place of its ancient armament of walls and iron and bronze and steel, has now girt itself with the much-venerated symbols of Christ” (fig. 9, p. 288). We might instead translate:

Instead of great stones, instead of both solid iron and yellow bronze, and even instead of the hardest metal, this house⁵⁶ girt itself with the signs of Christ, objects of many prayers.⁵⁷

The mosaic design that surrounds the inscription contains nothing that we would recognize as *σέματα Χριστοῦ*, although it is possible that the signs of Christ were

⁵³ Searching within the Christian Testament, we find that 1 Timothy uses words with the root *euseb-* ten times, compared to the next most frequent user of this terminology, 1 Peter, which contains five instances.

⁵⁴ Bagnall and Drew-Bear, “Documents from Kourion 2,” 242.

⁵⁵ Bagnall and Drew-Bear, “Documents from Kourion 2,” 243, agreeing with *IKourion* 202.

⁵⁶ *Domos* is frequently used in plural for “house.”

⁵⁷ Soren and James, *Kourion: The Search for a Lost Roman City*, 22: “In place of big stones and solid iron, gleaming bronze, and even adamant, this house is girt with the much-venerated signs of Christ.” Mitford (*Inscriptions from Kourion*, 354) notes that “πολύλιπτος is to be found in Kallimachos for the Homeric πολύλλιστος,” LSJ, s. v. πολύλλιστος, states that the word is used in *Od.* 5.445 to mean “object of many prayers” (citing Georg Autenrieth, *A Homeric Dictionary for Schools and Colleges* [New York: Harper and Brothers, 1891]). With thanks to David Elmer, in the Harvard Classics Department (David Elmer, email message to author, 27 August 2015).

on the walls, consisted of objects within the room, or were found in oral form as prayers themselves. As Henry Maguire argues in this volume, it may have been undesirable to have signs of Christ on the floor; we should not be surprised that the floor mosaic itself contains no such indications of Christ.

Mitford argues that, due to the lack of evident Christian symbolism in the surrounding mosaics that remain, the inscription “hints that the conversion of Kourion was a matter of convenience.”⁵⁸ Bagnall and Drew Bear rightly critique this comment.⁵⁹ Even if the mosaic imagery gives us nothing we could clearly identify as “signs of Christ,” and even if the content of this inscription is tantalizing and baffling, the inscription tells us a great deal by its very form. It employs the diction of epic by using dactylic hexameter. According to David Elmer, its first lines, with the “collocation of *lithos*, *stereos*, and *sidēros*” may have been a reference to *Odyssey* 19.494: ἔξω δ’ ὡς ὅτε τις στερεῇ λίθος ἢ ἐ σίδηρος.⁶⁰ The specific vocabulary of this interesting epigram may also tell us even more. The word *polyllitos*, as Mitford notes, is the equivalent to the Homeric *polyllistos* “object of many prayers,” but with the spelling that is found in the fourth-century BCE Kallimachos’s epigrams.⁶¹ The word is found twice in this corpus, once in an epigram regarding Apollo. The fact that the spelling *polyllitos* corresponds to an epigram connected with Apollo may be significant. This unusual word is deployed in the Eustolios Annex, which mentions Apollo (Phoebus) in the inscription detailing Eustolios’s benefaction, and near the location of the worship of Apollo Hylates in Kourion.⁶² Thus, this inscription looks to ancient traditions of Greek poetry and demonstrates the sophistication of the owner of the complex and of those who can read the inscription and understand its intertexts.

But the significance of this word does not only lie in looking backwards to its use in Kallimachos. Because this word in this particular form is used in such a limited way – only fifteen occurrences in the Greek literature contained in the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* – it is both easy and important to see how the term is used contemporaneously with the inscription, to draw a larger context. The word *polyllitos* is used roughly four times in the fourth and fifth centuries CE.⁶³ Two of the three writers who use these terms are Christians who produce Christian texts and stories that emulate the classical Greek tradition.⁶⁴ The term is used by Eu-

⁵⁸ Mitford, *Inscriptions of Kourion*, 354; see Soren and James, *Kourion: The Search for a Lost Roman City*, 22: “in place of big stones and solid iron, gleaming bronze, and even adamant, this house is girt with the much-venerated signs of Christ.”

⁵⁹ Bagnall and Drew-Bear, “Documents from Kourion 2,” 242–43.

⁶⁰ Prof. David Elmer, email message to author, 27 August 2015.

⁶¹ Mitford, *Inscriptions of Kourion*, 354.

⁶² Mitford, *Inscriptions of Kourion*, 204.

⁶³ Two of these are found in Nonnus, who in one place refers to “*theon ... polylliton*” the much-prayed to God. It is used once in Pseudo-Manetho to modify the goddess of childbirth, Eileithyia.

⁶⁴ I deliberately use this term “emulate” to echo the shift in art historians’ terminology with

dokia, empress and composer of Greek hexameter, to refer to the “much prayed to (or revered) Christ” in her *Life of Cyprian*.⁶⁵ The late fourth- or early fifth-century Nonnus uses the word *polyllitos* twice.⁶⁶

Nonnus’s use of the term is significant for the purposes of interpreting the Eustolios complex mosaic, because of his famous role as narrator of both Dionysus and of Christ. Nonnus produced a *Paraphrasis* of the Gospel of St. John in 3650 lines of dactylic hexameter, an expansion and rephrasing of the Gospel of John influenced by Neoplatonic thought. Simultaneously, or perhaps after the *Paraphrasis* had been completed,⁶⁷ Nonnus wrote his *Dionysiaca* in forty-eight books and 12,382 lines, a long story of Dionysus that included ruminations on his progress to divinization. Some scholars read Nonnus as writing primarily for aspirational Christians,⁶⁸ presenting a subtly triumphant Christianity in both volumes.⁶⁹ We can instead recognize Nonnus as someone who wrote about both Christ and Dionysus, and who reframed Christian scripture in epic tones. His writings are evidence of one form of late antique Christian identity, in which some Christians easily valued the language of the classical epic poets, melding Christian religious sensibility with that of the classical. Elsewhere in our volume, Ioli Kalavrezou offers a similar argument regarding the Lambousa treasure found at Cyprus: the plates depicting David “can be seen as a Christianized form of the ancient educational tradition of the hero myth.”⁷⁰

regard to Roman “imitation” of Greek sculpture; such art historians began instead to use the term “emulation” in order to mark the creativity and productivity in the Roman period *and* their relation to classical Greek tradition.

⁶⁵ *De martyrio sancti Cypriani* (e cod. Florent. Laurent. VII, 10) book 2 line 462.

⁶⁶ The term “*polyllitos*” is used once to modify “God” and once to modify *terpōlē* (rare sport, delight). Our only biographical knowledge about Nonnus comes from an anonymous epigram that states that he came from Panopolis (modern Achmim) in Egypt. See Konstantinos Spanoudakis, *Nonnus of Panopolis, Paraphrasis of the Gospel of John XI* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

⁶⁷ Spanoudakis, *Nonnus of Panopolis, Paraphrasis*, 4.

⁶⁸ This poetry, as Spanoudakis says, is “attentive to the aspirations of its audience” (*Nonnus of Panopolis, Paraphrasis*, 4).

⁶⁹ Spanoudakis says of Nonnus’s compositions: “The *Paraphrasis* and the *Dionysiaca* of Nonnus of Panopolis are two parts of a great cultural project which aims at recounting the history of the world. The perspective is essentially Christian ... Such poetry is attentive to the aspirations of its audience. The diverse subjects of the poems need not imply a diverse audience. Either poem within itself contains features and allusions to the ‘other’ heritage. A ‘mixed’ poetry is addressed to a mixed audience in which religious conviction is less important than cultural identity ... The arrival of Christ verified the truth and validity of these old symbols for those able to recognize them.” Spanoudakis, *Nonnus of Panopolis, Paraphrasis*, 4.

⁷⁰ See in this volume Ioli Kalavrezou, “The Cyprus Treasures since Their Discovery: A Re-Evaluation.” That the contrast between Christianity and “Hellenistic culture” is a scholarly construct rather than an ancient fact we know well from Werner Jaeger, *Early Christianity and Greek Paideia* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1961), for example. The connections of late antique Christianity to Greek education and literature has been explored in the work of Ellen Muehlberger, who shows with precision how non-Christian progymnasmata are used and re-

The Mosaic in the Landscape of Cyprus and Antiquity

Ino Nicolaou has argued regarding the mosaic inscriptions of the Eustolios complex that “the composer of [these texts] could not stop his ears to the Pagan Siren ... The propaganda of the new religion was being made through the traditional pagan means of expression,” namely, by using dactylic hexameter and archaizing verse.⁷¹ This interpretation does not take into account the broader context of Christian writing in late antiquity.⁷² It bifurcates “pagan” from Christian at a time that such labels would not have made sense to many Christians, who understood their theological-philosophical heritage as continuous of those of their forebears (or the Greeks whom they wished had been their forebears).⁷³ Georgios Deligiannakis writes that “the extent to which an interest in classical culture also contained a personal statement of belief or should be perceived as what we would today call ‘secular’ will always be open to discussion,” using the

formed in Christian education and practice. See her “The Morphing Portrait of a Church Father: Evidence from the *de morte* (CPG 4886) attributed to John Chrysostom,” *Eirene – Studia Graeca et Latina* 52 (2016): 407–19, and also her *The Moment of Reckoning: Imagined Death in Early Christianity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019). Simultaneously, of course, other Christians constructed the category of the pagan, asserting Christian difference and distance. A famous example of both kinds of Christianity comes in the relationship between the western writers Ausonius and Paulinus of Nola. It is particularly relevant to interpretation of the Eustolios complex because the discussion specifically names Apollo. Ausonius wrote to Paulinus: “This I pray: receive these words of mine, divinities from Boeotia, Muses, / And with Latin poetry call back the poet-priest.” Paulinus responded in this way: “Why do you instruct the Muses that I have rejected to return to my affection, my father? Hearts given up to Christ give refusal to the Camenae [sc. Latin Muses], and are not open to Apollo. Once upon a time there was this understanding between me and you, equals not in power, but in enthusiasm – to summon deaf Apollo from his Delphic cave, to call on the Muses as goddesses, and to seek from groves or mountains the gift of speech granted by the gift of god. Now it is another force that directs my mind, a greater God, and he demands another mode of life, claiming for himself from man the gift he gave, so that we may live for the Father of life.” *Carmen* 10.19–32. This material is gleaned from Robert Shorrock, *The Myth of Paganism: Nonnus, Dionysus and the World of Late Antiquity* (London: Bristol Classical Press, 2011), 15–16.

⁷¹ Nicolaou, “The Transition from Paganism to Christianity,” 14.

⁷² The idea that inscriptions that are written in verse reveal “the dying influence of the pagan literary form on Early Christian writing” is problematic. See Nicolaou, “The Transition from Paganism to Christianity,” 14, concerning the inscription at Agios Spyridon at Tremithous.

⁷³ Werner Jaeger helpfully argued in the mid-twentieth century that we must recognize the ways in which early Christian literature understands itself as a continuation of Greek *paideia*, indeed, as a perfection of it, as in the case of the second-century CE writer Justin Martyr, who advances arguments about philosophers such as Socrates knowing the Logos, and thus being Christians *avant la lettre*. Regarding differences in how such a mix was manifest in Athens and Alexandria in late antiquity, see Edward J. Watts, *City and School in Late Antique Athens and Alexandria* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006). Regarding constructing genealogical connections, see the Panhellenion as discussed, e. g., in Christopher P. Jones, *Kinship Diplomacy in the Ancient World*, *Revealing Antiquity* 12 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999); Nasrallah, *Christian Responses to Roman Art and Architecture: The Second-Century Church amid the Spaces of Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 87–118.

epigrams of Eustolios as an example.⁷⁴ While I share Deligiannakis's question, the very frames of "personal statement of belief" and "secular" are not helpful; these modern categories have unraveled,⁷⁵ revealing more about our present commitments and criteria than those of antiquity, in which, for example, the interiority of belief was not an omnipresent litmus test of true religiosity.

The Eustolios mosaics are examples of the contiguity of what we label Christianity and Greek culture. Eustolios or Nonnus or others in antiquity would have likely understood such juxtapositions of Apollo and Christ merely as how they lived, rather than as a complex intermingling of two separable elements. So too, we find examples of continuity of Christianity with its cultural context in early Christian miscellanies or collections such as the Dishna papers or Bodmer Miscellany, in which Cicero's Catiline Orations are found bound together with the Hymn to the Virgin, the Gospels of Luke and of John, and the tale of the Emperor Hadrian.⁷⁶ We find such continuity and sharing in the very education of Christian thinkers in the fourth century.⁷⁷ We have already found such continuity and complexity in the writings of Nonnus of Panopolis. We find such continuity again in Cyprus, as Pelli Mastora has demonstrated, in the fifth-century mosaic depiction of the bath of Achilles in Nea Paphos and in the larger cultural contexts of Christian use of Homer and Virgil (Constantine, Didymos of Alexandria) that she adduces.⁷⁸ Such continuity between what we wrongly bifurcate as Christian and pagan may also have been present among the artisans themselves. As Michaelides argues, the same workshop may have worked at the basilica of Agia Trias and at the Annex of Eustolios.⁷⁹

⁷⁴ Georgios Deligiannakis, "The Last Pagans of Cyprus: Prolegomena to a History of Tradition from Polytheism to Christianity," in Horster, Nicolaou, and Rogge, *Church Building in Cyprus*, 23–44.

⁷⁵ See, inter alia, Brent Nongbri, *Before Religion: A History of a Modern Concept* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2013); Carlin Barton and Daniel Boyarin, *Imagine No Religion: How Modern Abstractions Hide Ancient Realities* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2016); Talal Asad, *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003).

⁷⁶ Jennifer Knust "Miscellany Manuscripts, the Dishna Papers, and the Christian Canonical Imaginary," in *Ritual Matters: Material Remains and Ancient Religion*, ed. Jennifer Knust and Claudia Moser, MAAR (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2017), 99–118.

⁷⁷ Ellen Muehlberger, "The Morphing Portrait of a Church Father," 407–19.

⁷⁸ Pelli Mastora, "Achilles [*sic*] First Bath in the House of Theseus in Nea Paphos and the Nativity of Christ," *Επετηρίδα του Κέντρου Επιστημονικών Ερευνών*, XXXVII (Nicosia: 2015), 14–15; see also the discussion in Deligiannakis, "The Last Pagans of Cyprus," in Horster, Nicolaou, and Rogge, *Church Building in Cyprus*, 35–38; and in the same volume, Michaelis, "Mosaic Decoration in Early Christian Cyprus," 213–44.

⁷⁹ Michaelides, "Some Characteristics of a Mosaic Workshop," 319. See also Daszewski and Michaelides, *Mosaic Floors in Cyprus*, 105: "In the Baths of Eustolios at Kourion, dated to the beginning of the 5th century by a coin of Theodosius II found under one of its mosaics, the same lotus frieze [as found in Chrysopolitissa and Limeniotissa basilicas, which are probably of the same workshops] is found and it is so similar to those of the two basilicas that there is little

The mosaic inscriptions of the Eustolios complex are best interpreted not in light of battle between “paganism” and Christianity, but in light of larger philosophical-theological trends of late antiquity – that is, the larger *paideia* or culture and education.⁸⁰ At this time, discussion of the highest God was taking place, and Christianity was sometimes defined in light of current trends in Greek education, which reached back to Homer and other foundational literature.

Let us return to the larger Cypriot context: to the “magical” texts of Amathous and the harsh bishop of Salamis. Some Christians, like Epiphanius, to be sure, were clearing ground and rejecting other Christians and others in general for their idolatrous ways, carving out a thin and singular identity. But others, like the users of the *defixiones*, were aggregating their theologies, bringing together gods or philosophical-theological concepts and practices from multiple sources. The Annex of Eustolios, in its mosaic inscriptions, literally addresses the viewer-hearer. The building itself is a material object brimming with purpose and persuasive power. And its mosaics speak in epic tones of theological-philosophical virtues, drawing together the classical past and the signs of Christ.

Contributions in This Volume

Our volume explores this complexity around religion, culture, artisanal work, and society in Cyprus. We begin with Charalambos Bakirtzis’s “Sea Routes and Cape Drepanon from the Hellenistic to the Byzantine Period Excavations at Agios Georgios Tēs Pegeias, Paphos, Cyprus,” which provides an overview of the archaeological history of Cape Drepanon. This site, at the very west of the island, was important from the Hellenistic to the Byzantine period, first as a possible site of quarrying in relation to the building of Ptolemaic Alexandria, then as a site of trade and the transport of grain from Alexandria to Constantinople. We find the communication of ideas indicated by material evidence from small finds to architectural styles. This chapter points to how the hagiographies of saints associated with Cyprus often talk about their sea travels: ports are built into the to-

doubt that the same mosaicists must have been responsible for the decoration of both secular and religious buildings such as these.”

⁸⁰ Cyprus has an unusually high concentration of *hypsistos* inscriptions. According to Stephen Mitchell’s catalogues, Cyprus offers a full thirty-one inscriptions in which a god is named as the “highest”: see Stephen Mitchell, “The Cult of Theos Hypsistos between Pagans, Jews, and Christians” in *Pagan Monotheism in Late Antiquity*, ed. Polymnia Athanassiadi and Michael Frede (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 81–148; Stephen Mitchell, “Further Thoughts on the Cult of Theos Hypsistos,” in *One God: Pagan Monotheism in the Roman Empire*, ed. Stephen Mitchell and Peter van Nuffeln (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 167–208. These inscriptions vary in date and in relation to the god who is proclaimed as “highest,” but they are evidence on the ground, literally, of a larger discourse in antiquity, a discourse of the highest god or greatest god. See Angelos Chaniotis, “Megatheism: The Search for the Almighty God and the Competition of Cults,” in Mitchell and van Nuffeln, *One God*, 112–40.

pography of Cyprus and also are key to narratives of the island. Bakirtzis outlines our archaeological knowledge of this site, which included the Justinianic basilica, visible to sailors from the sea, and two post-Justinianic basilicas.

James Carleton Paget's "Cyprus in the New Testament and Beyond" tackles a longstanding puzzle: What can we know of early Christians in Cyprus in the first and the second century CE? We find some data in the canonical Acts of the Apostles, and there is some archaeological and other literary evidence of the first through fourth centuries. The chapter delineates the (meager) evidence we have of earliest Christianity in Cyprus and discusses the issue of Jews in Cyprus in the first century CE. It focuses in particular on the themes and the brevity of the account of Paul and Barnabas in Cyprus in the Acts of the Apostles, on the one hand, and the puzzle of the role of Jews in Cyprus, on the other. The chapter contextualizes the account in the Acts of the Apostle in light of what we know about Jews in Cyprus in the high Roman imperial period. It shows how necessary this task is, given the emphasis in Luke-Acts on conflict with Jews in Cyprus, even though a more general view of Cyprus in the first and second centuries should reasonably emphasize its well-known "pagan" aspects. Carleton Paget's account helps us to keep our eye on an understudied minority population – Jews – and on the rhetoric of an early Christian text like the Acts of the Apostles, which over-inflates the power and role of Jews in Cyprus.

"Archaeological Realities and Hagiographic Narratives: Revisiting the Beginnings of Christianity in Cyprus," co-authored by Athanasios Papageorgiou and Nikolas Bakirtzis, examines the tensions between the literary and archaeological record on the transition from traditional religion to Christianity at Cyprus. The chapter details hagiographical narratives relevant to the Christianization of the island, including Acts of the Apostles, Acts of Barnabas, and saints' lives. These literary sources, the chapter argues, portray the conversion of the island as a struggle. Jews in particular are depicted as violent and resistant in these texts. The archaeological sources, in contrast, suggest a rather different situation, mainly of peaceful co-existence. The chapter concludes by turning back to the Jewish revolt in 115–117 and its effect on the Christians of Cyprus, Roman patronage of traditional cults, as well as investigating the deep impact of natural disasters in the fourth century on the developing cities of Cyprus.

The next two essays focus on the mosaics of Cyprus. Henry Maguire's "The Gods, Christ, and the Emperor in the Late Antique Art of Cyprus," emerges from his keynote presentation at the conference. The chapter takes a seemingly small but clear difference between Christian and non-Christian uses of images, and it uses that difference to open up a world of implications for art and religion. Maguire observes, "whereas from the Hellenistic through to the end of the late antique period it was common for pagan gods and their exploits to be illustrated upon the floors of buildings, it was exceedingly uncommon for either Christ or the emperor to be so depicted." Why, Maguire asks, was it so rare for scenes from

the Bible or from imperial ceremony to be on the ground, where they could be stepped on? Maguire's chapter explores a wealth of iconography on the island of Cyprus. Depictions of the god Dionysus, for example, appear on the floors of the House of Dionysus and the House of Aion, or the goddess Aphrodite in a bath at Alassa. While Christian symbols can be found on mosaic pavements in Cyprus – fruiting vines, or a cross, for instance – only in rare cases outside of Cyprus is Christian figural imagery found on floors. Drawing in comparisons from outside Cyprus, ruminating on whether the lack of Christian figural imagery on the floor is due to bishop Epiphanius's stance against images (the answer is no), and investigating floor mosaics in Jewish synagogues which depict biblical scenes, Maguire marshals evidence to point to the absence of biblical imagery on Christian floor mosaics. Yet, he also notes, Roman imperial portraits on floors are also absent, making Christians in one way similar to their “pagan” others. Thus, Maguire concludes, “The absence of Christian portrait images on pavements was inextricably linked with the veneration of icons.” Art with the “pagan” gods could be placed underfoot, but as more honor was rendered to images of Christ or to other saints, they could not be incorporated into floor mosaics, even as the Roman emperors could not be trodden underfoot.

Demetrios Michaelides's “Mosaic Workshops in Cyprus from the Fourth to the Seventh Centuries CE: Two Parallel Lives?” returns us to the beauties of the mosaics of Cyprus and to the question of what they can reveal about relations between Christians and others in the fourth to seventh centuries. In his review of the mosaics (and some other decorative elements) of churches and elite structures throughout Cyprus from the fourth to the mid-seventh centuries CE, Michaelides discovers several important themes. First, some workshops accommodated themselves both to domestic and to religious structures. Second, close investigation of mosaics allows a glimpse of artisanal labor and larger artistic and economic trends: some mosaic workshops moved between Cyprus and Antioch or were found in distant locations within Cyprus.⁸¹ Third, several mosaics in Cyprus indicate the strength of traditional religion in the mist of the emergence and growth of Christianity on the island, and what we can perhaps call religious syncretism or at least proximity. For example, the same workshop could decorate both an ecclesiastical building, like the basilica of Agia Trias, and a civic or private building, like the Annex of Eustolios. Finally, there was a shift in decorative practice in the sixth century: as the marble trade came to Cyprus, sophisticated examples of *opus sectile* decoration were used in churches. Throughout, this chapter helps the reader to look closely and to understand with precision patterns, color, and motifs of those who made mosaics in ancient Cyprus. It also

⁸¹ See also discussions in Lawrence Becker and Christine Kondoleon, *The Arts of Ancient Antioch: Art Historical and Scientific Approaches to Roman Mosaics and a Catalogue of the Worcester Art Museum Antioch Collection* (Worcester, MA: Worcester Art Museum; Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005).

helps the reader to consider larger trends and issues, as it argues that the themes and techniques of the mosaics indicate a peaceful co-existence with Christians among their non-Christian neighbors on the island.

Drew Wilburn's "Ritual Specialists and the Curse Tablets from Amathous, Cyprus" turns us to something more hidden in the landscape of Cyprus. At Amathous, deposited either in a well or a shaft grave, the to-date largest cache of so-called magical materials from antiquity was found: more than two hundred lead and selenite tablets. The tablets which have been published so far are judicial in nature and "focus on removing the anger of adversaries, and ask that the victims be made speechless." The chapter deepens our understanding of ritual practice and religion in Cyprus. It does so by questioning the very definition of magic in contradistinction to religion, reminding us, for example, that the canonical Acts of the Apostles depicts a scene in Cyprus in which a figure named Elymas is called a *magos*, which we usually translate magician – a term that could equally have been applied to Paul and Barnabas by Roman officials. The chapter contextualizes the Amathous cache within the ritual practices in the ancient Mediterranean world, demonstrating, for instance, how the tablets contain an international set of names (Osiris, Iao, Adonai, among others), which indicate references to Egyptian religions and Judaism, as well as communications between Cyprus and other locations. The chapter also illuminates the use and importance of the Cypriot tablets by turning to other *defixiones* around the Mediterranean, considering how they were displayed in cult centers, and how ritual experts produced them.

The next two chapters star the contentious bishop of Constantia (Salamis), Epiphanius. Andrew Jacobs's "Epiphanius's Library" lays out the usual approach to the fourth-century CE bishop's corpus by those that mine it for its sources, rather than approach the agitated, critical bishop himself. This chapter instead pursues the question: What of Epiphanius's library? To what sources, and in what form, did Epiphanius have access? In this, Jacobs enters a larger set of scholarship on the late antique libraries of other figures, such as Eusebius and Jerome. Jacobs focuses on Epiphanius's unique qualities. In the *Panarion*, which was completed after Epiphanius had moved to Cyprus, mention of so-called pagan and heretical texts and authors predominates, but significant citations come from so-called orthodox writers. Yet, among these citations, many are precisely *about* those who are considered heretical. This orthodox voice unites to produce truth, yet that truth discloses heresy, sometimes in the heretics' own voices, quoted first by someone like Irenaeus, then again by Epiphanius. In Jacobs's terms, "Epiphanius's library is polyglossic." Jacobs reminds us that many voices from early Christianity emerge from Epiphanius's study in Constantia on Cyprus, even if they are deracinated from their original context of citation.

Young Richard Kim's "Cypriot Autocephaly, Reconsidered" returns to the question of the Cypriot autocephaly – that is, the Cypriot claim of the authority

to consecrate its own bishops, which fifth-century patriarchs in Antioch claimed was theirs alone. After carefully laying out the history of scholarship on Cypriot autocephaly from the late nineteenth century on, the chapter argues “that the quintessential act that epitomized this Cypriot autonomous impulse was the selection and consecration in 367 of Epiphanius as lead bishop of the island.” Kim lucidly guides the reader from the Council of Nicaea to the Council of Ephesus, through the complex church politics and councils of the fourth century, and he demonstrates how the ancient Cypriot church argued for its independence. In public debates, the Cypriot church used the figure of Epiphanius to demonstrate their right to choose a bishop, and for questions about apostolicity, to Barnabas. And not only the role of Epiphanius was crucial to bolster Cyprus’s authority, but also a miracle from St. Barnabas, according to the accounts: the revelation by Barnabas of the spot of his burial, and the discovery of his body “clutching a copy of the Gospel of Matthew, penned in the Cypriot’s own hand.”

It is this story of Barnabas and the Gospel of Matthew that is taken up in AnneMarie Luijendijk’s chapter, “The Gospel of Matthew in the Acts of Barnabas through the Lens of a Book’s History: Healing and Burial with Books.” The chapter looks to the broader context of how books in antiquity functioned both as texts to be read and as objects, especially for healing and burial practices. Barnabas’s Gospel of Matthew, as described in the Acts of Barnabas, played a role in making the case for the autocephaly of Cyprus. This chapter collects an important set of evidence regarding Barnabas, contextualizing it among other ancient practices of using written texts for a variety of functions: to authorize, to teach, to heal, even, if rarely, as an appropriate object with which to be buried. The chapter uses the Acts of Barnabas not to elucidate Barnabas himself, but to demonstrate how he functioned within debates over authority and rights within early Christianity, and most of all how literary accounts of written texts also functions to grant authority to persons, places, and arguments – in this case, to Barnabas, to fifth-century Cypriot ecclesiastical authorities, to Cyprus, and to the argument for Cypriot ecclesiastical independence.

Ioli Kalavrezou’s “The Cyprus Treasures since their Discovery: A Re-Evaluation” turns our attention to the Cyprus or Lambousa treasures, found at the turn of the nineteenth century in Cyprus. The numerous precious objects have little to no precise archaeological documentation associated with them. This is the reason that until now only the David plates had been placed in a historical context. Kalavrezou undertakes to show that, beyond the David plates, the other objects can be placed within a social and political context. These finds include the exceptional set of nine silver plates with representations of the life of King David of the Jewish Scriptures, numerous other silver household objects, and among the gold pieces a belt with special medallions presented by the emperor Maurice to the owner, together with an additional commemorative medallion which might be associated with the baptism of Theodosius Porphyrogenetos,