
Appendix

Some Brief Thoughts on the Ancient Harbor of Kourion

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The exact location of the ancient harbor at Kourion remains unknown, a fact that casts doubt on its very existence. Excavations undertaken at the main city site of the Hellenistic, Roman and Early Christian periods, situated on the well-known and commanding hillock 3 km west of Episkopi village, as well as the localities of *Bamboula* and *Kaloriziki* to the east and south of the same village, resulted in the discovery of various domestic remains and tombs that date back to the Late Bronze Age, Geometric and Archaic periods. No harbor traces were found at all. Moreover, the present day topography of the coastline from the precipitous cliffs south of the Sanctuary of Apollo to Cape Zevgari on the Akrotiri Peninsula excludes the existence of a natural harbor in the vicinity.

The absence of a natural harbor at Kourion is supported by the fact that the coastal locality of *Ayios Ermoyenis*, adjacent to the Kourion hill, was continually used as a cemetery from the Cypro-Archaic to the end of the Early Christian periods.

Nevertheless, a series of huge blocks, symmetrically arranged in a slightly curved line extending about 50 m into the sea (Leonard 1995), opposite the lower part of the south-eastern corner of the Kourion bluff, indicates the probable remains of an artificial harbor.

In the 1994 trial excavations in an area about 300 m northwest of the aforementioned alignment of rocks and 150 m north of the first coastal restaurant, near the foot of the Kourion acropolis, revealed the central apse and parts of the two lateral apses of an Early Christian church. Systematic excavations that resumed in March and April 1995 un-

covered most of the eastern half of this monumental sacred building.

The archaeological data suggest that this is a three-aisled Christian basilica dating to the early sixth century C.E. The spacious nave and the two aisles of the main part of the church are separated by twin marble colonnades, ten intact columns of which, along with their bases and capitals, have been uncovered. The east end of the nave is joined with the sanctuary or *bema*, which has a semicircular apse once crowned by a semidome and flanked by two smaller apses. The floors of the nave and aisles are paved with multicolored mosaic compositions while the floor of the sanctuary consists of colored marble *opus sectile*. A large quantity of tesserae and fragments of wall mosaics found above the floors of the building indicate that the upper parts of the walls of the nave and the semidome of the central apse were probably decorated with elaborate mosaics. The tesserae were in some cases capped with gold or made of mother-of-pearl.

A rectangular room adjacent to the south aisle seems to constitute the *catechumenon*, that part of the church where the unbaptized converts remained during the communion. The western extremities of the nave and aisles are linked with the *narthex*, the main vestibule of the church, part of which has been uncovered. Hopefully, the remainder of the *narthex* and the entire *atrium* will be excavated in 1996.

The location of this newly uncovered basilica suggests that it was connected with the postulated artificial harbor nearby and, like the basilicas discovered close to the three ancient ports of Salamis, Amathous and Nea Paphos, was the protector of the installations at Kourion.

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