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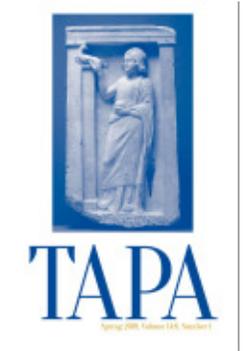
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Cyprus in the Surging Sea: Spatial Imaginations of the Eastern Mediterranean *

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SUMMARY: Cyprus was a principal venue in classical antiquity where Greek, Roman, and Near Eastern worlds encountered one another, and yet it remains a type of backwater, excluded from dominant historical narratives of the first millennia B.C.E. and C.E. I argue that this construct reproduces ancient otherings of the island, which developed via persistent yet fluid *topoi* of liminality. Three registers of etic spatial imaginations – location and distance, economic geography, and royal, urban histories – reveal how its enigmatic depictions endured. I conclude by addressing their durability in modern scholarship, which situates Cyprus outside the ambit of the classical world.

INTRODUCTION

AT THE HEART OF OUR UNDERSTANDINGS OF THE ISLAND OF CYPRUS IN classical antiquity reside a number of paradoxes. A large insular mass situated in a busy corner of eastern Mediterranean passages, Cyprus became a principal fixture of maritime trade and cultural networks between east and west, already from its early prehistory (Knapp 2013: 477–84; Broodbank 2013: 366–68). Yet despite its apparent rank as an integral venue where eastern worlds encountered Greek and Roman ones, or as an imperial edge facing eastern frontiers (e.g., Hauben 1987: 214), the island features rarely in surviving literature and documents after the end of the Late Bronze Age. Although there is material and epigraphic evidence for early impactful Greek

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presence on the island by the Iron Age (ca. 1100–500 B.C.E.; e.g., Collombier 2003: 141; Knapp 2008: 341–47; Iacovou 2013), ancient Greek sources seem to have staked Cyprus somewhere at the limits of Hellenic identity, occupying an estranged zone of linguistic kinship inflected with exoticism (Serghidou 2007: 269).¹ The royal *basileus* institution ruled the island, not the *demos*, to cite one fault line.² These tensions have undoubtedly shaped current scholarly approaches to Cyprus during the first millennia B.C.E. and C.E.: as Anthony Snodgrass (1988: 5) remarked nearly thirty years ago, ancient historians were (and still are) treating Cyprus as a “backwater, away from the main currents of history in the millennium which the Classical sources illuminate for us, occasionally touched by those currents but never initiating them.”³ While the archaeology of Cyprus has in many ways confirmed the island’s distinctive and entangled cultures (e.g., Knapp 2008: 13–65; Counts 2008), its hesitant position outside the scope of most classical histories invites further inquiry.

The marvelous fringes of the Mediterranean became rich spaces for defining Greek and Roman self-identities (MacLachlan 1992; Romm 1994), but Cyprus, “in front” of both Syria and Cilicia from a Greek perspective (Prontera 2014: 15), seems not to have been far-flung or politically-charged enough to warrant any thick ethnographic description (*sensu* Geertz 1973; see Helms 1988: 7–19, 49–65; Dougherty 2001: 7–11). Attending to these paradoxical treatments of the island as familiar but unfamiliar, in range but distant, civilized but made up of subjects rather than *polis* citizens, entails an excavation into the uneven making of this in-betweenness through time. As an insular mass that continuously vexed the categories of east and west, or self and other, Cyprus provides a rich study for the concept of geographical liminality (see Turner 1967: 93–111). I contend that Cyprus’s patchy presence in extant texts from the Greek and Roman world stems not solely from its distance and marginality from Greek or Roman centers, but also from different recalibrations of the island by others who pulled it within or pushed it away from shifting, dominant worldviews and institutional forms. This study thus charts the unstable and stratified uses and depictions of Cyprus

¹ The literature on the ancient “Hellenization” of the island and its problematic modern politics is massive; see e.g., Leriou 2007; Iacovou 2008b; Papanioniou 2012: 32–35.

² The question of citizens vs. subjects is difficult given the paucity of evidence on the mechanics of Cypriot kingship; see Hatzopoulos 2014: 222–225; Iacovou 2002; 2014b: 98–103; cf. Coldstream 1989; Demand 1996.

³ See also Thomsen 1995: 33; Fejfer 2013: 169; Iacovou 2014b: 98–100.

by Greek and Roman authors, instead of assigning permanent and ahistorical labels of liminality to Cypriot places or products.⁴

Rather than focus on mechanics or contacts by which eastern practices met western ones (cf. Demetriou 2012), I want to explore instead how spatial representations of the island helped to frame ancient ideas about political, social, and ideological thresholds (Hall 1997; Gruen 2011). Underpinning the extant corpus of etic references to Cyprus, which accumulated secondary and tertiary levels of meaning dictated by the fluid preoccupations, aims, and investments of outsiders, is the salient spatiality of the island (Figure 1; Serghidou 1995; Iacovou 2004; Knapp 2008: 14–30). One prominent feature was the sanctuary of Aphrodite at Paphos (e.g., Hom. *Od.* 8.363; *Hymn Hom. Ven.* 5.58–59; Tac. *Hist.* 2.2–3; see Zeman 2008; Smith and Pickup 2010; Pirenne-Delforge 2010). Indeed, Cyprus surfaces in ancient thought less through constructs of somatic or linguistic ethnicity than through the brevity of geographical epithets for the goddess Aphrodite, often employed to invoke eroticism, sexuality, or eastern origins: the goddess is Kyprogenes, Paphian, Amathusian, or simply Kypria (Ulbrich 2010: 167–8). While the perceived ambiguity of Cyprus has proven fertile ground for explorations of self/other or center/periphery dynamics in particular authors (e.g., Serghidou 2007), or in materials or objects of select historical periods (e.g., Papalexandrou 2008; Counts 2008; Connelly 2009; Gordon 2016), I suggest that attention to the diachronic mental mapping of the island offers insights not only into early geographic traditions, but also into broader social dynamics at work in the first millennia B.C.E. and C.E.

My investigation of ancient imaginations of Cyprus aligns with recent interest in the ways classical societies produced and reproduced socially contested spatial worlds.⁵ Repeated encounters with its numerous harbors in the late second millennium–early first millennium B.C.E., for example, and its subsequent integration into Ptolemaic and Roman provincial administration, likely led merchants and migrant settlers to associate this island with

⁴I am therefore reluctant to assign a term like “heterotopic” (*sensu* Lefebvre [2003: 128–129]; cf. Foucault 1986) to ancient Cyprus for this text-based study, given the concept’s insistence in theorizing urban spaces through their active revolutionary and resistant place-making. The rare presence of Cyprus in classical authors suggests rather an attenuation of its marginality, not “effective location... a focus for the application of force” (Casey 1997: 300).

⁵The literature on space in ancient thought is increasingly robust: see Romm 1994; Delattre 2001; Parker 2008; Skempis and Ziogas 2014; Podossinov 2014; Ceccarelli 2016.

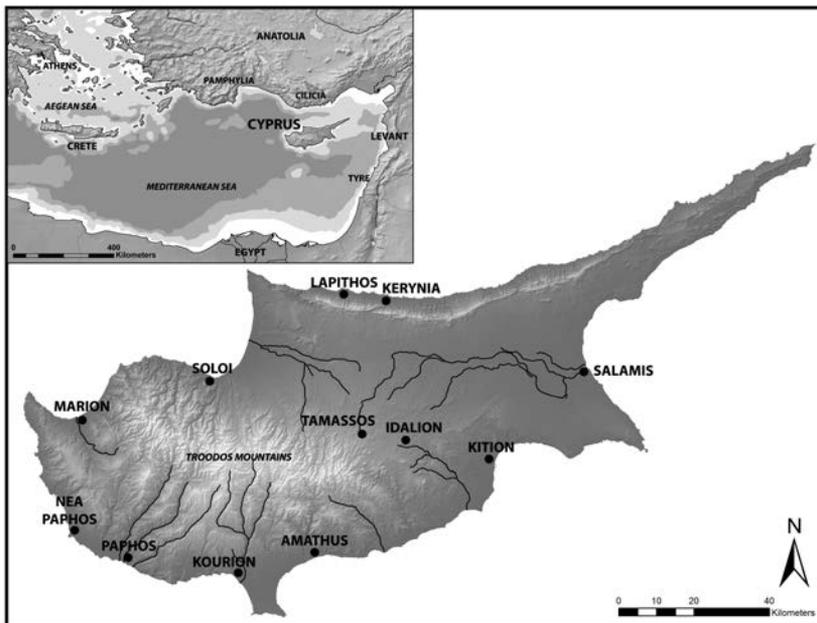


Figure 1. Sites mentioned in text. Created by author, data from the Geological Survey Department of Cyprus.

commerce and harbors, *insulam... portuosam* (Amm. Marc. 14.8.14).⁶ These contingent connections between ideal spatial conceptions and material experiences helped foster sense-making of the wider world (Prontera 2014: 15–16; see Lefebvre 1991: 33; Feld and Basso 1996; Harvey 1996: 304–305; 2005). Here I want to explore spatial imagination, which “emerges most forcefully in the analytic domain of representations” (Smith 2003: 73; see Harvey 1990; 2005). In Dell Upton’s (1996: 239) terms, spatial imagination “addresses the ‘ought-tos’ rather than the ‘can-bes’ of social and spatial life.” Importantly, these depictions of peripheral Cyprus shift between perspectives (Lefebvre 1991: 40), contingent to the time and place in which they were constructed (see Casey 1997: 297–301). Along these lines, I look at Cyprus with the methodology suggested by Katerina Kopaka (2008: 183; see also Thomsen 1995: 31–32; Delattre 2001: 68–69) for tracing insular *topoi* through the literature, place names, and epithets that people used and re-used while interacting

⁶On the relative obscurity and management of Roman Cyprus the seminal reference is Mitford 1980.

with and representing the island through trade, ritual, or diplomacy. Indeed, while islands *qua* islands were well-positioned to provoke thought on natural phenomena, exoticism, and idealism in the ancient world (e.g., Diod. Sic. 2.55–59; Gabba 1981: 55–60), exploring the surprisingly considerable absence of so large an island as Cyprus from Greek and Roman writing provides an important counternarrative to utopian or idealized island geographies.

I examine three spheres of etic landscapes by which Cyprus became de/familiarized as a challenge to the gradated boundaries of the ancient Mediterranean (see Braudel 1972: 168). The first concerns the position of the island in geographic traditions, somewhere at the “epigraphic horizon” of the expanding eastern Mediterranean network (S. Morris 1992: 102; Sherratt and Sherratt 1993; I. Morris 2003), but not wholly exotic (see Haubold 2014: 22). The second section inspects the portrayal of Cyprus as a land of commerce and industry, particularly through its renown in metallurgy, and the ways in which states viewed it within a peripheral geography of valued commodities. A third section analyzes Greek and Roman sketches of the island’s royal politics through its urban genealogies and quasi-civic architectonics. Throughout this discussion, I aim to place each source within its own cultural and temporal context so as not to conflate motives or authorial styles (Iacovou 2014b: 98). The selection of examples is not meant to be an exhaustive survey, but an admittedly diachronic synthesis that reveals how repeated imaginaries of Cyprus emphasized and also probed its liminality; the majority of sources are Greek, with a heavy Athenian bias.⁷ Moreover, given that the othering of Cyprus in outside thought has arguably helped to anchor its elliptical position in modern scholarship, I do not engage with a sense of emic representations from the corpus of inscriptions found on the island or allusions to Cypriot epic or oral traditions (e.g., Franklin 2014; see Huxley 1967), or to local hybridized creations (e.g., Counts 2008; Connelly 2009); these would require an altogether different paper. With these caveats, the goal is to trace changing attitudes to the placing and places of Cyprus, in order to understand how literal and metaphorical forms embedded Cyprus within the increasingly legible *oikoumene* yet kept it distant enough to forge lasting boundaries.

I: LOCATION AND DISTANCE

A recurring *topos* in the earliest extant Greek poetry locates Cyprus far off from the Greek world, in a section of the Mediterranean to and through which

⁷ See e.g., Hadjiioannou 1971; on the equally complex but scarce Near Eastern perspectives on Cyprus see Cannavò 2010.

only select travelers venture. In the *Homeric Hymn to Dionysus* for example (7.28–29), the hubristic pirates who tie up Dionysus aboard their ship assume that their captive was traveling far out to sea, toward “Egypt or Cyprus or to the Hyperboreans, or further still” (ἢ Αἴγυπτον ἀφίξεται ἢ ὄ γε Κύπρον/ ἢ ἐς Ὑπερβορέους ἢ ἑκάστέρω). As Donald Lateiner (2014: 73; 89–90) has recently shown, the Mediterranean was a dangerous and infinite expanse in early Greek epic, and the peripheral areas far from shore, the remote *eschatiai* (e.g., Hom. *Od.* 18.358; see Romm 1994: 47), evoked persistently unruly, uncanny spaces. The farther away, the stronger the cultural differences (Haubold 2014: 22).⁸ Unlike the central distinctions between humans and gods at play in the *Iliad*, it is the “intrinsic geographical edge” of the *Odyssey* that allowed the Homeric poets to construct these environments (Skempis and Ziogas 2014: 5; Haubold 2014: 22; Lateiner 2014: 70–71; see Dougherty 2001). Among these far-off boundary areas was the Phaeacian island of Scheria, where Odysseus washes up in Book 6 of the *Odyssey* and relays his adventures to the king Alcinous.⁹

Nausicaa, the daughter of Alcinous, describes her island home of Scheria as out in the “much-washed” or “storm-surfing” sea (*Od.* 6.204–205):

οἰκέομεν δ' ἀπάνευθε πολυκλύστῳ ἐνὶ πόντῳ,
ἔσχατοι, οὐδέ τις ἄμμι βροτῶν ἐπιμίσγεται ἄλλος.

We live far off in the storm-surfing sea,
the farthest out, and no other mortal men have dealings with us.¹⁰

In the *Theogony*, Hesiod describes Aphrodite’s connection to Cyprus with similar marine epithets (199):

Κυπρογενέα δ' ὅτι γέντο περικλύστῳ ἐνὶ Κύπρῳ

(They call Aphrodite) Kyprogenes, because she was born on wave-buffeted Cyprus.

Scheria and Cyprus, two isolated places far out in the sea, share a vocabulary that positions them in a quasi-mythic, forceful maritime realm. The uncom-

⁸ An early and profound glimpse of the spectrum between civilized town and wild edges occurs in the description of the Shield of Achilles (*Il.* 18.490–606); see discussion in Edwards 1993: 28–36.

⁹ There is debate about whether Scheria is an island, as the poet is never explicit; see the commentary of Heubeck et al. 1988: 306.

¹⁰ All translations are my own unless otherwise noted.

mon epithet *polyklystō* was reserved for the rougher and dangerous terrain of the remote sea, *pontos*: the Homeric poet also uses it to characterize the waters around the island of Pharos near Egypt (*Od.* 4.354–55; see Clay 2007: 152) and as a deathly space (*Od.* 19.277), while it came to define winter storms in Hellenistic epic (e.g., Aratus *Phaen.* 744).¹¹ Islands in stormy seas became *periklystō*, wave-thrashed on all sides (e.g., Aesch. *Pers.* 596, 880; Strabo 16.2.13).¹² Similarly, the infrequent epithet “loud-roaring” (πολυφλοίσβοιο θαλάσσης), used in early epic to empower the sea, characterizes Cyprus’s domain (*Hymn Hom. Ven.* 6.4).¹³ While Cyprus obtains more neutral and conventional insular epithets used for other Aegean islands, such as “sea-girt” (περίρρυτον, Hes. *Theog.* 193; see Kopaka 2008: 183), it often appeared in the stormiest fringes in epic space that separated the Greeks from their neighbors. The frenetic character of the eastern Mediterranean sea surfaces later in Dionysius’s *Periegesis* (121–22), a poem of geographic ordering of the *oikoumene*. Echoing πολυκλύστῳ (86), Dionysius further uses κλύζεται (509) to describe the shores of Cyprus.

Despite the conspicuously familiar wealth of Alcinous and the spatial traits of a *polis* (*Od.* 6.262–72, 7.78–132), Scheria is nearly inaccessible, a place where the inhabitants live out of reach from other populations.¹⁴ In contrast to the utopian-like coordinates of Scheria, however, or other islands where paradoxes ought to have occurred (Gabba 1981: 58), Cyprus could be more easily geographically located (see Clay 2007: 155). Depictions of Cyprus as a stopping point for the itinerant passages of mythic and historical figures reinforce it as a locus of recognizable harbors in an increasingly interconnected world (see e.g., Broodbank 2013: 367). Poets sang of Aphrodite’s own immediate cross-Mediterranean travels after her first appearance at Paphos, as recounted in the *Theogony* (188–206; Pirenne-Delforge 2010:15). As an insular trope, Cyprus became part of an eastern assemblage that symbolized security

¹¹ πολυκλύστῳ: Plut. *De exil.* 599a-607f; Dionys. *Per.* 86. On the conventional arrangements of Homeric epithets for the sea, see Gray 1947: 109–13.

¹² An additional epithet of the island by the Roman period is *Cryptos* (Plin. *HN* 5.129), “often hidden,” as Stephanus Byzantius (*Ethnika* κ 283) later explained, by the sea (Κρύπτων κεκλήσθαι διὰ τὸ κρύπτεσθαι πολλάκις ὑπὸ τῆς θαλάσσης. εἶτα Κύπρος).

¹³ There are several references in epic, see e.g., Hom. *Il.* 1.34; *Od.* 13.85; Hes. *Op.* 648. The threat of “loud-roaring” accentuates treacherous deep-sea sailing from smaller-scale coastal activity in *Op.* 648. Euripides begins the *Hippolytus* (1–6) by associating Kypris (Aphrodite) with dangerous seas (Segal 1965: 120).

¹⁴ On the distinctions between the Phaeacian town and its countryside, as constituents of Homeric social space, see Edwards 1993: 36–37.

for transgressive, lost, or captive figures, as with Dionysus mentioned above or Odysseus himself (*Od.* 17.442–44). Menelaus recounts to Telemachus in the *Odyssey* how he wandered through Cyprus, Phoenicia, and Egypt before making his way back to Sparta (4.83–85).¹⁵ Later, for Pompey’s escape to Egypt following his defeat at Pharsalus, Lucan pushes the embattled leader towards the presumed safety of Cyprus (8.456–59).¹⁶ Similarly, when Justin (18.5.1–5) relays Pompeius Trogus’s account of the ill-fated journey of tragic Dido to Carthage, she is said to have stopped at Cyprus en route from Tyre, picking up a shipment of brides (S. Morris 1992: 128).¹⁷

Through its increasingly defined position out in the eastern sea (Hdt. 1.72.3; 5.49.6), the island afforded various territorial constructs of the Mediterranean. Although Herodotus grants little attention to Cyprus in the *Histories*, despite its relevant importance to events like the Ionian Revolt (Serghidou 2007: 269; Iacovou 2014b: 99–100), his use of it as a spatial referent for large islands allows him to play with plural geographical imaginings, especially in opposing unstable Persian and Hellenic categories (Pelling 1997: 56; Serghidou 2007: 271). In book 5, the tyrant Aristagoras argues to the Persians that they would win money as well as control of several prosperous islands should they successfully take Naxos (5.31.3): “from there,” Aristagoras adds, “you would be in a good position to attack Euboea, a large and prosperous island not less important than Cyprus, and very easy to conquer” (ἐνθεῦτεν δὲ ὀρμώμενος εὐπετέως ἐπιθήσεια Εὐβοίῃ νήσω μεγάλη τε καὶ εὐδαίμονι, οὐκ ἐλάσσονι Κύπρου καὶ κάρτα εὐπετεῖ αἰρεθῆναι). Cyprus acts here as a common entity to the Persians, who, presented with unknown islands of the Aegean, would have likely recognized the name Cyprus as the far edge of a satrapal possession tied with the southern coast of Anatolia (Hdt. 3.91.1; see Raptou 1995: 238–39). In juxtaposing Cyprus with Euboea from the vantage of Persian imperialist expansion, however, Herodotus equally builds into what must have

¹⁵ Similarly, in Neo-Assyrian lore, the Phoenician king of Tyre and Sidon, Luli, having angered the king Sennacherib, purportedly escaped to the Cypriot city of Kition ca. 703–702 B.C.E. and, according to royal accounts, perished in the middle of the sea; see Luckenbill 1924: 68–69, Bull Inscription F1 (from the palace at Nineveh); Cannavò 2010: 174.

¹⁶ I thank Stephen Sansom for this observation and look forward to his forthcoming work on this passage.

¹⁷ See Baurain 1988. On stories of the well-known Trojan *nostoi* landing on Cyprus, see third section. The *topos* of Cyprus as a safe harbor in storms appears numerous times and may therefore better explain the island’s unexpected presence in circum-Aegean travels, like the wanderings of Habrocomes to Cyprus between Crete and Rhodes in Xenophon of Ephesus’ novel (5.10.2; Capra 2010).

been long-standing experiential histories of trade and connection between the two islands from the Greek perspective (Serghidou 2007: 271; Harrison 2007: 54–56).¹⁸ For when Aristagoras must turn to persuade the Spartans to journey east to take on Persian forces, Cyprus becomes inventoried again as but one of several islands out in the sea (5.49.6). In a fantastic use of material witness, Aristagoras brings a large bronze map of the entire world to the Spartan king Cleomenes with which to illustrate the expanses and riches of the Near East (5.49.5–7; Branscome 2010).¹⁹ Herodotus uses this object to imagine geopolitical distance from the perspective of a Spartan, refracted through the motives of a Milesian tyrant, but also to mirror his own authorial capacity as a proto-geographer and ethnographer (Branscome 2010: 2; Harrison 2007).

It is then curious that Cyprus, despite its schematic inclusion in Aristagoras's map, is granted little other description in this geography of wealth, given its contemporary renown for precious metals like copper (Serghidou 2007: 272; Kassianidou 2013), as discussed in the next section. It seems possible that Herodotus intentionally left things out of Aristagoras's cartographic speech so that he could show off his own knowledge in other sections in the *Histories* (Branscome 2010: 30–35). But a thicker description of Cyprus never arrives. As in earlier verse, Cyprus does not fully belong to the outermost fringes of the Greek world in Herodotean geography that deserve special interest or host discrete and unique populations, like Scythia, Babylon, or Ethiopia (MacLachlan 1992: 32; Karttunen 2002; Harrison 2007: 54), despite some hinted-at similarity in practices (e.g., 1.105, 1.199, 2.79). In Herodotus's description of the Persian forces, for example, the Cypriot men fighting for Xerxes are described as wearing eastern headdresses (μίτρησι) but appear “in all else like the Greeks” (τὰ δὲ ἄλλα κατὰ περὶ Ἑλλήνας, 7.90.1). In other fifth century B.C.E. works, Cyprus is lumped together with other easterners, as when King Pelasgus of Argos declares that the Danaid women from Egypt look like Libyans, Egyptians, Cypriots, Indians, and Amazons (Aesch. *Supp.* 277–90).²⁰

¹⁸ Archaeologically, connections between Euboea and the island and particularly the site of Amathus are well attested, chiefly through ceramic imports: see e.g., Aupert 1997: 24; Petit 2001: 60–61.

¹⁹ For a summary on contemporary maps from the sixth-fifth centuries B.C.E. see Brodersen 2012.

²⁰ Indeed for Herodotus (7.90), the inventory of Cypriot forces fighting for Xerxes (from Salamis, Athens, Arcadia, Cythnus, Phoenicia, Ethiopia) exemplifies this non-cohesive ethnicity; see Petit 2004: 15; Serghidou 2007: 273. On this passage from the *Suppliants* see also Hadjistephanou 1990.

As Anastasia Serghidou (1995; 2007) has shown, there is clear ambivalence in Herodotus's spatial imaginations of Cyprus: somewhere in-between east and west, Greek and Persian, and not distinct enough to earn its own ethnography (Ceccarelli 2016: 73; Pelling 1997: 56).

The location of Cyprus became more defined as geographic knowledge oscillated in form between descriptive literature and mathematical science in the later first millennium B.C.E. Emerging geographic traditions varied in their cataloguing of islands (Lightfoot 2014: 16; Ceccarelli 2016: 67–71) and in delineating the void of the Mediterranean sea, often circumscribed by coasts but given little of its own definition (Clarke 2017: 56). While some authors positioned islands in groups near the closest stretch of continental mainland, others categorized insularity as a discrete topic warranting entire books (e.g. Diod. Sic. 5.2.1). As a regulated Ptolemaic and later Roman possession with an administrative capital at Nea Paphos, Cyprus – whether associated with the Cilician coast or annexed to a Mediterranean insular inventory – seems to have avoided association with the hard limits or edges of empire (Parker 2008: 204–05).

Yet in the shift toward “seeing the state” by calculating geometric contours of land and sea in the service of territorial legibility and power (*sensu* Scott 1998; see Nicolet 1991), Cyprus, like many other regions, became metonymically associated with its cities. In the fourth century B.C.E. *Periplus* attributed to Pseudo-Scylax, a form of hodological writing that outlined distances of coastline and harbors (see e.g., Geus 2013), the author lists the cities that were predominantly located on its coasts, such as Salamis, Carpaseia, Ceryneia (Kyrenia), Lepethis (Lapithos), Soloi, Marion, and Amathus (*Periplus*, 103). Strabo's (14.6.1–5) introduction of Cyprus, written around the Augustan era and explored in more depth below, continues *periplus*-like by detailing cities and rivers from a maritime vantage point (Thomsen 1995: 31): Cyprus is relationally defined within its surrounding eastern Mediterranean seas (14.6.1; see Clarke 2017: 48), with its civilizing qualities indexed by its numerous urban forms (see Purcell 2017: 29–30).

By the first century C.E. *De Situ Orbis* of Pomponius Mela, the description of Cyprus is still schematic (2.102): it possesses many cities (*urbes*), is the first place where Venus (Aphrodite) emerged from the water, and is huge (*ingens*; see also Plin. *HN* 5.129–30). Like Strabo, Mela situates Cyprus against bodies of water and notes that it is “more or less in the center” of the gulf along Asia's coast. Ptolemy (*Geog.* 5.13) records only the names of major points, like capes, bays, rivers, and towns with which to measure and inscribe distances from node to node against a global scheme of the *oikoumene*. For Ammianus

Marcellinus in the fourth century C.E., Cyprus was distinctly *procul a continenti* (14.8.14), far removed from the mainland. Lists of coastal geographic features are therefore integral to the style and methodology of these representations of insular space, although the relationship between some cities, such as “old” Paphos and Nea Paphos, generated confusion for these outsiders (Bekker-Nielsen 1999: 158). The elision of the Cypriot interior, except as mountainous and copper-rich (Strabo 14.6.3), further speaks to an exterior view of Cyprus’s positioning as an island of urban harbors somewhere across or at the edge of the “vastness” of the Mediterranean (see e.g., Hor. *Carm.* 1.7.32, *cras ingens iterabimus aequor*).

II: ECONOMIC GEOGRAPHY: COPPER AND TREES

The apparent association of Cyprus with harbors that facilitated trade opens up a second register for exploring imagined constructions of the eastern Mediterranean via the accumulation of knowledge from utility, exchange, and commodities (Helms 1988: 111–30; Harvey 2005: 229; Parker 2008: 147, 165). In addition to its optics as a space of transit and commerce in emerging networks of long-distance travel (e.g., Ter. *Ad.* 2.2.220–35), Cyprus gained geographical identification through its materials and resources, which were diversely valued, depending on the author and his prerogatives. As conceived by Strabo, for example, Cyprus had significant agricultural capacity compared to other Mediterranean islands (14.6.5):

κατ’ ἀρετὴν δ’ οὐδεμιᾶς τῶν νήσων λείπεται: καὶ γὰρ εὐοινός ἐστι καὶ εὐέλαιος σίτω τε αὐτάρκει χρῆται. μέταλλά τε χαλκοῦ ἐστὶν ἄφθονα τὰ ἐν Ταμασσῶ, ἐν οἷς τὸ χαλκανθές γίνεται καὶ ὁ ἰὸς τοῦ χαλκοῦ, πρὸς τὰς ἰατρικὰς δυνάμεις χρήσιμα. φησὶ δ’ Ἐρατοσθένης τὸ παλαιὸν ὑλομανούντων τῶν πεδίων ὥστε κατέχεσθαι δρυμοῖς καὶ μὴ γεωργεῖσθαι, μικρὰ μὲν ἐπωφελεῖν πρὸς τοῦτο τὰ μέταλλα δενδροτομούντων πρὸς τὴν καῦσιν τοῦ χαλκοῦ καὶ τοῦ ἀργύρου, προσγενέσθαι δὲ καὶ τὴν ναυπηγίαν τῶν στόλων ἤδη πλεομένης ἀδεῶς τῆς θαλάττης καὶ μετὰ δυνάμεων· ὡς δ’ οὐκ ἐξενίκων, ἐπιτρέψαι τοῖς βουλομένοις καὶ δυναμένοις ἐκκόπτειν καὶ ἔχειν ἰδιόκτητον καὶ ἀτελεῖ τὴν διακαθαρθεῖσαν γῆν.

In productiveness, [Cyprus] is inferior to none of the islands, for it is rich in wine and in oil and has enough grain for its needs. At Tamassos there are abundant mines of copper in which chalcantite (copper sulfide) is produced, and also the rust of copper, which is useful for its medicinal properties. Eratosthenes says that in antiquity the plains were thickly overgrown with woody vegetation, so that they were covered with woods and not cultivated; that the mines helped a little against this, since the people would cut down trees to burn the copper and the silver, and that the building of the fleets was further added, since the

sea was now being navigated safely, with naval forces, but that because they could not thus prevail [over the growth of forests], they permitted anyone who wished or was able to cut down the timber and to keep the cleared land as his own property and exempt from taxation.

Strabo states, prosaically, that Cyprus is not inferior to other islands in respect to its *arête*, its productiveness of land, not the excellence of its kings or important men as he often does for other Greek places (Thomsen 1995: 32, n. 107).²¹ There is a moral economic geography at work in Strabo's history of Cypriot productiveness from antiquity (τὸ παλαιὸν) to his day:²² a past of timber for ships and mines, and a present of fertile soil for the Mediterranean triad of olives, grapes, and grain (see e.g., Foraboschi 2000: 147; García Morcillo 2017: 138–39). Here, the benefits of mercantile geographic networks outlined for other areas of the Roman *orbis terrarum*, like Iberia (e.g., 3.2.5; Clarke 2017: 51–54), are downplayed in favor of cataloguing the island's harvested resources. And while Strabo highlights the abundance of copper on the island, his careful mention of wine, oil, and grain seems convenient to a *topos* of contemporary agricultural values as befitting a large (14.2.10), Greek-speaking island that had just recently become a part of the Roman Empire in 22 B.C.E. (Veyne 1990: 52–53; Parker 2008: 165–67). Strabo argues, via Eratosthenes, that changes in mining and agriculture were as much a response to economic progress as they were to the dynamic and here, unexpectedly threatening, efficacy of trees. He builds on the tension of Cyprus as a liminal place caught between forces of culture and nature (Romm 1994: 57).²³ The physiographical ambiguity of Cyprus is marked by a vegetal politics that simultaneously reproduced the authorities who managed land use and tax collection and the dangerous power of trees to alter the island's *arête*.

Implicit in these imagined landscapes are the discrepancies between Strabo's emphasis on productivity - one of the ancient epithets of the islands was apparently *Macaria* (Plin. *HN* 5.129) - and the terrain of semiarid

²¹ While there are multiple valences of *arête* meaning excellence, goodness, and glorious deeds, see LSJ s.v. ἀρετή 2b, “productive” in relation to lands (e.g., Libya in *Hdt* 4.198). For Strabo's treatment of distinguished men, see Engels 2005.

²² For the link between *arête* and the island's economy, in relation to a similar description of Cyrene (Strabo 17.3.21), see Thomsen 1995: 32–33.

²³ Thomsen 1995: 32: “The expression employed, *hylo-manein* [ὕλομανεῖν], ‘to run riot with *hyle*,’ is definitely negative in tone. See also the clause: ‘because they could not defeat the vegetation,’ which implies that the vegetation is the enemy. Of what? Of the three staple crops, i.e. of the proof of Cyprus' *arête*.”

Cyprus.²⁴ In terms of supporting agriculture, Cyprus was hardly a “bread basket” of antiquity with marketable agropastoral surplus:²⁵ much of its soils are marginal and its rainfall often erratic, with drought a real and persistent threat, resulting in a long history of struggles to meet self-sufficiency (Christodoulou 1959: 28–30, 41–42; Iacovou 2014a: 161–62). Even in antiquity, Strabo’s claims for the island’s landed wealth and *autarkei* seem discordant with anecdotes about the region’s intense heat and lack of rain (Eur. *Bacch.* 403–07). Martial mocked the island’s heat in an epigram to Flaccus, who lived in Cyprus (9.90.9–15):

Infamem nimio calore Cypron
 Observes, moneo precorque, Flacce,
 Messes area cum teret crepantis
 Et fervens iuba saeviet leonis.
 At tu, diva Paphi, remitte, nostris
 Inlaesum iuvenem remitte votis

Flaccus, I warn and beg you, beware of Cyprus, infamous for its excessive heat, when the threshing floor grinds up the crackling harvests and the glowing mane of Leo becomes fierce. And you, goddess of Paphos, return the young man unharmed, return (him) to my prayers.

As Jane Fejfer (2013: 169–70) has recently pointed out, Martial deliberately distinguishes between a Roman *locus amoenus* of Venus earlier in the epigram – a flowing stream and grassy glen, distance from troubles (*exclusis procul omnibus molestis*, 9.90.4) – and the threatening, excessive heat (*nimio calore*) of Cyprus, viewed as a periphery. Far from the agriculturally-dominant landscapes that Strabo described, Martial instead imagines Cyprus as a countryside of ruined harvest. Perhaps, a century earlier, Cato the Younger felt similarly that the commission (or his exile) as quaestor to Cyprus was not the favor of presumed riches that others thought it to be (Plut. *Vit. Cat. Min.* 34.2–4).²⁶ The impulse to see islands like Cyprus as ideally self-sufficient in their isolation, however, was pervasive in ancient thought on utopias (Gabba 1981: 58–59; see Clay 2007), and underscores Strabo’s attention to the privileged values of agricultural commodities.

²⁴ See also “rich Cyprus” in Verg. *Aen.* 1.621–22; “leafy Idalion” in Catull. 64.96; Ael. NA 5.56.

²⁵ There is scarce evidence for grain shipments from Cyprus: see Andocides *De Reditu Suo* 20–21, ca. 410 B.C.E.); IG ii² 407 (fourth century B.C.E.).

²⁶ See also Plautus *Merc.* 933 for the *topos* of Cyprus as distant place of exile.

Strabo's econometric depiction equally foregrounds the landscapes of mining and metallurgy. Copper was one local resource that supported Cyprus's role in late second millennium and first millennium B.C.E. trade networks, and which has drawn significant attention from antiquity to the present (e.g., Arist. *Fr.* 6.256). During the Late Bronze Age (ca. 1700–1100 B.C.E.), Cyprus (known as Alashiya) was a key provider of copper within interregional trade systems, as recorded in letters between authorities at Ugarit, Egypt, and the Aegean.²⁷ The matching of Cyprus with copper, as viewed from the Greek world, thus fostered mythic and ritual referents (e.g., Ov. *Met.* 10.220, *fecundam Amathunta metallis*).²⁸ In the *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite* (5.2–13), for example, the poet describes the goddess teaching metallurgy to craftsmen, passing along the trade secrets of her cult's island; her marriage to the craftsman Hephaistos in Greek myth reinforces this close connection (West 1997: 57).²⁹ In a similar vein, the mythic beings known as the “daktyls,” small phallic creatures associated with mining and metallurgy and commonly linked to Mt. Ida on Crete, were invoked alongside the discovery of iron on Cyprus (Clem. Al. *Strom.* 1.16.75.4; Plin. *HN* 7.197). This reference to a purported Hesiodic fragment may thus attest to the early links between Cyprus and Crete in ancient perceptions of mineral resources and metallurgical craftsmen (S. Morris 1992: 129).³⁰

Galen's (*Simp. Med.* 9.3.) descriptions of the copper mines near the Cypriot town of Soloi in the second century C.E. come close to a genuine, detailed engagement with the island's economic and utilitarian landscapes.³¹ Unlike Strabo, Galen's representations reveal first-hand knowledge and experiences of his tour of the expansive Roman mining operation. He notes the overpowering smell of sulfur, the bands of slag, the forced labor of slaves, and the

²⁷ On the identification of Alashiya with Cyprus, see Knapp 2008: 335–341.

²⁸ Kopaka (2008: 187–189) notes other Greek islands named for their metallic resources: *Molivothis* (μολιβώδης) *nisos* (Lead island) near Sardinia (Ptol. *Geog.* 3.3), for example, or the *Kassiterides nisoï* (Tin islands) near the British Isles (Hdt. 3.115.6–7). “Temese” in *Od.* 1.184 is a source of copper that some suggest may have signified the inland town of Tamassos on Cyprus (e.g., Muhly 1996: 46).

²⁹ On the connections between ritual practice and copper production on Cyprus during the Late Bronze Age, see Webb 1999: 298–302; Knapp 2008: 223.

³⁰ For an introduction to the significant recent work on the similarities and differences between ancient Crete and Cyprus, see Cadogan et al. 2012. On the construct of Crete in Greek thought see Delattre 2001.

³¹ *Simp. Med.* is an abbreviation for Galen's work usually referred to with the Latin title *De simplicium medicamentorum temperamentis ac facultatibus libri xi*.

spatial connections between mines and town in his effort to track minerals with pharmacological benefits. Yet this depiction of imperial industry, embedded in a long inventory of plants, animal products, and minerals, works chiefly to flesh out his understanding of mining residues, and only reaffirms the instinct to visit copper-rich Cyprus to find such esoteric knowledge (see Michaelides 2009: 94).

A related mythic juncture between Cyprus and its mineral wealth pertains to the heroic figure Kinyras, a king of Cyprus and, by the time when Pindar was writing in the early fifth century B.C.E., a man renowned for possessing great riches (*Nem.* 8.18).³² Kinyras is also important in Mediterranean lore as an accomplished lyre player (Eust. schol. on *Il.* 11.20; see Franklin 2016),³³ a *protos heuretes* of mining and metalworking (Plin. *HN* 7.195), and even a priest of divinatory practices in the temple of Aphrodite at Paphos (Pind. *Pyth.* 2.15–17; Tac. *Hist.* 2.3). In the only appearance of the island in the *Iliad* (11.19–28; not even in the Catalogue of Ships), King Agamemnon, before the Greek venture to Troy, puts on an elaborate bronze corselet (θώρακα, *Il.* 11.19), studded with tin, blue glass, and precious stones, which the poet describes as a guest gift (ξενιῆϊον, *Il.* 11.20) from Kinyras (Hainsworth 1993: 216).³⁴ As Bryan Hainsworth (1993: 218) notes, it seems plausible that the poet assigned the corselet to Kinyras of Cyprus to “imply that the fame of Agamemnon had reached the ends of the earth” (cf. West 1997: 628–29), or at least to the doorsteps of Near Eastern royal diplomacy (S. Morris 1997: 610). Kinyras thus anchors Cyprus on the complicated spectrum of Greek practices of *xenia* (S. Morris 1992: 102). More prosaically, the scene references the familiarity with Cyprus as one source for the best metal. Although the apparatus of kingship remains poorly resolved for the transition to the Iron Age and its continuity up to the Ptolemaic period (e.g., Hatzopoulos 2014), etic renderings of Cypriot kings and particularly their royal architectonics, perhaps most famously witnessed in the excavated “royal” Archaic tombs of

³² A local hero on Cyprus, with a Semitic name, likely connected to the Hebrew *kin-nor* (“lyre”), the Akkadian god *Ki-na-rum*, and the Ugaritic *knr* (S. Morris 1997: 610; see Franklin 2016).

³³ Kinyras is connected as eponymous ancestor to the Kinyradai, the temple musicians in charge of the Paphian cult of Aphrodite (West 1997: 57; Franklin 2016). On Kinyras see also Baurain 1980.

³⁴ In Eustathius’s commentary on this passage from the *Iliad* (11.20), he claims that Kinyras had failed to keep a promise to Agamemnon of fifty fighting ships for the war effort, instead sending only one (see also Apollodorus *Epit.* 3.9–10).

Salamis on the island (e.g., Blackwell 2010), provide further scope on the island's in-betweenness explored in the next section.³⁵

III: ROYAL, URBAN HISTORIES

A long-standing *topos* about Cyprus is the population's chronic history of subjugation by other powers. In one of the more cited examples for the politics of the historical periods (e.g., Iacovou 2002: 82–83), the Neo-Assyrian ruler Sargon II commissioned a stela, to be placed on the island itself yet inscribed in Akkadian, on which he boasted how Cypriot kings trembled in fear of his power as he forced them into becoming imperial, tribute-bearing clients (Cannavò 2010; Radner 2010).³⁶ In Herodotus's narration of the revolt of Cypriot cities during the Persian wars (5.108–116), the Ionians conceive the Cypriots as only momentarily in pursuit of liberty, having suffered a long history of enslavement (5.109.3; Serghidou 2007).³⁷ The trope has longstanding antiquity. The British, during their occupation of the island from 1883–1960, summoned this local stereotype to justify their colonialism. Sir Richard Palmer, for example, Governor of Cyprus in the 1930s, notoriously stated in 1939 that “the people of Cyprus make a luxury of discontent and always pretend that they do not like being ruled, and yet...they expect to be ruled, and in fact, prefer it” (quoted in Given 2002: 423).³⁸

It seems reasonable to locate one ancient root of these biases in the Greek recognition that Cypriot authority was archaically monarchical (Serghidou 2007: 287; e.g., Strabo 14.6.6), rather than a product of negotiation between citizens of a *demos*.³⁹ While the appearance of Kinyras and his guest gift in the *Iliad* may imply his influence as a ruler on a diplomatic footing with Agamemnon, the local institution of the *basileus* had significant protohis-

³⁵ I have argued elsewhere for an approach to royal architectonics in the classical period on Cyprus that privileges mutable places of authority over essentialized ethnic labels: Kearns 2011.

³⁶ The cuneiform inscription dates to 709–708 B.C.E., and is most often marshaled in discussions of the island's political territorialization due to the mention of seven local kings. See Lipinski 2004; Yon 2004: 345–54, no. 4001. For the Neo-Assyrian use of royal stelae for establishing authority, see e.g., Harmanşah 2007.

³⁷ An especially marked characterization, given Herodotus's depictions of the Ionians themselves as enslaved (see Serghidou 2004).

³⁸ Shakespeare dramatizes this unruliness of Cyprus and the in-betweenness of Othello as half-Moor in *Othello* (e.g., 2.1.204–206, 2.3.182–84, 194–95).

³⁹ For an example of popular portrayals of Cypriot kings, see e.g., Athenaeus 6.71.

torical roots and Cyprus presented a challenging middle space between concepts of unified rule and a political topography fragmented into diverse, autonomous yet culturally plural regimes (Iacovou 2002; Serghidou 2007). Indeed, the impetus to connect the limited textual inventories of its cities to broader explanations of disjointed territorial politics on the island articulates the persistent potency of these repetitive spatial representations (e.g., Fourrier 2002: 135; Iacovou 2008a: 642; Satraki 2013: 126). It is difficult, however, given the paucity of sources, to trace how ancient populations actually codified or categorized Cypriot institutions of rule or the island's royal subjects.⁴⁰ What we see instead, from scattered references, are recurring focal points that emphasized the role of kings in founding and developing cities, as well as the spatiality of monarchical rule and the tensions with unification amongst several centers of authority.

As noted above, Cyprus's position as a harbor for wanderers or the lost worked to situate stories of the heroes of the Trojan War making their ways back to Greece within the eastern assemblage of Mediterranean states (see Gjerstad 1944). It is in the vein of the legends of *nostoi* tossed about by storms that the landscapes of Cyprus become pertinent to Greek protohistory. Several important mythic and heroic figures end up founding cities and kingdoms along Cyprus's coasts.⁴¹ The hero Agapenor, according to Pausanias (8.5.2), was blown off course after vanquishing Troy and landed on Cyprus, where he founded the city of Paphos and its temple of Aphrodite (Isoc. 9.18), as well as mined its copper under quasi-colonial purview (Lyc. *Alex.* 484). Teucer, brother of Ajax, is said to have founded the city of Salamis in eastern Cyprus, providing a far off seat for Aeginetan power (e.g., Pind. *Nem.* 4.46–47). Euripides' *Helen* (147–51) depicts Teucer's post-war travels to start a new life on Cyprus. Similar narratives mark the Athenian heroes Phalerus and Akamas as founders of Soloi (Strabo 14.6.3), the Laconian Praxander as

⁴⁰ In an obscure side note in the encyclopedic *Suda*, the author notes that Theophrastus at one time wrote a treatise called “On the Kingship of the Cypriots” (Περὶ βασιλείας Κυπρίων, Suid. s.v. *τιάρρα*). The lexicon of the Alexandrian grammarian Harpocration also alludes to the existence of a work on the constitution of the Cypriots, *Kypriou Politeia*, presumably authored by the Aristotelian school (Arist. frg. 532. Gigon: Harpocration, ed. Bekker). These two works are lost and not mentioned elsewhere, leaving the hypothetical (and very late) suggestions of treatises of Cypriot kingship a very open question (e.g., Iacovou 2004: 271; Satraki 2013: 125; Hatzopoulos 2014).

⁴¹ On the disagreements in the fifth century B.C.E. about what constituted that mythic history, see e.g., Whitley 1993: 226–27.

founder of Lapithos (Strabo 14.6.3), and Argive colonists founding Kourion (Hdt. 5.113; Strabo 14.6.3), creating a patchwork of Greek (and Phoenician, at Kition especially) city-builders or city-usurpers across the island. In this sense, despite its distance, Cyprus gains familiar civility through its well-built cities (Κύπριοι ἔϋκτιμένης, *Hymn Hom. Ven.* 5. 292), in the vein of Ithaca (*Od.* 22.52) or Pylos (*Od.* 3.4), although the inclusion of some Phoenician founders, as at Kition, allowed for non-western topographies.

Distinct among the landed genealogies for Cyprus, neither Greek nor eastern, is the city of Amathus on the southern coast, which the fourth century *Periplus* of Pseudo-Scylax lists as being autochthonous (Petit 2004: 16). It is perhaps through the city's later Ovidian turn as a sexualized, decadently transgressive stage for the cult of Aphrodite (*Met.* 10.220–42; O'Bryhim 1999; Karageorghis 2005: 78–79, 109–10) that we find this special generative genealogy in contrast to Greek or eastern foundations. When the shameful Propoetides anger Venus by refusing to recognize her divinity, the city itself is disgusted, denying that it ever “would wish to have given birth” to them (*an genuisse velit Propoetidas abnuat*, *Met.* 10.221).⁴² Scholars of the Cypriot Iron Age have long grappled with the implications of this presumed autochthony in relation to the site's distinctive archaeological and linguistic signatures (e.g., Petit 2001; Iacovou 2008a: 635), its markedly unique orientation between Greek and Persian forces in episodes like the Ionian Revolt (e.g., Hdt. 5.110–116; Petit 2004: 9–14; Serghidou 2007: 276–77), and the politically-charged construction of its ancient inhabitants as indigenous, known in scholarship as “Eteocypriots” (Given 1998). Despite its major cult of Aphrodite, Amathus finds scarce mention in broader work on Hellenic narratives of autochthony (e.g., Roy 2014).

The *nostoi* tales held a significant place in later Greek historiography, since they acted as a starting point for the post-mythic beginnings of history, as outlined by Thucydides in his famous introduction to the *Peloponnesian War* (1.1–1.21; see Malkin 1998: 3). For Cyprus, the legends are deemed to reflect the important take-over of existing cities by Greek authorities (Iacovou 2008b: 270–71). As Jonathan Hall (1997) has cogently argued, foundation stories were powerful engines for establishing and manipulating local identity across generations in the ancient world, but these *nostoi* legends only indicate how the Greeks integrated Cypriot cities into their own mythic landscape (see also

⁴² See also Papantoniou 2012: 274. For a critical review of etic accounts of sacred prostitution on Cyprus, see Hermary 2014.

Bickerman 1952; Sweeney 2015). Indeed, the establishment of cities that could be held up as Greek lent prominent figures, such as the Stoic philosopher Zeno from the city of Kition, Hellenic status (Diog. *Vit.* 7.1).⁴³

For Herodotus, the disparate Cypriot city-kings could be placed in juxtaposition with the influence of Greek statesmen. He writes that Solon of Athens traveled to Cyprus and was so impressed by the king Philocyprus of Soloi that he wrote a poem praising him “above all other tyrants” (τυράννων μάλιστα, 5.113.2). This praise is all the more intriguing given Herodotus’s employment of Solon earlier in his *Histories* (1.29–33) as a figurehead with which to expound upon the qualities that make a man the most prosperous and fortunate. By the second century C.E., Plutarch had added significant details to Solon’s trip to Cyprus (*Vit. Sol.* 26.2–3):

ἔπειτα πλεύσας εἰς Κύπρον ἠγαπήθη διαφερόντως ὑπὸ Φιλοκύπρου τινὸς τῶν ἐκεῖ βασιλέων, ὃς εἶχεν οὐ μεγάλην πόλιν, ὤκισμένην ὑπὸ Δημοφώντος τοῦ Θησέως, περὶ τὸν Κλάριον ποταμὸν ἐν χωρίοις ὄχυροῖς μὲν, ἄλλως δὲ δυσχερέσι καὶ φαύλοις κειμένην. ἔπεισεν οὖν αὐτὸν ὁ Σόλων ὑποκειμένου καλοῦ πεδίου μεταθέντα τὴν πόλιν ἠδίονα καὶ μείζονα κατασκευάσαι. καὶ παρῶν ἐπεμελήθη τοῦ συνοικισμοῦ, καὶ συνδιεκόσμησε πρὸς τε διαγωγὴν ἄριστα καὶ πρὸς ἀσφάλειαν, ὥστε πολλοὺς μὲν οἰκήτορας τῷ Φιλοκύπρῳ συναλθεῖν, ζηλώσαι δὲ τοὺς ἄλλους βασιλέας· διὸ καὶ τῷ Σόλωνι τιμὴν ἀποδιδούς Αἰπειᾶν τὴν πόλιν καλουμένην πρότερον ἀπ’ ἐκείνου Σόλους προσηγόρευσε.

Next [Solon] sailed to Cyprus, and was greatly beloved by Philocyprus, one of the kings there, who had a small city founded by Demophon, the son of Theseus, and situated near the river Clarius, in a position which was fortified, but otherwise inconvenient and inaccessible. Solon therefore persuaded him since a fair plain was lying below the city to change its location and build a more pleasing and spacious city. He also remained and took charge of the new city’s consolidation (*synoecism*), and helped to arrange it in the best possible manner both for convenience of living and for defense. The result was that many colonists flocked to Philocyprus, so that other kings were envious of him. [Philocyprus] therefore paid Solon the honor of naming the city, formerly called Aipeia, after him, and called it Soloi.

Plutarch’s version of the establishment of a new city of Soloi is short on a description of Cyprus and rather repackages the well-known story in antiquity that Solon founded a colony in the eastern Mediterranean after he had fin-

⁴³ Important, however, that Zeno’s origins on Cyprus are never considered a part of his Stoic contributions for writers like Diogenes.

ished creating laws for Athens (Irwin 1999: 187).⁴⁴ While serving to reinforce the talents and wisdom of Solon, Plutarch's account also becomes a window into the *topos* of a well-built, ideally located city (as in e.g., Arist. *Pol.* 1327a), against a Cypriot background.

The significance attributed to city-building within Cypriot kingship emerges as a theme in the later fourth century B.C.E. The Athenian rhetorician Isocrates, in an oration about the Salaminian king Evagoras (9) from the line of Teucer, used the epideictic genre of oratory to give a biography of his regal achievements and history (Poulakos 1987).⁴⁵ Addressed to Evagoras's son Nicocles (and likely meant as a guide to proper rule for the young king), the oration first details how Evagoras, having been exiled from Cyprus, came back to reclaim rule over his city, Salamis, by immediately upon return gathering allies and attacking the usurped palace (προσέβαλλε πρὸς τὸ βασιλειον, 9.30). Evagoras's resilience and fortitude, in regaining his control over Salamis after defeat, serve as key principles of a virtuous Cypriot king. But an integral distinction of Evagoras, as compared to the eastern, strange Phoenicians who had overthrown him and taken his city, was his program of embellishing the built environment (9.47). While the tyrants of Phoenicia had left Salamis in "a state of barbarism," without a harbor, Evagoras set about city-building (9.47). In Isocrates' words, Evagoras taps into the tradition of kings who judge the success of their rule by the cities that they built and the lands that they added to their territory.⁴⁶ Indeed, Isocrates reestablishes Evagoras's genealogical claims to Teucric kingship (9.12–20) and uses Salaminian urbanism as a pivotal locus to explore the mechanics of monarchy between Greece and the east. Although it is likely that Isocrates did not have much engagement with Salamis itself (Hägg 2012: 35), and rather renders Evagoras's architectonics as ideal fixtures for a defensible, functional city (Hermay 2013: 84), this description fits well with the imagined urban responsibilities of the Cypriot king, oscillating between center and periphery. Centuries later, Pausanias accentuates Evagoras's performance of Greekness, in securing Phoenician

⁴⁴ As Irwin (1999: 187–88) notes there is confusion over where the colony is: many ancient scholia place it on Cyprus or as the city of Soloi in Cilicia.

⁴⁵ On Evagoras' Greekness see also *IG* II² 20.17; *IG* I³ 113; Raptou 1999: 250–62. Isocrates wrote two other orations for Cypriot kings, and the three are known as his "Cypriot trilogy." The *Evagoras* was presumably meant to be recited in Salamis at a festival commemorating the king, who had died shortly before Isocrates wrote it in 374/3 B.C.E. (Hägg 2012: 30).

⁴⁶ Also an important trait of Near Eastern kingship; see e.g., Mitchell 1994.

ships for Conon “as an Athenian” (ἔπραξε δὲ ὡς Ἀθηναῖος, 1.3.2), through his account of the king’s statue erected in the Athenian stoa.

CONCLUSION

What emerges from this review of imagined Cyprus in the ancient world is the tacking of familiarity between proximity and distance, both in terms of real space as well as conceived practices and culture that accumulated through repeated positioning of the island alongside changing political and social values. The recurring placement of Cyprus in dangerous, stormy seas highlighted both the island’s efficacy as an intermediary stopping point, and its insularity, and thus the potential for its unique “character” (Κύπριος χαρακτήρ, Aesch. *Supp.* 282). Early Greek foundation legends endeavored to put Greeks on Cyprus alongside the events of the Trojan War, claiming the island at least in language and enriching Hellenic genealogies through connections to Aphrodite or Kinyras, but leaving space to encounter odd clothing and to imagine the urban fixtures of monarchical culture. This urbanity of Cypriot kings, in striving to build and to improve their cities, made their society discernable, yet equally marginalized the island’s inhabitants as non-participants in civic life. For the Roman Empire, these *topoi* became instrumental in classifying the distant island as a foreign possession with valued goods. In pushing the boundaries of the known world further outwards through the advancement of geographical knowledge, however, Cyprus persistently fell between the edges and the privileged center. The intricacies of its geography and demography were as a result flattened and reduced to the metonymical landscape of copper, cities, and trees. How strange is this textual construct of Cyprus compared to other large insular masses of the Mediterranean, given the elliptical position conventionally attributed to islands in Greek thought (Gabba 1981: 55–60; Kopaka 2008)?

Sicily offers a compelling comparison due to its size, peripheral position in relation to the Aegean, historical transition from Greek and Phoenician colonial landscapes to Roman ones, and performance as place-making island in Greek myths of wandering heroes. Ancient authors identified Sicilian coastlines as the stages of monstrous and mythical beings in early epics like the *Odyssey*, or, like Cyprus, as a safe landing that received weary protagonists such as Aeneas (e.g., Strabo 1.2.15).⁴⁷ The large island also hosted the cre-

⁴⁷ Strabo is quoting Polybius’s *Histories* 34.2.9–11; on the island as home to Cyclops, see e.g., Thuc. 6.2, or as coastal location of the monstrous Scylla and Charybdis (e.g., Ov. *Met.* 13.730–14.74), see Gerrish 2016.

ation of genealogical ties to Greekness during periods of colonial encounters, and its kings and tyrants (e.g., Lomas 2006) made rich foils for emerging thought on the nature of the *polis* and its collective authority. Yet unlike the fragmentary portrayals of Cyprus outlined above, these authors carved out considerable space for describing and detailing the features, places, and communities of Sicily as it became intertwined with Greek and later Punic and Roman economic and cultural life over the course of the first millennium B.C.E. Its productive agricultural land, for example, made it an early and enduring attraction, and gave cities like Syracuse a sheen of wealth at times all too illusory (see e.g., Strabo 6.2.7).⁴⁸ Thucydides' account of Athens' motives for military engagement with Sicily against the Peloponnesian League in 415 B.C.E. plays on this knowledge by rhetorically positioning his own capacity as informed author against the Athenians, whom he calls "ignorant" of the island's demography and settlement histories (Smith 2004: 34–38). Indeed, Sicily featured as excursus or as captivating background in the works of several authors (e.g., Hdt. 7.153–6; Pl. *Ep.* 7. 326b–3267), providing an increasingly complex yet familiarizing set of descriptions, epithets, and *topoi* of the island in ancient thought.

It is the confusing ambiguity of Cyprus, clearly caught up in major networks and historic progress yet only schematically discussed by our sources, which remains underexplored and which has implicitly dictated how we (as classical historians and archaeologists) view the island's historical pasts (Fejfer 2013: 169). Given the island's rich material record (e.g., Hadjisavvas 2010), it is hard to believe that Cyprus was persistently a backwater during the first millennia B.C.E. and C.E., drifting outside the Mediterranean networks of world-building and connectivity (*sensu* Horden and Purcell 2000: 123–72); rather, its capacity to stand as both aligned and estranged from the developing axes of prevailing social boundaries meant that it rarely demanded the full attention of those determining and recording their own coordinates. By virtue of its maritime position it may have been a crossroads over the *longue durée* (*sensu* Braudel 1972: 102), but it was a distant one embedded in an eastern assemblage dominated by exotica like Egypt, Phoenicia, and Mesopotamia. Importantly, it is this facet of the island's "disturbingly familiar" context betwixt and between east and west as viewed and constructed by outsiders that has persisted in various forms into modernity, continuously re-situating Cyprus on the margins

⁴⁸ On perceptions of wealthy Sicily see e.g., Evans 2016; Diod. Sic. 5.2.1, with Sicily as the "richest island" (κρατίστη τῶν νήσων).

of Europe as much as on those of the middle East (Argyrou 2017: 120; see Durrell 1957; Papalexandrou 2008).⁴⁹

Thus Cyprus becomes, in classical scholarship, an incongruous peripheral entity, whose archaeological record confirms, on one hand, its uniqueness and indeed encourages “Cyprocentric” approaches that emphasize the island’s long-term generative, not derivative, cultures and historicity (e.g., Iacovou 2007; 2014b; Papantoniou 2013).⁵⁰ Tailoring methods and macrohistorical approaches to the ancient island in its formative periods of urban and monarchical growth, these studies reject prevailing scholarly assumptions that yoke the island to normative Athenian or more broadly Greek *polis* structures and cultural practices. Yet on the other hand, within the inward-looking field of Cypriot studies, the textual depictions that do survive are expected to perform outsized explanatory work for the historical record (Iacovou 2007: 462–63), especially for the fraught and ineluctable topic of the rise of Iron Age kingdoms in relation to processes of “Hellenization” (e.g., Leriou 2007; Knapp 2008: 250–52, 290–97; ; Iacovou 2014b: 108–12). Amathus, discussed above for isolated references to autochthony, exemplifies this inward-outward tension. Whether de-insulating Cyprus and connecting its pasts to broader regional and macroregional Mediterranean contexts (e.g., Hadjisavvas 2010), or zooming in on its heterogeneous local complexities, such analytics that implicitly or explicitly amplify ancient otherings of Cyprus run the risk of overdetermining the island’s distance and isolation, economic geographies of copper and trees, and royal architectonics.

The intention of this discussion has therefore, perhaps paradoxically, not been to recuperate classical Cyprus’s historicity from the margins but to suggest that modern treatments of the backwater placement of the island have typically glommed onto enduring ancient ones. In drawing more sustained attention to the ways in which others imagined how the island “ought-to” have been located in emerging social worlds, the performative aspects of these spatial representations highlight an epistemological slippage in the move from ancient *topoi* to modern explanations of past social orders. Given the iterative association of Cyprus with copper, for example, we tend to view the island through a metallic register whereby copper and iron become the

⁴⁹ On the seminal theorization of liminality as “betwixt and between” see Turner 1967: 93–111. For a cultural theory of Mediterranean modernity and its unstable geographical imaginaries, see Chambers 2008.

⁵⁰ Classical scholarship is viewed here from a normatively western and Greek Cypriot perspective; on the fraught binary between Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot historical discourses, see e.g., Bryant and Papadakis 2012.

prime movers in explanations of local economy, trade, politics, and ritual during its historical periods (e.g., Iacovou 2014a: 163). While not denying the importance of their production and consumption, this particular imagination elides other components of the island's economies, inequalities, and politics. How then do we move forward given that Cyprus seems to reside *ex silentio*, somewhere beside our knowledge of the classical *oikoumene*? In acknowledging its position as a paradoxical threshold that challenged certain Greek and Roman conceptions and perceptions of the world, we simultaneously affirm the relevance of Cyprus for future studies of how those ideas of alterity, boundary-making, and liminality came into being under different conditions and authorities. Through an integration of textual and material investigations, the island provokes us to analyze it as a complex foil for our canonical frameworks of the ancient spectra of east and west, self and other.

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