Reconsidering Late Roman Cyprus: 
Using new material from Nea Paphos to review current artefact typologies

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Summary

This thesis is based around detailed analysis of an assemblage of newly excavated material from the Paphos Theatre site in SW Cyprus. Before presenting the new work, the academic context into which it must fit is investigated. This process of re-evaluating past work sets up a framework within which the new material would be expected to fit. In fact, research on Late Roman Cyprus is not as advanced as might be expected after over seventy years of excavation. This is most particularly the case for fundamental principles like typology and chronology for the local ceramics and glass. A review of past and current excavations shows that the typology of Cypriot Red Slip ware is widely used around the Eastern Mediterranean as a dating tool for deposits containing this distinctive Fine ware. This makes it essential that it be confirmed to be a reliable and substantially correct construct. Unfortunately, a re-analysis of the foundations of the Cypriot red Slip ware typology and chronology reveals many uncertainties and establishes the necessity for new material from secure deposits to help refine current typologies.

The artefact assemblage from Area Three at the Paphos Theatre provides just such an opportunity. A combination of a series of sealed deposits, a high density of artifacts and identifiable coins has enabled a comprehensive study to be achieved. A major collapse, probably an earthquake, sealed a paved street and drainage system in the trenches and this episode can be pinpointed to around the mid to late fifth century by the coin evidence. Most interesting is the fact that the dating suggested by the coins does not match the dating usually assigned to the associated pottery and glass. After establishing the reliability of the coin evidence, the study of the other artefacts offers new ideas about the dating and typology of the local Cypriot Red Slip ware, Cooking ware, Lamps and Glass. In fact an analysis of all the pottery from the site suggests that the chronology of Cypriot Red Slip ware and Cooking ware in particular needs to be pushed back to focus on a floruit in the fourth and fifth centuries. This is at least one hundred years earlier than current typologies that focus on the mid sixth to seventh centuries. This analysis provides some reliable fixed points, for both local pottery and glass, earlier in the Late Roman sequence upon which future work can be built.
Preface

The content of this thesis is the result of original research and analysis of an assemblage of archaeological material excavated at the Paphos Theatre site in Cyprus. The ideas and conclusions recorded are my own, although where I have received specific advice and help these suggestions are referenced to the person concerned. Many of the logistical parts of this project were undertaken by members of the Paphos Theatre excavation team, some of their contributions are mentioned below.

First thanks must go to the excavations teams whose hard work in the Area Three trenches began this project. In Trench 3A, team leader Cameron Petrie in 1995 and in 1996 team leader Helen Nicholson, and excavators Emma Devitt, Robyn Outram, Patty Henderson, Panagiotis Kariatelis, Peter Larsen, Joanne Rixon, Grahame Bond and Henry Huggins. In Trench 3B, team leader Craig Barker and excavators Andrew Symington, Archondia Thanos, Fran Keeling, Chris John, Michelle Wong, Nick Conroy, Margaret Proudfoot, Roz Pouw, Melissa Riley, Rowan Conroy and Simon Kalucy. In Trench 3C, team leader Holly Cook and excavators Monica Jackson, Pat Keeley, Elaine Third, Anna Sophocles and Lynn Brunet. All the ink drawings in this thesis are the work of a team of drawers on-site in Paphos; their quality work has also made this project possible. Many thanks to drawers Amanda Dusting, Celeste Goulding, Tim Martin, David Loong, and Carin Wilson. Photographer Bob Miller and architect Geoff Stennett contributed to the illustrations presented. Gratitude to numismatist Dr Anne Destrooper-Georgiades for her invaluable work identifying the coins from Area Three. To be mentioned also are the conservators Barbara O’Brien and Bronwyn Cosgrove. Thanks are really due to all the members of the Paphos Theatre Excavation team from the years 1995-99, too many people to mention. Without their help in the field and in processing the artifacts, none of the analysis presented here would have been achievable.

This project would also not have been feasible without the funding provided by the Australian Research Council in the form of a scholarship, with particular thanks to Fran and Brad Keeling for personal and financial support. Invaluable scholarly advice was provided by Pascale Ballet who inspected some of the ceramics on site. Many thanks to Jean-Yves Empereur and the members of the Centre d’Études Alexandrines. The visit to Alexandria to examine the pottery from their excavations around the city was an important aspect of the research for this thesis. The
Department of Antiquities, Cyprus and the Cyprus American Archaeological Research Institute have aided my research projects on the island since 1989. Also thanks to Julianne Deeb for ploughing through the early versions of the thesis for editing purposes.

The most important direct contribution to this thesis was made by my supervisor and the director of the Paphos Theatre Excavations, Professor J.R Green. He was the originator of the idea for this research and a continuous help and support throughout the project. His sponsorship over the last seven years requires a large portion of appreciation. Finally, the significant personal contributor, R.A.Z Simington, without his assistance and encouragement this thesis would not have been completed.
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**Abbreviations**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ARS</td>
<td>African Red Slip ware</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Atlante I</strong></td>
<td><em>Atlante delle forme ceramiche, I</em> Ceramica fine romana nel bacino mediterraneo (medio e tardo impero) Enciclopedia dell'arte antica, classica e orientale. Roma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Atlante II</strong></td>
<td><em>Atlante delle forme ceramiche, II</em> Ceramica fine romana nel bacino mediterraneo (tardo ellenismo e primo impero) Enciclopedia dell'arte antica, classica e orientale. Roma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRSW</td>
<td>Cypriot Red Slip ware</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS</td>
<td>Cypriot Sigillata</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ERS</td>
<td>Egyptian Red Slip ware</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ERSA</td>
<td>Egyptian Red Slip ware A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ERSB</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>ERSC</td>
<td>Egyptian Red Slip ware C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ES</td>
<td>Eastern Sigillata</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESA</td>
<td>Eastern Sigillata A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LRP</strong></td>
<td>Late Roman Pottery</td>
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