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Conclusions

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After nearly a decade of fieldwork at the sites of Pyla-*Vigla* and Pyla-*Koutsopetria* on Cyprus, the Pyla-*Koutsopetria* Archaeological Project can offer some significant, if still provisional conclusions about these coastal sites and the island, more generally, from the earliest onset of the Hellenistic period to the end of Antiquity. This conclusion picks up where the conclusion to the first volume in the PKAP series left off by examining the role that connectivity played in understanding the development of settlement at the site. In particular, we have argued that changing political organization of the island and the Eastern Mediterranean more broadly during the Hellenistic and Roman period created both an impetus and opportunities for activity in the microregion. The fortification at Vigla, built during the tumultuous Early Hellenistic reflect the unsettled political fate of the island, while the sprawling coastal settlement at Koutsopetria reflected the security and economic opportunities of Roman Cyprus. We also noted the significance of the microregion in the development of the island's religious landscape. Our work to document the Early Christian basilica excavated at Koutsopetria cast light on the Early Christian era where new forms of religious practice and sites emerged and features at the church connected the site churches near Salamis and on the Karpas Peninsula. Thus, regional connectivity informed our reading of both the architecture at Vigla and Koutsopetria, as well as shedding light on the changing economic landscape of the microregion

The project's initial focus on connectivity emerged in the aftermath of the publication of Horden and Purcell's monumental work, *The Corrupting Sea* (2000) and sought to use ceramic evidence from intensive survey to determine the connections between this microregion, the island of Cyprus, and the broader Eastern Mediterranean. From 2004-2009, we conducted an intensive pedestrian survey methods to produce a substantial sample of largely ceramic material from the coastal plain and tops of the elevated coastal plateaus that dominate our 100 ha. survey area (Caraher et al. 2014). This material revealed a landscape the developed after the fall of the Iron Age kingdoms on Cyprus and by the Late Roman period activity at the site showed dense and expansive connections to the wider Eastern Mediterranean. In 2008, we commenced a three-season excavation campaign that sought to ground truth and clarify the results of our survey and asked more focused research questions including the date of monumental architecture at Vigla and Koutsopetria. We combined this work with the results of two seasons of excavation by Dr. Maria Hadjicosti and her team in the mid-1990s to expand both our base of evidence and add nuance to the history of Vigla and Koutsopetria. This conclusion, then, both summarizes key findings and returns to the key themes addressed in the conclusion of volume one. This includes a consideration of how the material at our site represents the differing relationship of the microregion with political centers elsewhere on the island, more substantial conclusions related to local settlement patterns, and the place of the fortification at Vigla and the Early Christian basilica at Koutsopetria within the contemporary landscape of the island. Because our excavations were largely limited to the Hellenistic to Late Roman periods, our conclusion will focus on revising and expanding our 2014 arguments for these eras. We will also add brief discussion of abandonment as it relates to both the Early Christian basilica at Koutsopetria and the fortifications at Vigla.

Section 1 characterizes the faint pre-Hellenistic remains discovered at Vigla and Koutsopetria and consider their respective contexts. Section 2, rooted in a detailed understanding of the historical context of the late Classical and early Hellenistic periods on Cyprus, will present a series of overarching thematic conclusions concerning geo-political transition, connectivity, and abandonment. Section 3 engages with recent historiography of Roman and Late Roman Cyprus to present some thematic conclusions focusing on connectivity, the religious landscape, and the abandonment of the microregion at the end of antiquity.

1. Pre-Hellenistic Material from Vigla and Koutsopetria

Despite evidence for pre-Hellenistic period material throughout the larger microregion, including at the nearby Late Bronze Age site of Pyla-Kokkinokremos (Bretschneide et al. 2023) and in concentrations on the Mavrospilios ridge (Caraher et al. 2014), evidence for activity during that period at Vigla and Koutsopetria remain faint. Excavations at both sites failed to yield extant deposits of pre-Hellenistic material. Rather they produced small, eroded sherds that almost certainly are material in a secondary context. At Vigla where the architecture featured stone soccles with mudbrick a super structure, older and heavily abraded ceramics likely served as a tempering agent for the mudbricks. The presence of such pre-Hellenistic material culture within the construction material ubiquitous to our excavations on Vigla suggests that Hellenistic builders procured sediments conducive to mudbrick architecture in an area with a Cypro-Archaic to Cypro-Classical material presence. This confirms the impression from both earlier scholarship and the intensive survey that Iron Age activities occurred in the microregion perhaps centered north of Vigla on the Mavrospilios plateau where we tentatively associated a scatter of Cypro-Classical pottery and several fragmentary figurines with a sanctuary (Caraher et al. 2014, 213-214). A Cypro-Archaic statue of Bes currently in the Louvre (Hermary 1984; Counts 2008) likewise appears to have come from the general area adding further evidence for the presence of Iron Age activity near our site. Wherever the center of Iron Age activity, small fragments of pre-Hellenistic also appear at Koutsopetria. Since the construction there is primarily cut and mortared field stones, the use of ceramics in the mortar is the most likely explanation for the earlier material, given that this phenomenon is known from elsewhere on Cyprus in later periods (Given 2018). It is also possible that some of these pre-Hellenistic sherds may have also been incorporated in the various plasters used at the site and appeared in floor packing. The absence of significant quantities of pre-Hellenistic material across the Vigla plateau and the coastal plain in general would seem to suggest that this area saw only non-intensive use during these periods. It is also possible, however, that the low intensity scatter of small and abraded sherds represented evidence for manuring during which sherds were moved to the plateau and plain from a nearby settlement along with fertilizing manure (Forbes 2013). Today the plateau remains fallow and the coastal plain under annual cultivation.

2. The Hellenistic Fortification of Vigla

The fortifications and settlement on the height of Vigla reflects the close relationship between the political developments on both the island and in the Mediterranean during the transition from the Late Classical to the Early Hellenistic period. This tumultuous era represented the start of a significant change in the domestic politics of the island as well as the reorganization of the economic, political, and religious landscapes historically tied to variable autonomy of the island's city kingdoms. As we have argued in our first volume, the development of the coastal region of Pyla village from the Early Hellenistic period through Late Antiquity may well reflect the emergence of what was initially a sparsely populated border zone between Kition and Salamis until the political and economic unification under Ptolemaic and later Roman rule relieved the microregion of these inter-kingdom tensions and opened the area for agricultural and maritime uses.

2.a. A History of the Cypro-Classical II (400-323 BC) and Hellenistic (323-58 BC) Transition

To understand how our work in coastal region of Pyla village contributes to recent discussions of the Classical to Hellenistic transition, a brief summary of history of the island is necessary. Prior to the Hellenistic era, Cyprus was defined by a series of disparate independent political units and diverse cultural identities in place for nearly two centuries. By 350 BC, Cyprus' cultural and political landscape was markedly heterogeneous, with notable influences from Greek, Near Eastern, and Egyptian culture (Gordon 2012; Papantoniou 2013a, 2013b, and 2012). Ten nominally independent city-kingdoms ruled the island under the imperial authority of the Achaemenid Persian Empire and organized the island's territories. Following Alexander the Great's victory over Darius III in 333 BC at the Battle of Issus, most of the Cypriot kings turned against the Persians. The Cypriot dissent against Persia culminated a year later when numerous city-kingdoms aided Alexander in his naval siege of Tyre in 332 BC (Arrian 2.20-22, see also Plutarch, Alexander 29.2). This political system organized around independent city kingdoms did not last far past Alexander's death in 323 BC. Cyprus, alongside the rest of the remnants of Alexander's empire, found itself in the struggle between his many successors. Cyprus, in particular, was a point of contention between Ptolemy and Antigonus who forced Cypriot kings to chose either to support one of the Diadochoi or remain neutral. The political wrangling and resulting conflicts threw the city-kingdoms into disarray, led to further fragmentation, and rendered most of the island kingdoms unwilling or unable to resist incursions by hostile forces. By 312 BC, Ptolemy had conquered much of the island and ended Cypriot kingship, killing the king of Kition, arresting others, and appointing Nikokreon, the king of Salamis, as *strategos* of the island (Diodorus Siculus 19:59). Despite some degree of Antigonid success following Demetrius Poliorcetes' defeat of Ptolemy I at the Battle of Salamis in 306 BC and subsequent seizure of the island, Antigonid control was short lived (Diod. 19.56-57). The Ptolemies and Antigonids continued to skirmish until 294 BCE, when the Ptolemies gained island, ruling over it until 58 BCE. The Ptolemies abolished the institution of autonomous Cypriot kingship and shifted the political center of the island from Salamis in the east to the west at Nea Paphos. They appointed a governor from Alexandria to rule Cyprus directly and stationed a large mercenary garrison to maintain control (Keen 2012). It was during the tumultuous period from the first Ptolemaic incursions in 312 to their ultimate conquest in 294 that the fortified site of Vigla was constructed, inhabited, and abandoned.

2.b. State and Settlement at Hellenistic Vigla: Fortifications and Numismatics

While it is often difficult and problematic to attempt to relate specific archaeological evidence to historical events, the remains at Vigla are clearly the result of specific imperial level decisions by the Diadochoi. What follows is an assessment of Vigla's place within the known fortification corpus of the island from the 5th through 4th centuries BC, its relationship to the numismatic evidence of the

4th and early 3rd centuries BC, and its chronological and functional positions within the context of the Eastern Mediterranean during one of its greatest periods of social, political, and cultural upheaval.

Balandier, in a series of article-length studies, argues that the fortification of Cypriot cities and their hinterlands between the Archaic and Hellenistic eras took place in two discrete periods of hyper fortification: the 6th and 3rd centuries BC (Balandier 2002, 2007, 2010, 2011). During the 6th century, city wall systems were either built, expanded, or restored at Amathous, Palaepaphos, Tamassos, Kition, Episkopi-*Bamboula*, and Salamis. This first period of intensive fortification, according to Balandier, was likely the result of Achaemenid Persian pressure. When Onesilos seized the throne of Salamis and convinced all the cities but Amathous to revolt from Persian rule during the Ionian Revolt, the Persians crushed Cypriot resistance. Traditionally, it was expected that the Persians left only the city walls of Amathous and Salamis after they suppressed the revolt. Recent archaeological excavations, however, have shown that many cities recovered and repaired their respective systems during the 5th century. Further fortification efforts continued in the first half of the 4th century that focused solely on the island's civic spaces.

By the second half of the 4th and first part of the 3rd centuries, however, Balandier identifies a wholly new defensive strategy on Cyprus. She recognized the shift away from the heavy focus on civic space to fortification strategies that also incorporate smaller settlements as well as rural citadels, forts, and watchtowers. This new strategy of fortifications might date to either the decades immediately after the death the death of Alexander when his generals scrambled to secure part of his empire or the first period of Ptolemaic rule on Cyprus after Ptolemy and his allies defeated Antigonus and his allies to secure control of the island in 316 BC. During the first period of Ptolemaic control over Cyprus, however, they appeared to have viewed the island prior as a springboard for exerting their influence in Cilicia and Syria, which would ultimately ensure the island's security. Instead, Balandier argues that that the new defensive outlook is more likely consistent with Antigonid influence after they regain control over the island following the Battle of Salamis in 306 BC. She ascribes to the decade long restoration of Antigonid rule on the island the fortification of Palaeokastro, the new harbor and city walls at Amathous, and the new harbor at Nea Paphos. For the Antigonids, the island represented an imperial holding that required protection. Thus, for Balandier, most of the late-4th and early-3rd century fortifications on the island are more likely to date to the narrow window of Antigoid control rather than the Ptolemaic influence before 306 BC or after the Antigonid defeat in 294 BC, which coincided with declining Antigonid influence in the Eastern Mediterranean more broadly.

These arguments risk a certain amount of circularity, which archaeological evidence is unlikely to entirely resolve in part because of the complexities of the numismatic situation on the island during these decades. The numismatic evidence pertaining to the Cypro-Classical to early Hellenistic periods is fraught with a lack of standardization. Keen argues that in the 4th century BC all nine functioning city-kingdoms produced their own coins. By the late second half of the 4th century BC, Alexander the Great had his imperial coinage minted at four of nine capital cities: Salamis, Kition, Paphos, and Amathous (Keen 2012). After his death in 323 BC, all nine capital cities began minting Alexander issues before resuming their own coinage. By 312 BC Nikokreon and subsequently in 310 BC Menelaus, Ptolemy's brother and appointed *strategos*, began minting their own coins at Salamis. Being the administrative center throughout the second half of the 4th century BC, Salamis' mint became the most important on the island (Keen 2012: 74-80). The admixture of local Cypriot coinage, Alexander issues, and those of the Antigonids, and Ptolemies circulating throughout Cyprus in the second half of the 4th century BC make for a very complex numismatic corpus. It was not until the 3rd century that the Ptolemies made attempts at standardizing the coinage of their empire.

Evidence from the excavations at Vigla help shed light on the function of the region during the transitional period from the Cypro-Classical to early Hellenistic periods. The architectural evidence clearly delineates a heavily fortified space with interior structures associated with domestic activities and the local production of metal weapons. The seemingly short period of occupation, evidenced by multiple phases of occupation with extant floor surfaces and chronologically indistinguishable material remains, allude to a space with a relatively short lifecycle. The uniformity of the numismatic assemblage also indicates a short period of occupation. In all two coin types are represented, a bronze Alexander the Great issue that dates to the last quarter of the fourth century BC minted at both Salamis and Kition and a bronze issue attributed to Evagoras II dating from 361-351 BC minted at Salamis. The fortification system consisting of an imposing fortification wall and rock cut *taphros* on the north side represents a significant investment by its builders to provide a protected space for its residents. The composition of the material remains, metal weapons, an abundance of small bowls, evidence of metal weapon production, and the associated fortification system, point to a military-oriented settlement.

Vigla sits on a promontory that overlooks the coast and the overland route connecting ancient Kition and Salamis. Although it is physically closer to Kition, it is not spatially connected to the civic footprint of either city. Vigla, as a fortified and garrisoned space, potentially falls in line with

Balandier's observation of a new defensive network untaken in Cyprus during the late 4th century by the Antigonids. The Antigonids worked to reorganize the southern coast and constructing a fort capable of keeping watch over a stretch of coastline looking south towards Egypt and the land route between the administrative center of the island at Salamis and Kition to the west had value. Three further lines of evidence support an Antigonid origin for Vigla. First, the numismatic evidence recovered from Vigla include both an Alexander issue and an example denoting a local Cypriot king of Salamis. The admixture of Alexander and local, both likely form the Salamis mint, fit within the greater numismatic context from the second half of the 4th century outlined by Keen (2012: 72-73). This context saw the coterminous minting of Alexander issues with Cypriot kings at local mints after Alexander's death in 323 BC and seemingly before the minting activities of Nikokreon, king of Salamis and Menelaus, Ptolemy Soter's brother who governed Cyprus on Ptolemy's behalf until his defeat by Antigonid forces after the battle of Salamis in 306 BC. Second, strategy expressed in the fortification at Vigla is more consistent with the Antigonid approach to the fortification of the island than that of Ptolemy. Ptolemy Soter's *laissez-faire* approach to Cyprus, one that according to Balandier envisioned no need to invest in fortification and, according to Keen, made no effort in the 4th century to standardize coinage, argue against Ptolemy undertaking the construction of a fort like Vigla. Finally, the site's abbreviated occupation also promotes Antigonid origin and date. One could envision the Antigonids making the investment in constructing Vigla at some point following the Battle of Salamis in 306 BC. There is precedent for Antigonid investment in Cyprus to satisfy a perceived need for fortification. In other words, they had a need and the resources to construct the site. Following Antigonus' death in 301 BC at the Battle of Ipsus, the declining authority of his son Demetrius, and the eventual and prolonged return of Ptolemy to Cyprus, a site like Vigla no longer served a specific need after Ptolemy took control and moved the capital city to the western side of the island.

2.c. Connectivity

The early Hellenistic assemblage excavated from Vigla presents an opportunity explore concept of connectivity and place the material from the fort within Cyprus and broader regions within the Eastern Mediterranean. Our survey work identified several episodes and sites of Hellenistic settlement throughout the Pyla-*Koutsopetria* survey universe with the densest material footprint at Vigla. The Hellenistic date derived from a survey assemblage that included mostly varied blackslipped wares and diagnostic amphora types. The survey assemblage largely appeared to date to the early Hellenistic period with the caveat that the ceramic industry on Cyprus remain poorly understood (Caraher et al. 2014: 282). The excavations at Vigla provided the most extant assemblage of early Hellenistic pottery and metal finds from secure contexts found on the island. This corpus of material allows us to understand the distribution of ceramics both on Cypriot and within the Eastern Mediterranean region. The most informative classes from Vigla include the corpus of lead sling-bullets, locally produced shapes, and evidence of imported vessels and modes of décor.

The astonishing number of metal weapons found at Vigla demonstrates the military nature of the site (DiFabio et al. forthcoming) and reinforces its intrusive presence in the local landscape. Several bronze arrowheads and catapult bolts; iron spearheads and knives; and lead sling-bullets have been discovered in multiple contexts including floor surfaces, sub floor assemblages, on both sides of the fortification wall, in mudbrick collapse, and outside of buildings. The corpus of lead sling-bullets are of particular value in that their presence reflects well-established tactics in Greek warfare. The use of lead sling-bullets and the practice of inscribing the projectiles using Greek language in relief was a Greek innovation, though it is worth noting the use of the leaden sling-bullet in Cyprus likely predates the fourth century BC (see Hagberg 2010 and Fischer 1980). Several sling-bullets have been discovered elsewhere with the names of Philip and Alexander (in the genitive), while others demonstrate the method of warfare and epigraphic habit continued throughout the Hellenistic period (Manov, Talmatchi, and Custurea 2019; Manov and Torbov 2016; Robinson 1931, 1941; Dündar and Rauh 2017). The locality of Vigla has yielded nearly 100 sling bullets and dozens of inscribed examples along with evidence of onsite production (Olson 2014; DiFabio et al forthcoming). The bullets depict names (Andron, Boiskos, Epikratidas, Filetairos, Tharupos [or Tharugos]) and symbols (thunderbolt and pitchfork). The assemblage of sling bullets consisting of multiple inscriptions and symbols mirrors that of the well-known Greek deployments of lead sling-bullets at Olynthus under Philip in 348 (Robinson 1941), at Patara under Alexander the Great in 334/333 (Dündar and Rauh 2017), at Stymphalos in the middle of the third century (Hagerman 2014), and at Tel Dor under Diodotus Tryphon in 138/137 (Gera 1985). The presence of lead sling pellets and evidence for their manufacture at the site further reinforce the dependence on this fortification and settlement on connections outside of the island. While the chemical composition of the lead from Vigla is ongoing the most obvious sources would be Asia Minor or the Aegean.

The most common vessel shape found at Vigla was a single-serving portion bowl with two varieties. The first presents an incurved rim with a ring foot, while the second a thin vertical rim with a disc base. The vessel, irrespective of the rim and base shapes, represents a consumption system indicative of a common mess with individual serving portions. Despite its singular function, there are at least ten fabrics, both local and imported, identified within the Vigla assemblage. The fineware examples include Attic, multiple variants of Atticizing, and Hellenistic Color Coated. The semi-fine examples have base fabrics that are reddish yellow, pink, pale yellow, and pale brown. Fineware and semifine ware vessels are adorned with slips (red, orange, and black), stamps, incised lines, and carination lines, while others remained undecorated.

A fortified site with a short occupation history and a standing garrison produced a ceramic assemblage much different than the urban and semi-urban spheres found throughout Cyprus. On the one hand, the presence of Attic, Atticizing, and Hellenistic Color Coated wares fall well within the ceramic contexts from the nearby sites of Panayia-*Ematousa* (Lund 2006), Salamis (Jehasse 1978, 1981) and Kition (Jehasse 1981) whose Hellenistic remains include the aforementioned wares. On the other hand, the absence of bowls with horizontal and downturned rims, for example, which are prominent elsewhere on the island, mark the Vigla assemblage as unique. Moreover, the presence of at least four semi-fine fabrics diverges from the assemblages of Salamis, Kition, and Panayia-*Ematousa*, suggesting connections to ceramic producing areas within Lund's "southeastern" or possibly "central" ceramic producing regions of Cyprus (Lund 2015: 153-164). Unlike the well-established Hellenistic Color Coated ware that was a Cypriot product and saw widespread circulation throughout the island, the semi-fine wares were more regionally local and not nearly as prevalent at sites outside of their immediate distribution core. This likely reflects both the disruption of the island-wide production and distribution networks supporting Cypriot Hellenistic Color Coated wares and the economic, social, and political isolation of the military settlement at Vigla. Thus the residents of Vigla relied on more locally produced and distributed types characteristic of southeastern and central Cyprus and off-island connections to the Aegean and the greater coastal Levant.

2.d. Abandonment

Vigla was a wholly new construction atop the plateau. The undulating bedrock and levelling efforts with accompanying stone soccle/mudbrick architecture served as the earliest habitation surface. The occupational history, depending on the location of the plateau, included at least an additional two extant phases. The construction efforts that enacted the second floor surface saw continued levelling and a combined plaster and tamped earth floor surface. This occupation across most of the plateau experienced some sort of conflagration evidenced by an ashy layer discovered in multiple units. The latest phase saw a new floor surface and, in multiple cases, a reorientation of some of the stone architecture. This latest level yielded the most intact or mostly intact vessels and coins on floor surfaces. There is no evidence for any type of prolonged abandonment following the burning event given the chronologically indistinguishable material culture found in all phases. It appears that the inhabitants cleaned the site, as evidenced by the pit feature found in EU 16, and quickly rebuilt. Shortly thereafter, however, the site was abandoned. There was an array of finds suggesting an abrupt abandonment (coins, metal weapons, and intact vessels on floor surfaces). In examining the depositional history of the site, the latest Hellenistic phase was covered by toppled mudbrick walls, which contributed to the excellent preservation found across the site. The timing of the collapse, intentional and immediately preceding abandonment versus prolonged erosion, eludes us at the moment but future palaeobotanical analysis will provide valuable data here. One could envision an intentional dismantling of the site once it no longer fell within the imperial strategies of the Ptolemies following 294 BC.

The landscape of Pyla's littoral during the Late Bronze Age and Early Hellenistic period follows a pattern of punctuated occupation followed by total abandonment. The occupational trajectories of Pyla-Vigla and Pyla-Kokkinkremos, a Late Bronze Age neighboring site less than 1 km away, share many similarities despite their cultural and temporal differences. Both sites are set atop natural plateaus and adopt a fortification system of field stone soccles set atop bedrock with mudbrick superstructures (Karageorghis and Demas 1984; Bretschneider, Kanta, Driessen 2023). The fortified sites also appear to be newly built and occupied for a short period of time, possibly mere decades in both cases. And finally, both were rapidly abandoned and not rebuilt. To what extent their respective abandonments can be attributed to greater geopolitical events (collapse of the Late Bronze Age and reorientation of the island by the Diadochoi) or local factors (episodic silting up of the embayment, water needs, shifting economic networks), it remains curious how two sites almost unique to their time periods followed such similar trajectories in the Pyla region.

3. Roman and Late Roman Koutsopetria

Our initial interest in the site of Pyla-Koutsopetria focused on the coastal plain which even a casual investigation demonstrated to be a significant Roman and Late Roman site with an excavated Early Christian basilica. Intensive survey at the site did much to situate Koutsopetria within the island's settlement history and economic networks. Excavations at the site offers little to contradict the conclusions from the survey, but the continued interest in the "Long Late Antiquity" on the island allowed us to place Koutsopetria within the decade of scholarship that appeared since the publication of the first volume which has continued 21st-century efforts to reinterpret the relationship between rural and urban in antiquity. The study of excavated church architecture allowed us to consider the liturgical traditions present on the island and propose another layer of regional connections linking Koutsopetria and Salamis-Constantia. Finally, our discussion of the abandonment of Koutsopetria offers a final chapter in our understanding of this region in antiquity, but it remains a chapter that will undoubtedly see revision in the future as scholars continue to subject the tidy narratives of the "long late antiquity" to new critiques and chronologies.

3.a. State and Settlement

Historically, the study of cities has dominated the archaeology of Roman, Late Roman, and Byzantine Cyprus. The impressive urban sites of Paphos, Kourion, Salamis, Soloi, Amathus, and even Polis-Arsinoe have received sustained archaeological attention (see Metcalf 2009 and Zavagno 2017). This work has contributed to arguments demonstrating continuity between the Iron Age kingdoms on the island and later (even modern) settlements. It likewise reinforced the island's reputation as one of the most urban landscapes of the Eastern Mediterranean. While archaeologists continue to work to untangle and publish the complexities of Cyprus's Roman and Late Roman urban landscape, they have published a number of significant urban villas most notably at Paphos (Hayes 1991), Kourion (Costello 2014; Soren 1987; Davis 2013), and Salamis (Argoud et al. 2008), as well as urban amenities at Amathus, Kourion, Soloi, Salamis, and elsewhere (Gordon 2012). In Late Antiquity, this attention to urban contexts produced a bumper crop of monumental Early Christian basilicas with excavations at Paphos, Amathus, Kourion, and Salamis revealing multiple examples of elaborate Christian buildings (see Maguire 2012 for survey of these buildings and citations). This work reinforce the central role of urban life on Roman Cyprus and the link between Roman administrative structures and Christian institutions.

This seminal work invariably informs our study of the Roman and Late Roman period at Koutsopetria. In fact, in our first volume, dedicated to the survey of the coastal zone of Pyla-Koutsopetria, we defined the site as ex-urban and argued that such sites expand our understanding of the relationship between urban and non-urban settlement on the island. Our approach not only contributed to recent arguments that smaller urbanized coastal sites complemented the urbanized southern coast of the island (Bakirtzis 1995; Leonard 2005), but also to recent efforts to consider both on Cyprus and elsewhere the role of non-urban and rural sites in the Roman and Late Roman period (Alcock 1993; Decker 2009; Veikou 2009; Vionis 2022). This involves challenging the Finleyean conception of the ancient "consumer" city that merely drew resources from the countryside (see Finley 1977 for the classic formulation of this) and introducing a more dynamic, reciprocal model of settlement that recognizes the interdependence of urban and rural sites. For our work, Horden and Purcell's vision of a Mediterranean formed by densely connected microregions provided a model for understanding settlement that integrated both urban and rural spaces without implying a hierarchy (Horden and Purcell 2000). Their work upset the tidy binary of producer and consumer spaces that structured a corresponding urban and rural dichotomy. Recent work by Myrtou Viekou (2009; 2010) has proposed the existence of "third spaces" that were neither strictly urban or rural in the Roman countryside and offered a new context to make of non-urban sites. This more fluid understanding of settlement might better account for sites such as Dreamers' Bay which Simon James and colleagues have argued was an industrial zone serving Kourion rather than a settlement or harbor town (James et al. 2020). The distance between the Dreamers' Bay site and Kourion (13 km)is roughly equal to the distance between Kition and Koutsopetria (10-12 km), but the church and the significant quantities of ceramics appropriate for a domestic setting suggests that the latter is more of a town than an industrial estate.

These approaches to non-urban sites offer new ways to understand the bustling or "busy" countryside of Cyprus (Rautman 2000) and to complicate its deserved reputation for dense urbanism. Recent work combined with earlier scholarship offers new ways of understanding non-urban sites across the island. For example, Hector Catling directed the Cyprus Survey Project in the 1950s and documented the Kornos cave (Catling 1970) and the Dhiorios settlement and ceramic works on the Kormakiti peninsula (Catling 1972). Both of these sites were rural and offered substantial assemblages of both local and regional Late Antique ceramics including kilns for the production of cooking ware vessels at Dhiorios. The excavations at the small settlement of Panayia Ematousa (Sørenson and Jacobson 2006) and rural sites on the Akamas peninsula (Leonard 1995) have likewise shed light on a wider range of Roman period settlement than nucleated cities that are nevertheless deeply engaged in regional and transregional exchange networks. Excavations in the 1990s by Charalambos Bakirtzis revealed the massive ex-urban site of Ay. Georgios-Peyias with three basilicas, a bath, warehouses and other structure dating, it would appear, to Late Antiquity

(Bakirtzis 1995). The initial excavations at Kousopetria by Maria Hadjicosti, at Kopetra, by Marcus Rautman (2003), at Alassa by Pavlos Florentzos (1996), and at Maroni-Petrera by S. Manning (2002) represented a watershed decade in the archaeology of the Late Antique Cypriot countryside. The excavations at Kopetra and Maroni Petrera emerged from intensive pedestrian survey projects which likewise expanded our knowledge of Roman and Late Roman countryside. Recent work in the Troodos mountains by the Troodos Areas Environmental Survey Project (Given et al. 2013), for example, has demonstrated that the Troodos mountains continued to be exploited for iron into the Roman and Late Roman period (see also Sdralia et al. 2023) and a number of other survey projects have produced a "busy countryside" of sites ranging from villages to isolated farmsteads (Rautman 2003), production sites (Manning et al. 2000), and even monumental Christian architecture (Procopiou 2013). While the excavation of these sites often added to the catalogue of Christian churches, more importantly, they also expanded our knowledge of the fabric of non-urban places and the productive landscape of the island and demonstrated that the connections between non-urban spaces and the wider region were not solely mediated by urban centers.

The work of Athanasios Vionis and his colleagues in the Xeros River Valley may offer the best parallel for Pyla-*Koutsopetria*. Much like Pyla-*Koutsopetria,* the busy countryside of the Xeros valley extended along the Iron Age boundaries of the city of Kition to the east and Amathus to the west. As we have argued elsewhere, the site of Koutsopetria and the settlements in the Xeros Valley both emerged at the collapse of the Iron Age political system which likely discouraged settlement along the boundaries between states. When Hellenistic and Roman rulers governed the island as a unified province, whatever factors discouraged the exploitation of politically marginal landscapes disappeared and areas such as the coastal zone of Pyla village and the Xeros valley became appealing zones for settlement and exploitation. Their location of Koutsopetria and the Xeros valley settlement along the most likely route of Roman roads on the island further strengthens their connection to the post-Iron Age period. He argued that the location of the sites outside the immediate urban area but along transportation routes linking cities to productive rural landscapes suggests that these settlements likely functioned as market villages serving populations engaged in agricultural activities and extractive industries (Vionis 2022). John Moschos refers just such a market town on Cyprus called "Tadai" (Prat. Sp. 30). This might be a corruption of a place called Dades which Ptolemy located east of Kition and west of the Thronoi promontory (Ptol. Geog. 5.14; Caraher et al. 2014, 289; Leonard 2005, 151-154). These market towns would have engaged in the production of ceramics and roof tiles, set aside places for burials, and constructed sometimes multiple churches, such as at Kopetra, indicating that these non-urban sites were nevertheless bustling centers of exchange, religious activity, life and death. These settlements and those from earlier periods have contributed to changing attitudes toward rural settlement on Cyprus in antiquity and suggests that settlements outside the urban core represented more resilient and even persistent activity areas which ultimately shaped the organization of larger urban nodes (e.g. Kearns 2022).

Koutsopetria was a non-urban site and its development during the Hellenistic, Roman, and Late Roman period appears to follow a period of expanded settlement in the Cypriot countryside during these centuries (Lund 2015, p. 240 with references). The excavations at Koutsopetria largely confirmed the results of the survey which showed the expansion of settlement onto the coastal plain during the Hellenistic and Roman period. The large fragments of Hellenistic pottery found in later contexts suggests that Hellenistic activities took place nearby. While the excavations did not enter into any obvious primary context from the Roman period, the presence of small fragments of Roman period painted plaster in the floor packing of the hallway to the west of Room 1 hints that the site likely featured well-appointed buildings. The residual assemblage throughout the Koutsopetria reinforced our argument for domestic activities on the plain by producing fine, cooking, and utility wares. The absence of a clearly stratified contexts, however, did little to add chronological resolution to the assemblage produced from the intensive survey. Slight variations in how we dated and identified material, in fact, made comparing the two assemblage challenging, but offered little apparent opportunity to refine the otherwise ambiguous chronology of cooking and utilitarian vessels. As a result, most of the coarser vessels date only to the broader "Roman period" and contribute only to our impression that activity on the plain intensified over the course of first four centuries AD. The material capable of producing the finest chronologies for the site remain fine ware and transport amphora. Unfortunately these do little to close the well-known "ceramic gap" between the 2nd and 4th centuries AD, but there is nothing to contraindicate continuity in settlement at the site, makes it a potentially useful location for further research.

It seems likely that the decline of Iron Age polities contributed to the expansion of settlement in rural areas especially in the former borderlands between cities. Shifts in the political landscape of the Roman Empire further contributed to the development of settlement at Koutsopetria in the Late Roman period. We have argued elsewhere that the visibility of the coastal site of Koutsopetria in our intensive survey reflected the preponderance of 6th-century material on the surface. The ubiquity of Late Roman 1 amphoras indicated that a significant quantity of agricultural produce moved through our site in the Late Roman period. The appearance of imported fine wares from both Africa and the

Aegean further suggested that our site became an emporium in the 6th century. This coincided with the changing Justinian placement of Cyprus under the command of the *quaestora exercitus* in 536 which redirected the agricultural production of the island toward the Aegean and the Balkan limes (Zavagno 2017: 65-66). It may be that this high level reorganization of Late Roman provincial administration both encouraged the development of coastal sites like Koutsopetria in support of a more rigorous extraction of agricultural produce and, as we will see below, connected the site more closely to the Aegean trade networks. Thus the quantities of LR1 amphora and fine wares common to Aegean markets made the site both more visible to our surface survey, but also attracted other economic, social, and religious activities to Koutsopetria.

The settlement patterns at Koutsopetria appear to be entangled island's changing political landscape. The new non-urban settlements that emerged during the Hellenistic and Roman period represent a wide range of settlement types and economic activities, and this diversity complicates a tidy dichotomy between rural and urban during these centuries. The Cyprus that emerged after the demise of the Iron Age kingdoms was less a series of dots along the coast of the island, and more a tapestry of interconnected regions that includes places both on the island and in the wider Mediterranean.

3.b. Connectivity

Our understanding of the diversity of post-Iron Age non-urban settlements on the island developed in part from Horden and Purcell monumental Mediterranean synthesis, *The Corrupting Sea*, which argues that the Mediterranean economy consists of a network of connected microregions. During the intensive pedestrian survey of the Pyla-Koutsopetria microregion, we drew upon their concept of connectivity to trace the character of the assemblage recovered from Koutsopetria. The survey assemblage revealed economic ties connecting Pyla-Koutsopetria to the elsewhere on Cyprus, Levant, the Aegean, and the wider Mediterranean during the Roman and Late Roman period. This work represented another in the recent efforts to challenge G. Hill's and T. Mitford's argument that Cyprus was a quiet backwater of the Roman East (Hill 1940; Mitford 1980). Taking inspiration from the work of work of Dimitri Michaelides (e.g. 1996), John Hayes's publication of the ceramics from the House of Dionysios at Paphos (1991), the work of John Lund (2015), and their younger contemporaries (e.g. Leonard 2005, Gordon 2012, Zavagno 2017), we argued that during the first seven centuries AD, Cyprus was anything but a backwater. Instead the island was deeply embedded in the economic life of the Roman East, traded extensively with its neighbors, participated in wider trends across the empire, and exploited their natural and agricultural resources for both public and private expressions of power and wealth. In the 21st century, recent work on connectivity, globalization, revised ideas of insularity, and hybridized culture have shaped our view of Roman and Late Roman Cyprus as a sphere for distinct forms of cultural and economic interaction that extends far beyond monumental architecture (Caraher and Gordon 2020). The quantitative analysis of imported and local ceramics (Lund 2015, Winther-Jacobsen 2010), evidence from shipwrecks and ceramic production sites (Leidwanger 2013; Demesticha 2013; Demesticha and Michaelides 2001), and survey and excavation at small harbors, emporia, villages, and non-monumental buildings have all contributed to a view of Cypriot micro regions that demonstrate their deep connections across the Roman and Late Roman world. Moreover, by embracing theoretically rich concepts like globalization, insularity, and hybridity, they locate the study of Roman and Late Roman Cyprus within a larger conversation about the island that extends from the Bronze Age (e.g. Knapp 2008) across most of antiquity (e.g. Counts 2008).

Intensive pedestrian survey relied largely upon the analysis of ceramic assemblages to trace the lines of connectivity present at Koutsopetria. While the ceramic wares present in our excavations are consistent with the common forms from both our survey and elsewhere on the island, they nevertheless reinforce the connections between Koutsopetria and the wider region for the Roman period. The nearby sites of Panayia-*Ematousa* and Kition, for example, produced a robust assemblages of Eastern Sigillata A in many of the same forms found at Koutsopetria. Generally, speaking, the forms are from the heart of the ESA sequence and dated to the second half of the second or early first century BC to the second century AD (cf. Lund 2006, 205-207; Lund 2015, 164-165). We did not recognize any of the later forms noted by Hayes (1985) and more recently noted by Reynolds (2010) and Lund (2016) as being evidence for production patterns extending later than initially anticipated and offering the potential to bridge the 3rd-4th century gap. The relatively small percentage of Cypriot Sigillata produced by the excavation would appear to reflect the proportions of CS present at other sites in the eastern part of the island. As Lund and others have observed, it may be that the sources for CS are situated further west on the island and the eastern part of the island maintained strong ties to the Northern Levant. This result offers a corrective on the assemblage produced from our survey which produced a much higher percentage of CS material suggesting that Koutsopetria. The amphora assemblage is essentially identical to that produced by the survey revealing ties to both elsewhere on the island and the Aegean basin. In sum, the excavation confirmed the results of the survey and situated Koutsopetria in the Roman period astride east-west routes through the region.

The assemblage of Late Roman ceramics produced by the excavation likewise reinforces the overall impression of the survey. The most notable variation between the two assemblages is that the overall percentage of African Red Slip pottery increased while not producing any new forms suggesting that the assemblages are fundamentally similar in character. In contrast, Phocaean Ware which made up only a small percent in the survey, made up even less of the excavated material and one of the more common forms PHW3 was absent entirely. Cypriot Red Slip remains abundant. This distribution of fine ware serves as one measure of connectivity. The prevalence of ARS demonstrates the close link between the south coast of Cyprus and producers in North Africa. The significant quantities of Cypriot Red Slip which tends to be more prevalent on the western side of the island with production sites in Psidia and perhaps on Cyprus, parallels the appearance of Dhiorios type cooking vessels, which likewise tend to be more prevalent on the western side of the island. This assemblage appears to suggest west to east movement of material across the island of Cyprus.

These connections, on the one hand, suggest that, for ceramics, that the pattern of connectivity at Koutsopetria flipped between the Roman and Late Roman period. As we argued on the basis of the survey data, it seems likely that Justinian's decision to groups the island with the Aegean and the southern Balkans under the *quaestor exercitus* linked the island more solidly to the Aegean and central Mediterranean trade networks. In fact, the prevalence of ARS at Koutsopetria presents an assemblage that has certain similarities to assemblages from Butrint (Reynolds 2010) or Corinth (Sanders and Slane 2005) where ARS appeared in large quantities throughout the sixth century, although Phocaean wares tended to be common complements to ARS in these contexts. In contrast, Beirut saw relatively small quantities of ARS compared to Cypriot and Phocaean red slips (Reynolds 2010). In other words, the ceramic evidence appears to indicate that Koutsopetria "faced west" during the 6th century reflecting strengthened economic ties to the Aegean that perhaps followed the administrative reforms of the mid-6th century (Zavagno 2017, 65-66; Metcalf 2009).

The distribution of ceramics at the site only tells part of the story of the connections between Koutsopetria and the larger region. Recent work at Polis-Chysochous on the western side of the island, demonstrates that not all parts of the island were equally engaged in western-facing trade (e.g. Caraher et al. 2019; Caraher and Moore 2022). At Polis, for example, a massive assemblage of Late Roman fine ware excavated from around the 6th-century South basilica produced only traces of

ARS and LRC wares against the backdrop of a massive assemblage of Cypriot Red Slip forms. Polis, in short, appears to be less engaged in trade with the western Mediterranean despite its long-standing status as an important Cypriot urban center, the seat of a bishop, and the presence of a wealthy and presumably cosmopolitan population. Koutsopetria, in comparison, produced a far more cosmopolitan assemblage of imported ceramics despite its status as less central, ex-urban subsidiary of the city of Kition. As unusual as it might appear, it would seem that the site of Koutsopetria was in some ways, was embedded within a more geographically expansive trading network than the urban site of Polis.

The architectural remains at Koutsopetria offer another, more nuanced view of the site's links to the region. The wall-painting at the site, for example, uses pigments sourced from the island, especially in the Troodos, while drawing on motifs common to the eastern Mediterranean more broadly. The use of *opus sectile* floor decorations is similarly common on Cyprus, but also a trend in throughout the Eastern Mediterranean. The gypsum floor slabs in Room 1 are likewise a familiar flooring solution across the island where gypsum served as a local alternative to marble which the island lacked. Gypsum also constituted an important element to the glistening wall plaster and mortar associated with the church and reflected long-standing construction practices from across the island. The gypsum at our site likely come from sources near Dhali, in the foothills of the Troodos. The walls themselves appear to consist of spolia likely quarried from the Vigla or Kokkinokremos. In fact, the presence of a light scatter of Late Roman material at Kokkinokremos may well represent the evidence for this quarrying as several intensive campaigns of excavation have yet to reveal any significant Late Roman investment on the plateau (Bretschneider, Kanta, and Driessen 2023: 3). The massive assemblage of roof tiles likewise reflects regional connections on the island. The tiles most commonly associated with Room 1 appear to be of a type manufactured in the Kalavassos valley that we called "Kopetra-type" tiles in our survey volume. These were used regularly on contemporary buildings on the southeast coast of the island. While it is impossible to associate all the tiles found in the vicinity of the excavation with the church, it seems likely that tiles from Mesaoria recognized in the survey may joined the Kopetra-type tiles on the roof of the church and its surrounding buildings especially as it is clear that the building saw multiple phases of repair and modification that likely included rebuilding some of the roof. In sum, the remains at Koutsopetria building reveals a network of local connections that allowed for the construction of this kind of building on this site.

3.c. Religious Landscapes

The religious landscape of Roman and Late Roman Cyprus emerges at the intersection of settlement change and connectivity. While Koutsopetria revealed very little evidence for religious life in the Roman period, the presence of an Early Christian basilica indicates that the community on the coastal plain was part of the larger Christian community on the island. The archaeological attention received by monumental Christian architecture exerted a formative influence over the trajectory of Late Roman and Byzantine archaeology on the island, and the work of Andreas Dikigoropoulos (GET CITE) and Athanasios Papgeorghiou (GET CITE) are particularly notable in this regard. Church plans, architectural typologies, and less frequently decorative techniques, particularly mosaic and wall painting, formed the basis for interpreting the place of Cyprus in the both the history of Late Roman and Byzantine architecture, and in the Eastern Mediterranean. From G. A. Soteriou's ambitious arguments for the central role of Cypriot churches in the development of Byzantine architecture more broadly (1935; see Davis and Stewart 2014) to A.H.M. Megaw's famous article that asked whether Byzantine architecture on Cyprus was metropolitan or provincial (1974) and Slobadon Curcic's 2000 reformulation of that question, architecture, elevations, and floor plans in particular, provided evidence for the relationship between Cyprus and the rest of the Mediterranean world. In many cases, these urban churches remain little known beyond their plans (and their impressive remains) and even the impressive publication of the architecture at Soloi (Gagniers and Tinh 1985) and at the Campanopetra at Salamis (Roux 1998) fell short of comprehensive documentation and lacked the thorough publication of context, finds, and stratigraphic dates. Among excavated urban churches, the publication of the Episcopal precinct at Kourion (Megaw 2007) and recent work at Polis-Chrysochous (Caraher et al. 2019) have come closer to these standards. As a result, most urban churches on Cyprus remain difficult to date archaeologically and, in some ways, stand detached from their larger urban contexts as excavators focused their attention on the architectural plan. The overall unevenness of both publication and excavation has made it difficult to contextualize Cypriot architecture and urbanism within the larger Roman and Late Roman world.

The architecture of the church at Koutsopetria may offer a window onto a more distinct relationship between our site and others on the island. The basilica form is common throughout the island as is the presence of ancillary rooms that likely served ecclesiastical, liturgical, and even economic and social functions. As Marcus Rautman has noted for the village site of Kopetra, even smaller, rural settlements could have multiple basilicas (Rautman 2003). The larger ex-urban settlement of Ay. Georgios-Peyia to the northwest of Paphos featured at least three elaborately decorated churches that appear to be associated with the seat of a bishop. In terms of settlement size, Koutsopetria appears to fall between Ay. Georgios and a village like Kopetra, and there is every reason to imagine that site had multiple basilicas.

The wide and shallow central apse of the Koutsopetria basilica and the narrow passageway that connects the central apse to the northern apse and aisle are common features to churches on the Karpas peninsula and likely served as a liturgical function allowing the clergy to move between the central apse and a flanking pastophoria (GET CITE). They share affinities with the well-known basilica of St. Epiphanios at Salamis-Constantia, and the passage between the central and northern apse hint at similar liturgies. Moreover, St. Epiphanios was almost certainly earlier than the church at Koutsopetria, an especially well-known church in antiquity and an important pilgrimage site on the island. Moreover, the bishop of Salamis-Constantia, including the eponymous Epiphanios, was a leading ecclesiastical and political figures on the island and, from time to time, in the region (GET CITE). It seems plausible to conclude that the formal similarities between the churches at Salamis, those on the Karpas Peninsula, and the church at Koutsopetria represents the ecclesiastical influence of the church at Salamis. Links between the church at Koutsopetria and churches at Salamis likely reflect the site's position on a route between Salamis and Kition. Our evidence is rather irregular, unfortunately, as Kition remains one of the few ancient cities on Cyprus without a well-excavated Early Christian basilica and, as a result, it remains unclear whether churches at Kition maintained any distinctive architectural elements. The city of Salamis-Constantia saw persistent investment in its urban fabric throughout the 6th and 7th centuries by local ecclesiastical elites who not only maintained and expanded the pilgrimage sites dedicated the St. Barnabas, Epiphanios, and the massive Campanopetra basilica, but also funded the construction of a massive aqueduct to bring water to the city. The basilica style churches of Salamis, its immediate district, and the Karpas peninsula speak to the extent of local prosperity into the countryside.

Thus the ecclesiastical networks in which the church at Koutsopetria appears to operate suggest connections to the western part of the island and the influence of Salamis. If we connect the construction of the basilica to 6th century prosperity evident at Koutsopetria, this conforms with to growing ecclesiastical and political prominence of Salamis in the 5th, 6th, and even 7th centuries where the community enjoyed imperial patronage, constructed large, elaborate basilica style churches, and

3.d. Abandonment

Finally, Scholars of Late Roman and Early Byzantine Cyprus, like so much of the Eastern Mediterranean, have increasingly placed the island chronologically within "the long Late Antiquity" which recognizes fundamental continuity between the 5th and 8th or even 9th centuries in the Eastern Mediterranean. For Cyprus, "long Late Antiquity" is complicated by at least two Arab raids on the island that disrupted political and social life on the island and left their marks in both the architecture and archaeology (see Panayides and Jacobs 2023). These raids, however, rather than being points of discontinuity in Late Antiquity, marked the start of the famous, if controversial, condominium period on the island that embodied aspects of both continuity and discontinuity in the island's political arrangement and relationship with neighboring regions. Andreas Dikigoropoulos's 1962 dissertation defined 7th to 10th century Cyprus in the famous phrase of the 8th century pilgrim Willabald as "betwixt Greeks and Saracens." His attention to the architecture of these centuries built upon A.H.M. Megaw's studies of the vaulted churches of Cyprus (Megaw 1946), and, more recently, C. Stewart (2008, 2010) has continued to study the architecture of this period as a key to the island's social, economic, religious and political status during these centuries. D. Metcalf (2004, 2009) and L. Zavagno (2011; 2011-12; 2017) have collated evidence from coins and seals to track continued ties between the economic and political ties between Cyprus, the Arab Caliphate to the east and Byzantine state in Anatolia and the Aegean. Important work has also focused on understanding the chronology of Late Roman ceramics both on Cyprus and across the region. P. Reynolds (2014; 2010), J. Vroom (2004; 2005; 2007), A. Vionis (2009), and P. Armstrong (2009), among many others, have pushed some common ceramics types, namely forms of widely traded Late Roman red slips and common transport amphoras, from the 5th and 6th century into the 7th and even 8th centuries (see Caraher and Moore 2023). This work, in turn, has challenged the dating of buildings and sites on Cyprus by pushing destruction levels later than the Arab raids and demonstrating the urban areas continued to be economically connected and vital into the later 7th or even 8th centuries.

Traditionally, the historiography of Late Antique Cyprus culminates in the Arab raids of the mid-7th century AD which scholars have argued resulted in the destruction of buildings across the island and the disruption of traditional Cypriot settlement structures. Archaeologists have generally dated this transformation of the Cypriot landscape and attendant episodes of destruction on the basis of coins, particularly from the reign of Herakleios. These are common issues on Cyprus, however, and tend to appear regularly in archaeological contexts across the island. Their frequency on Cyprus relative to other 7th century issues, complicates their utility for providing precise dates for the destruction of particular monuments. As a result, archaeologists have tended to cluster the dates of destruction, abandonment, and settlement change around a historical event made plausible on the level of individual sites because of the frequent appearance of rather common issues of Herakleios. Such reasoning shaped the initial analysis of Room 1 and the apse, with the excavator arguing that issues of Herakleios on the floor dates the destruction of the building to after the mid-7th century.

Our analysis of the archaeology of Room 1 complicated this reading of the history of this building, by recognizing that the building underwent a number of modifications and repairs over its life including at least one episode of significant collapse and destruction. It seems probable that the first episode of significant modification likely occurred relatively early in the history of the room or at least prior to the middle of 7th century. We have associated this modification with a change of function or some event that compromised the architecture of the building. The presence of 7th century material in floor packing and the presence of original wall plaster built into walls associated with the final phase of the building suggest that the final abandonment of the site may have occurred as late as the end of the 7th or 8th centuries. The latest ceramic evidence from the Koutsopetria excavations complicates any effort to establish either a relative or absolute chronology of events. For example, the relatively well-preserved fragments of early-7th century fineware on the floor of the building, in African Red Slip, Phocaean Ware and Cypriot Red Slip fabrics, may be nearly a half-century earlier than the fragments of Dhiorios cooking pots, dating to the mid-7th century or later, both in the floor fills and in a deposit to the north of Room 1. The ubiquitous, early-7th century, coins of Herakleios, evidence for the recycling of gypsum floor slabs, and the casual decoration of ship graffito hints that abandonment was not a single event, but probably happened over a rather lengthy period during which the building remained standing and used periodically after its abandonment and before its final collapse.

The history of Room 1 offers a far more nuanced perspective on the process of abandonment and collapse in Late Roman Cyprus. The efforts to repair and maintain Room 1 evokes similar efforts to repair throughout the 6th and 7th century at Kopetra and Polis and even the famous rebuilding of the church at Soloi. The incomplete salvaging of gypsum floor slabs at some time prior to the final collapse of the double arch which made the room inaccessible may be similar to the salvaging efforts associated with the post-abandonment phase of the basilica at Kourion which produced a small scatter of later pottery that preserved signs of continued activity even after the large-scale abandonment of the site. In short, the ongoing revision of ceramic chronologies, the difficulties associated with using coins to date events, and challenges associated with establishing sequences of collapse, repair, rebuilding, and salvaging, make complex island-wide phenomena like settlement change difficult to track.

In a regional context, it is increasingly clear that eastern and southeastern Cyprus remained economically active and resilient into the 8th century. For example, Salamis, even after the supposed sack of the Salamis by Mu'āwiya in 649 and then an occupation by Abu-l-A'war the next year, seem to have experience the continued construction and, if not prosperity, at least stability including repairs to Ay. Epiphanios and the construction of a substantial new fortification wall. The immediate neighborhood around Salamis likewise saw ongoing activities with the famous vaulted basilicas of the Karpas Peninsula and ongoing activity at the coastal site and church of Ay. Philon. While the nature of the Arab raids seems to have ensured a certain degree of inconsistency in their destruction of site across the island, the general impression left by the ongoing activity throughout the eastern part of the island seems to imply that the disruptions of the mid-7th century were either exaggerated or less devastating than traditionally assumed. The site at Koutsopetria, which is linked to Salamis by a known ancient route, may have not have demonstrated the kind of resiliency of the Salamis or even Kition, which allowed these settlements to persist into the 9th and 10th centuries, but the ongoing activity in this region may account for the slow abandonment of the site over the long 7th century.

3.e. The End of Antiquity

Ultimately, the complex history of this room's final phases offers a narrow glimpse the halting processes that marked the end of antiquity on the island of Cyprus. As arguments from discontinuity between the ancient and Medieval world give way to more subtle readings of this period of transformation that emphasize both continuities across the 6th to 8th centuries and the gradual character of transformation on the island. The excavation of Room 1 and the apse of the Christian basilica revealed little evidence for activity associated with those spaces after the end of the 7th century. The intensive pedestrian survey in the wider region likewise revealed very little evidence for continuity between the end of antiquity and the Medieval period. In other words, it is difficult to escape the conclusions that our site was abandoned at the end of antiquity, but similarly difficult to ascribe it to a single, catastrophic event.

Throughout the Roman and Late Roman periods, the site of Koutsopetria remained embedded in a complex network of regional and interregional connections that shaped the architecture, decorative schemes, and material culture of the site. The excavation reinforced the general trend in the ceramic evidence collected in the survey to show that between the Roman and Late Roman period, Koutsopetria shifted from predominantly eastern facing site, with economic ties to the Levant manifested in the robust assemblage of Eastern Sigillata A, to more westerns facing site with Aegean, North African, and Anatolian imports. This shift reflected the changing relationship between our site and the political and economic strength of the Roman Empire as an administrative unit. Indeed, the prosperity of the site in the 6th and early 7th century may well represent the exception and the site's decline over the course of the 7th century AD may represent a kind of return to earlier levels of less intensive settlement in the area. The Empire's struggles to maintain political control over the Levantine coastline and the strained economic, religious, and cultural connections between Cyprus, Syria, and the Anatolia may well mark the end of the network of prosperous interaction that allowed a site like Koutsopetria to be visible in the archaeological record.