The Donation of Zeno: St. Barnabas and the Modern History of the Cypriot Archbishop'S Regalia Privileges

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The Donation of Zeno: St Barnabas and the Origins of the Cypriot Archbishops' Regalia Privileges

by JOSEPH P. HUFFMAN

This article explores medieval and Renaissance evidence for the origins and meaning of the imperial regalia privileges exercised by the Greek archbishops of Cyprus, said to have been granted by the Emperor Zeno (c. 42 to 91), along with autocephaly, upon the discovery of the relics of the Apostle Barnabas. Though claimed to have existed ab antiquo, these imperial privileges in fact have their origin in the late sixteenth century and bear the characteristics of western Latin ecclesial and political thought. With the Donation of Constantine as their prototype, they bolster the case made to the Italians and the French for saving Christian Cyprus from the Turks.

One of the long-standing narratives of ecclesiastical history remains the resolute and ultimately successful claim to autocephaly made by the archbishops of Cyprus, despite centuries of periodic challenges, including the very extinction of the Orthodox archiepiscopacy itself under Latin rule. The claim to Cypriot autocephaly has always been rooted in the late fifth-century discovery of St Barnabas’s relics, which came to serve as an unambiguous declaration of the apostolic founding of the Cypriot Church. The tradition of the apostolicity of the Cypriot Church, and thus its right to autocephaly, has long been a settled fact in modern scholarship and continues to be asserted by the Cypriot Church. Yet equally unambiguous has been the additional claim that, in

My thanks to Michael Cosby for drawing my attention to St Barnabas.

honour of St Barnabas’s relics, the Emperor Zeno (c. 425–91) also granted to the archbishops of Cyprus certain imperial regalia privileges which remain to this day as a joint bulwark of autocephaly alongside the apostolicity of the Church. The modern Cypriot Church thus celebrates both autocephaly and the imperial regalia privileges in tandem as rights ab antiquo, and modern western scholarship has also embraced the late antique origin of the regalia privileges. This article investigates the historical origins of these privileges and their relationship to the established late antique tradition of the Cypriot Church’s apostolic autocephaly.

The search for evidence of a late antique conjunction between Zeno’s clear and certain recognition of Cypriot autocephaly and a separate grant of imperial regalia privileges to its archbishops has produced a curious discovery: St Barnabas himself is hard to find in late antique and medieval Cyprus. In fact autocephaly had already been secured in the fourth century by the island’s other great episcopal hero, St Epiphanius. Furthermore, the imperial privileges said to have been granted in St Barnabas’s honour are in fact nowhere to be found. These privileges are odd in two ways. Firstly, although they are said to have been issued as a means of securing the autocephaly of the Cypriot Church from patriarchal control, they themselves have nothing to do with ecclesiastical jurisdiction and authority. Rather, they are regalia rights symbolic of temporal power freighted with imperial sovereignty: carrying a gold-orbed sceptre in lieu of a pastoral crosier, wearing a robe in the imperial purple rather than the monastic black, and signing official documents with imperial red (cinnabar) ink have nothing to do with ecclesiastical administration but everything to do with temporal governance. Secondly, these three privileges are oddly placed in a late fifth-century context, since such imperial


2 Louis de Mas Latrie, Histoire de l’île de Chypre sous le règne des princes de la Maison de Lusignan, Paris 1852–61, i. 80–1; Harry Luke, Cyprus under the Turks, 1571–1878: a record based on the archives of the English consulate in Cyprus under the Levant Company and after, London 1921, repr. 1989, 16–17; Hill, A history of Cyprus, i. 278. According to John Hackett, ‘Zeno, to mark his sense of the importance attaching to the discovery [of St Barnabas’ relics], conferred upon the Cypriot primates certain privileges, which they have most jealously guarded ever since’: A history of the Orthodox Church of Cyprus, 24.

3 ‘With the end of the fifth century and the appearance in the East of the Roman theology on the apostolic sees, that is, with apostolicity now as the principle of ecclesiastical organization, the Cypriot bishops, who until then had made no mention of St. Barnabas, remembered their apostle. The autocephaly, however, had already been assured in the fourth century by the work and person of Epiphanius of Salamis, especially’: Benedict Englezakis, ‘Epiphanius of Salamis, the father of the Cypriot autocephaly’, in Silouan Ioannou and Misael Ioannou (eds), Studies in the history of the Church of Cyprus, 4th–20th centuries, Aldershot Brookfield, Vr 1995, 38.
administrative grants to Orthodox prelates were unheard of in the polity of Byzantium. Byzantine emperors regularly maintained an imperial governor and military commander on the island and thus did not rely on the archbishops for either civil or military administration there.\(^4\) Hence the purported imperial privileges of the Cypriot archbishops are analogous to the Donation of Constantine in the Latin tradition, that is, they are set in an historical context devoid of any actual archiepiscopal secular governance. Such a double anachronism explains the complete absence of any surviving historical evidence for these privileges throughout both the late antique and medieval eras of Cyprus’ history.

Such powerful apostolic and imperial auctoritas would not have been neglected by medieval archbishops if they had been available. Yet the medieval Greek archbishops and bishops of Cyprus did not in fact turn St Barnabas’s relics and imperial regalia to their advantage. The thousands of episcopal lead seals that survive from their administrative documents from the sixth through the twelfth centuries virtually never employed the hallowed Apostle of the isle in their iconography. Archbishop John of Cyprus (late seventh century) may have included the bust of St Barnabas on his seals though this remains uncertain;\(^5\) it is more certain that Archbishop Theodore did so in the late seventh or early eighth century.\(^6\) Yet all subsequent archbishops preferred other emblems of their ecclesiastical authority: most employed the more popular Cypriot episcopal saint, Epiphanius of Salamis (c. 310–403), with a few looking off-island to the model bishop St Nicholas or the proto-martyr St Stephen for their seals. Among the island’s several bishops one finds lead seals depicting the Hospitality of Abraham, the Hodegetria, or even Daniel in the Lion’s Den and the Madonna with Child.\(^7\) The apostolic benediction of the blessed Barnabas

\(^4\) As an important part of Emperor Justinian I’s administrative reforms, Cyprus was removed in AD 536 from the praetorian prefecture Oriens and, along with five other provinces, put under the authority of a newly created quaestor exercitus. Governors are in evidence during the ‘Second Byzantine Golden Age’ down to the start of the Lusignan era in 1191 (during which there were neither Byzantine governors nor Orthodox archbishops).


\(^7\) For the most up-to-date and richly analysed collection of episcopal seals see D. M. Metcalf (ed.), *Byzantine lead seals from Cyprus*, Nicosia 2004. Concerning the popularity of St Epiphanius Metcalf concludes (p. 429) that ‘St Epiphanius figures frequently in the iconography of Cypriot seals, especially in connection with the church of Constantin. It seems, also, that the cult of the saint made the name popular.’
was therefore very rarely attached to the daily ecclesiastical business of the Byzantine Church on Cyprus.

St Barnabas and the legend of his miraculous fifth-century patronage of the Cypriot Church’s autocephaly was never forgotten.⁸ Indeed, evidence survives of a continuous literary tradition that maintained the memory of Alexander the Monk’s mid sixth-century Laudatio account of the autocephaly story.⁹ A contemporary of Alexander and Hagia Sophia’s own reader, Theodorus Anagnostes, had quickly learned of it and proceeded to insert the autocephaly tradition tied to St Barnabas into his own mid sixth-century Historia ecclesiastica.¹⁰ The Cypriot bishop Leontius of Neapolis (Limassol), in his seventh-century hagiography of St John the Almoner, tells of the latter’s pilgrimage to the relics of St Barnabas and St Epiphanius (though here Epiphanius has become the miracle worker).¹¹ The geographer George of Cyprus, though confusing the

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⁸ According to the iconographical evidence, however, it was a minimal memory. Only ten of the many Orthodox churches of medieval and Renaissance Cyprus preserve images of St Barnabas: the twelfth-century wall paintings in the churches Panagia Phorbiotissa (Nikitari), Panagia tou Arakou (Lagoudera) and Holy Apostles (Perachorio); the thirteenth/fourteenth-century paintings in the church of St Nicholas of the Roof (Kakopetria); the late fifteenth-century paintings in the churches St Mavra (Kilani), Christ Antiphonitis (Kalogrea), Holy Cross (Platanistasa) and Archangel Michael (Kholi); the early sixteenth-century paintings in the churches of the Dormition of the Mother of God (Kourdali) and Holy Cross (Kyperounda). St Barnabas is always depicted wearing the omophorion or himation over a chiton (indicating his archiepiscopal status) with a rounded and somewhat elongated face and a rounded dark beard (the exception being St Nicholas of the Roof, where he sports a light brown pointed beard). Barnabas is usually paired with St Epiphanius, or the two are joined by a host of patristic saints (Gregory the Theologian, St John Chrysostom, St Basil, St Nicholas, St Athanasius) and Cypriot bishops. Not once in any of these church images does St Barnabas bear additional regalia, nor do any other archbishops of Cyprus for that matter: Sophocles Sophocleous, Icônes de Chypre: diocèse de Limassol, 12e–16e siècle, Nicosia 2006, 75, 409 (plate 101); Andreas Stylianou and Judith Stylianou, The painted churches of Cyprus: treasures of Byzantine art, London 1985, 2nd edn 1997, 66, 67 (plate 26), 118, 147, 149 (plate 77), 175, 183–5, 213, 217–18, 237, 421–2, 484; Doula Mouriki, ‘The cult of Cypriot saints in medieval Cyprus as attested by church decorations and icon painting’, in A. A. M. Bryer and G. S. Georgallides (eds), ‘The sweet land of Cyprus’: papers given at the twenty-fifth jubilee spring symposium of Byzantine studies, Birmingham, England (March 1991), Nicosia 1993, 238–40.


¹⁰ Theodorus Anagnostes (Lector), Historia ecclesiastica, PG lxxxvii.a.183–4. Based on its contents, Theodorus had to have concluded this history before AD 543. See also Theodorus Anagnostes, Kirchengeschichte, ed. Günther Christian Hansen, Berlin 1971, 2nd edn 1995, repr. 2009.

¹¹ Leontios of Neapolis (Limassol), Vite Sancti Johannis Eleemosynarii, PG xciii.1613–68; A. J. Festugière, Leontios de Néapolis, Vie de Syméon le Fou et Vie de Jean de Chypre, Paris 1974; Three Byzantine saints: contemporary biographies of St Daniel the Stylite, St Theodore of
Gospel author Matthew with Barnabas’s reputed cousin John Mark, commented in his early seventh-century *Descriptio orbis Romani* that ‘The eparchy of Cyprus has continued, having sovereignty for itself, because here the holy apostle Barnabas was found, having the Gospel of Mark [sic] on his chest.’ The early ninth-century monastic chronicler from Constantinople, George Hamartolos, maintained the tradition, which was then taken up by George Kedrenos in his eleventh-century compendium of world history. This literary tradition no doubt accounts for the story’s inclusion in the eleventh-century imperial *Menologion* (a hagiographical collection) of Michael IV the Paphlagonian (1034–41).

Even after the end of imperial rule on Cyprus, Byzantine writers like Nilus Doxapatris and Joel the Chronographer sustained the autocephaly tradition in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries respectively. And the last significant ecclesiastical historian of Constantinople, Nikephorus Kallistos Xanthopoulos, carried the Barnabas-based autocephaly claim into the early fourteenth century in his own *Historia ecclesiastica*. This tradition is remarkably consistent in its details over almost eight centuries, with the only variant being some isolated confusion about whether the tree under which St Barnabas’s remains were found was a carob or a cherry. Every instance contains the clear assertion that St Barnabas’s miraculous appearance resulted in the autocephaly of Cyprus from the claims of the metropolitan of Antioch, based on Barnabas’s apostolic foundation of the Cypriot Church. But not a single one of these accounts makes mention of the imperial privileges; indeed, the literary evidence is as silent about these as the sigillographic evidence.

The centre of St Barnabas’s cult on Cyprus was a pilgrimage church named after him in Salamis (later renamed Constantia after the emperor who rebuilt it after fourth-century earthquakes had devastated the settlement) near Famagusta. And even when the capital city of

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17 Joel the Chronographer, *Chronographia compendiosa*, PG cxxxix. 263 4.

Salamis-Constantia was abandoned in the seventh century in favour of Famagusta, the monastic church of St Barnabas continued to function as an active pilgrimage shrine from late antiquity down to the present day.¹⁹ The thirteenth-century pilgrim Wilbrand of Oldenburg serves as an eye-witness of this: on his visit to the church, he describes its environs as a ‘civitas destructa’.²⁰ Yet amid all the centuries of a sustained local cult of St Barnabas on the island of Cyprus, often under great duress, there is not one late antique or medieval source anywhere attaching to this cult a tradition of imperial regalia privileges granted by Emperor Zeno to the archbishops of Cyprus.

It is important at the outset to make clear then, that no account of the three imperial regalia privileges (orbed sceptre, purple robe, cinnabar ink) appears in medieval Greek texts—either in tandem with or apart from the St Barnabas autocephaly tradition.²¹ And indeed there is none in medieval Latin texts either. The fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Cypriot bureaucrat and historian Leontios Machairas (c. 1369–1458), respectful as he was of the Catholic Church and the Lusignan ruling elite for whom he worked,²² says nothing of the matter in his Recital concerning the sweet land of Cyprus, entitled ‘Chronicle’, written in the Greek Cypriot dialect. He does, however, give us insight into how the linguistic and cultural climate of the island had changed by the early fifteenth century:

§ 158. And because there are two natural rulers of the world, the one lay and the other spiritual, so there were in this little island: the emperor of Constantinople and the patriarch of Antioch the Great, until the Latins took the land. For this reason we were obliged to know good Greek, for sending letters to the emperor,

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²¹ The fourteenth-century writers George (Pseudo) Kodinos (Treatise on the dignities and offices) and Matthew Blastares (Syntagma alphabeticum) both mentioned the autocephaly of the Cypriot Church, but did not include the St Barnabas miracle story.

²² The era of Lusignan French rule in Cyprus began in 1192 when Guy de Lusignan purchased the island from the Knights Templars as compensation for his loss of the Kingdom of Jerusalem, and lasted until 1473 when the Republic of Venice assumed control of the island upon the death of the last Lusignan king, James II. The Templars had purchased Cyprus from King Richard the Lionheart of England after the king’s victory over the last Greek ruler, Isaac Komnenos, in 1191. Venetian control of Cyprus lasted until the Ottoman Empire took complete control of the island in 1570.
and to be perfect in the Syrian language (for the patriarch): and thus men used to teach their sons, and thus the chancery was carried on in the Syrian language and in Greek, until the Lusignans took the land. (And the royal court was the foundation of the Greek emperor, and there the dukes lived, who used to come here.) And (when the Latin period began) men began to learn French, and their Greek became barbarous, just as it is today, when we write both French and Greek, in such a way that no one in the world can say what our language is.\textsuperscript{23}

The Lusignan crusader kingdom not only produced linguistic, cultural and religious diversity on Cyprus but also an evolving Cypriot memory of the island's own history. For Machairas records a traditional need to learn Syriac before the Frankish era because of the archbishop of Antioch's ecclesiastical jurisdiction over the island. Now we can have no doubt that Machairas was very well educated and socially connected, and so would never have knowingly made such a public gaffe about the island's ecclesiastical history.\textsuperscript{24} Yet his institutional memory is a far cry from late antiquity's confident assertions of autocephaly. This suggests that after almost three hundred years of Latin rule the Cypriot Orthodox population had no living memory of an active, autonomous Greek archbishop (indeed, such had long since been replaced by a Roman Catholic metropolitan).\textsuperscript{25}


\textsuperscript{24} Machairas served in royal and seigneurial Frankish administration and thus had access to both documents (Chancery, \textit{Haute Cour}, and \textit{Secrète}) and leaders among the French ruling elite, both appearing extensively in his chronicle: Angel Nicolaou-Konnari, \textquote{Diplomats and historiography: the use of documents in the Chronicle of Léontios Machairas}, in Alexander Daniel Beilhammer, Maria G. Parani and Christopher David Schabel (eds), \textit{Diplomatics in the eastern Mediterranean, 1000–1500: aspects of cross-cultural communication}, Leiden 2008, 293–323. See also Catia Galatariotou, \textquote{Léontios Machairas’ Exegesis of the sweet land of Cyprus: towards a reappraisal of the text and its critics}, in Bryer and Georghallides, \textit{The sweet land of Cyprus}, 409: \textquote{There is no doubt that in his references to Cyprus’ past Machairas draws from people’s collective memory, from oral and written sources, to exemplify the rich cultural heritage which Greek Orthodox Cyprus carried over from its Byzantine past into its Lusignan present: memories of the \textit{stratia}, the \textit{kapnikon}, the dukes; of emperor Alexios Komnenos, Manuel Boutoumites and the legend of Kykkos; of Saints, relics, miracles, bishops and archbishops.} Machairas however, did not remember Cypriot autocephacy through the patronage of St Barnabas.

\textsuperscript{25} Vitalien Laurent, \textquote{La Succession épiscopale des derniers archevêques grecs de Chypre, de Jean le Crétôis (1152) à German Pèsimandros (1260)}, \textit{Revue des études byzantines} vii (1949), 33–41. In an ironic twist, Patriarch Ignatius II of Antioch had
Though the Greek clergy were strenuous in their assertions of independence from the Latin Church until the mid-thirteenth century, by the fifteenth century a *modus vivendi* had been functioning for some time, built as it was on years of living side-by-side, and on the successful implementation of the papal *Bulla Cypria* of 1260 (which assured the Greek clergy semi-autonomy under Latin clerical oversight).\(^{26}\)

The result was that no schism or heresy conflict came to dominate Cypriot religious history during the Lusignan years, whose French monarchs were in fact often patrons of the Greek Church.\(^{27}\) And in this historical context of a wider definition of the Cypriot community (i.e. inclusive of Latins, Greeks and other immigrant Christian communities like the Syrian Maronites and Armenians), St Barnabas as patron of Greek Cypriot autocephaly faded into near oblivion while St Epiphanius advanced as the miracle-working patron saint-bishop of the island, as pilgrims like the early fourteenth-century Westphalian priest Ludolf discovered.\(^{28}\) This multilingual and multi-religious world, formed over some three centuries,\(^{29}\) was

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\(\text{28}\) ‘Near Famagusta is another city called Constantia or Salamina [i.e. Salamis], set on the seashore, where was once a harbour, and a very noble, famous and wealthy city, as its ruins testify ... In this city too S. Barnabas the apostle suffered martyrdom, and near it was burned and there buried’: Ludolf von Suchen, ‘De terra sancta et itinere Hierosol’, in Claude Delaval Cibbham (ed.), *Excerpta Cypria: materials for a history of Cyprus*, Cambridge 1998, repr. London 2011, 20. During his visit in around 1336–41, Ludolf was obviously not told Alexander the Monk’s *Laudatio* miracle account, which insisted that St Barnabas was not in fact burned but buried intact. Almost a century and a half later (in 1453) the Dominican Felix Faber of Ulm received the same account of the patron saints of Constantia/Salamis during his pilgrimage on the island (*Excerpta Cypria, 4*) as did the Franciscan Francesco Suriano in 1484 (*Excerpta Cypria, 48*).

acknowledged in an off-hand way by the Cypriot Athanasius Lepentrenus in his letter to the Byzantine scholar Nikephorus Gregorias around 1350:

Neither will most of the barbarians, at least those who have had some schooling, be without a part in this beautiful feast [i.e. of Gregorias’ exquisite prose writing]; for there are Cypriots who are competent in three languages and can translate Greek into the languages of the Syrians and of the Italians. So be it.

If we look past Lepentrenus’ blinkered private aside about barbarian Syrians and Italians who need beautiful Greek translated for them, it is clear that at least for the Cypriot Greek elite an education meant access to the French, Latin and Italian languages, which in turn opened doors to high preferment as cultural and political mediators in the Lusignan and Venetian governments. As a result of such a role, a certain ‘westernisation’ in administrative practices and intellectual categories became part of their subsequent education, and it was from this growing knowledge of western European political and ecclesiastical ideas that the notion of the imperial regalia privileges of St Barnabas would finally emerge.

For its origins, we turn to the troubles and texts of sixteenth-century Cyprus. The end of the Lusignan dynasty in 1489 and the era of Venetian rule (1489–1571) saw the production of Italian-language histories of Cyprus written by the Latinised Greek Cypriot bureaucratic community. The changed audience for their histories is telling, given the turn to Italian as the language of communication. For the Venetians needed to know the history of their newly annexed island, and learned Greek Cypriots took charge of their historical education. The first glimpse into this process of cultural transmission is provided in a manuscript compilation containing the thirteenth-century medieval French _Gestes de Chiprois_ in Italian

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30 Lepentrenus’ letter is included in these two chronicle editions: Leontios Machairas, _Recital concerning the sweet land of Cyprus_, ii. 112, and George Boustronios, _A narrative of the chronicle of Cyprus, 1458–1489_, ed. Nicholas Coureas with supplementary Greek texts of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries trans. H. Pohlsander, Nicosia–New York 2005, 239, no. 11.


32 Peter Edbury, _The kingdom of Cyprus and the crusades, 1191–1374_, Cambridge 1991, 180–1. The same can be said for the Roman Catholic ecclesiastical institutions and practices in Lusignan Cyprus, and so all such Greek Cypriot bureaucrats like Machairas knew well western notarial and ecclesiastical practices.

33 A reduced version of William of Tyre’s history known as the _Annales de Terre Sainte_, Philip de Novara’s _Estoire et le droit conte de la guerre qui fu entre l’empereur Frederic et messier Johan de Ibelin_, and the anonymous _Chronique d’un Templier de Tyr_ (though perhaps
translation, which is named after its owner, the Venetian nobleman and legal scholar Francesco Amadi (†1566). A private collection for his own extensive library, this compilation also contained something else: an anonymous short Italian chronicle of Lusignan-era Cyprus also apparently translated from an original medieval French source or sources.\textsuperscript{34} Whence Amadi obtained this remains unknown, but it is essentially a translation of the record covered in Machairas’s history, and then extended down to 1441.\textsuperscript{35}

This historiography was further enriched in the later sixteenth century by additional efforts at extending Machairas’s history. Though still in the Greek Cypriot dialect, a recapitulation of Machairas’s Lusignan-era narrative was integrated into additional material chronicling the transition to Venetian rule by George Bustron, a scion of one of Cyprus’ elite Greek families known for their careers in the Lusignan civil service, with some even achieving nobility by the later fifteenth century.\textsuperscript{36} And a fuller translation of Machairas’s history into Italian was produced by Diomede Strambaldi, another Greek Cypriot whose family had risen to prominence among the French elite in the later years of the Lusignan era.\textsuperscript{37} Amadi, Bustron, Strambaldi – their histories were specifically designed to authored by Gérard de Montréal) were known collectively as the *Gestes des Chiprois*. This tripartite manuscript apparently made its way to the West at some point in the fourteenth century from the copy produced by a certain John Le Miége while a prisoner in the castle of Kyrenia in 1343. When and by whom it was translated into Italian remains a mystery: Laura Minervini, ‘Les Gestes des Chiprois et la tradition historiographique de l’Orient latin’, *Le Moyen Age* cx (2004), 315–25.


\textsuperscript{35} It is possible that Amadi obtained this Italian-language chronicle from the Podocataro family: Gilles Grivaud, *Entrelacs Chipriotes: essai sur les lettres et la vie intellectuelle dans le royaume de Chypre, 1191–1570*, Nicosia 2009, 252.

\textsuperscript{36} *The chronicle of George Boustronios, 1456–1489*, ed. and trans. R. M. Dawkins, Melbourne 1964; George Boustronios, *A narrative*. Whereas Amadi’s history went to 1441, Strambaldi extended Machairas’s account to 1458, and George Bustron extended it further to the close of the fifteenth century. One of the major transitions that Bustron documents is that of the indigenous island leadership from the Greek aristocracy under the Lusignan’s feudal society to the Greek burghers under the Venetian mercantile empire, the latter increasingly educated in Italian schools and thus fully conversant with Italian language and history: Nicholas Coureas, ‘From the Middle Ages to the Renaissance: elements of transition in the chronicle of George Boustronios’, in Erik Kooper (ed.), *The medieval chronicle VI*, Amsterdam–New York 2009, 191–203.

\textsuperscript{37} *Chroniques d’Amadi et de Strambaldi*, ed. René de Mas Latrie, Paris 1891–3. Volume ii of this work contains Strambaldi’s *Chronica del Regno di Cypro*; volume i contains
summarise and transmit the record of Cyprus’ venerable past to the Venetians and thereby represented a collective effort to educate the island’s new masters about the essentials of the land that they now governed. Yet not a single one of these three sources mentions the St Barnabas autocephaly story, let alone any claimed imperial regalia privileges. Autocephaly, when considered in the larger context of Machairas’s fifteenth-century history, appears to have been completely forgotten and the regalia privileges were hitherto completely unknown.

When then did the St Barnabas autocephaly story return? It would only prove to be useful in the context of a Venetian empire collapsing at the hands of the expanding Ottoman empire, with Cyprus already a tributary of the Porte after the Ottoman-Venetian peace treaty of 1540. Florio Bustron (†1570), kinsman of George Bustron and a notary in the Venetian Secrète, fluent in French, Italian and Latin as well as his native Cypriot Greek, was the right man at the right time for rediscovering St Barnabas. He had been specifically entrusted with translating the Lusignan Assizes of Cyprus from their medieval French into the Venetian dialect in 1531, and even when no longer serving as a notary the Venetian government still secured his services to make a copy and translate a 1455 Lusignan diploma of the Haute Cour. He was also a committed Cypriot patriot whose life may have ended during the Turkish siege of Nicosia (22 July—9 September 1570). This Bustron, therefore, had the capacity, the commitment and the occasion to translate into an Italian-language chronicle the meaning of his island’s history, and he did so by returning to its original patron saint.

Florio Bustron enjoyed many years of access to the Secrète archives, from which he wrote his history during the urgent final decade or so of Venetian rule. For the early centuries, though, he relied heavily on Amadi, with details about Strambaldi himself. Volume i was reprinted as Francesco Amadi, Cronaca di Cipro, ed. Theodore H. Papadopoulllos, Nicosia 1999.


Hill, A history of Cyprus, iii. 1146. This is based on Giovanni Sozomeno’s account. No other contemporary source confirms this, however, and perhaps Sozomeno might have been referring to another member of the Lusignan family with the same first name: Grivaud, Entrelacs Chiprois, 260.

supplements at least from the *Lignages d’Outre-Mer* (pedigrees of the most important Lusignan-era crusader families), the *Remembrances de la secréte* and the *Assizes*. Yet in addition to reprising these sources, he chose to insert two additional narratives about St Barnabas into the historiographical storyline already so thoroughly established by Machairas, Amadi, Strambaldi and his own ancestor George Bustron. As a Renaissance scholar he was well versed in the historical sources for late antique Cyprus, and thus he marshalled a collection of illustrious Cypriot heroes and saints for a patriotic history celebrating the noble and ancient culture of Cyprus. And this would of course include St Barnabas.

The first story is taken from the apocryphal *Acts of Barnabas*, where St Barnabas and St Mark bring down divine destruction on a theatre filled with naked revellers in Kourion because of their immorality. Would it be too credulous to suspect that Florio Bustron chose to include the partnership of these two biblical saints on Cyprus as a precedent for his Italian readers from the Republic of St Mark to ponder? Secondly, after describing the martyrdom of St Barnabas and then listing his early successors as archbishops of Cyprus, Bustron reintroduces the autocephaly miracle story of Alexander the Monk’s *Laudatio*:

In tempore del quale Antimio, un’ Pietro Enapheo, arcivescovo d’Antiochia, li mosse differentia, et voleva obbligarlo per suo suddito, dicendo lui essere apostolico, havendo l’apostolo Paulo nella sua città; Antimio andò avanti all’ imperatore e si diffese respondendo: Cipro esser libera, et non sugetta, et esser anco lui apostolico, havendo l’apostolo Barnaba nella sua città, el quale ha nel suo senso l’Evangelio de San Matheo, et questo seppe per revelacion divina. L’imperatore, volendosi guistificar de questo, mandò con esse Anthimio prelati; li quali, andata fuora di Salamina poco distante verso occidente, in una grotta, hanno trovata la persona di quest’ apostolo Barnaba, et l’Evangelio, lo qual tolseno, et in quel locho hanno edificata una bellissima chiesa a spese dell’ imperatore; e d’ alhora liberato Anthimio et concesso che si possi intitolare arcivescovo de Cipro.

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43 *Florio Bustron, Historia overo commentarii de Cipro*, 16. On the Kourion theatre legend as told to visiting pilgrims see Calvelli, *Cipro e la memoria*, 280–1, 301, 321. An additional legend was told to pilgrims about Barnabas turning two menacing lions into stone (pp. 31–2, 214) or in a modified version about a dragon sculpture come to life which he changed into a lion of stone (pp. 86, 97). For the *Acts of Barnabas* see Ohler, *Barnabas*, 164 73, and Bernd Kollmann, *Joseph Barnabas: Leben und Wirkungsgeschichte*, Stuttgart 1998, 76–82.

44 *Florio Bustron, Historia overo commentarii de Cipro*, 32.
Bustron, therefore, perhaps recovering the *Laudatio* from an archive to which he had access, repeats here the essence of the late antique autocephaly claim for the Cypriot Church. But then he goes a remarkable step further and adds something completely new to the story: the regalia privileges finally make their first public appearance: ‘Et li concesse il baston imperiale, con il pomo in cima, et il capello con la croce rossa di supra, et molte altre immunità a honor perpetuo di questa isola benedetta et santa.’ An imperial sceptre with an orb on top (i.e. an *aureum pomum*), a cape with a red cross and many other immunities for the perpetual honour of this blessed and holy island: these thirty-three Italian words would have more of a future than a past. Inserting regalia rights into the St Barnabas autocephaly story is consistent with the administrative milieu of Florio Bustron’s career, but why was the regalia symbolism added to the St Barnabas autocephaly story, and why at this juncture in Cyprus’ history? What would lead Florio Bustron directly to contradict Machairas’s account of Cyprus’ dependence on the patriarchate of Antioch, which had recently become available to Venetian readers in the form of Strambaldi’s Italian translation?

Several points of note appear immediately. The first is that we do not yet have the complete set of three privileges here: the red (cinnabar) ink is missing and will only appear in the early modern period; the imperial purple on the robe is not specified either since only a red cross is granted (more reminiscent of St George’s Cross as a crusading symbol, though perhaps also of its ancient use by the Byzantine cavalry); and finally the imperial sceptre – evocative enough of delegated sovereign power – has an ‘apple’ attached to its top. This is of course not merely an ornamental fruit, but rather a well-known insignia, the *aureum pomum*, a profoundly obvious claim to imperial temporal sovereignty on the island of Cyprus.

Indeed the *aureum pomum*, in combination with an imperial sceptre, is the most striking aspect of Florio Bustron’s ‘first draft’ of these imperial privileges. This symbol (also known as the Christianised *globus cruciger* when orb and cross were combined, as they remain to this day on the Cypriot archiepiscopal sceptre) had an ancient Roman origin and was well known in Byzantium through unbroken tradition. It was also documented in western European circles since at least the imperial coronation of

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45 Ibid.
46 St George was also the patron saint of the Republic of Genoa, which flew the St George Cross flag on its substantial trading fleet. In the sixteenth century England also adopted the St George Cross for its own flag and St George as its patron saint (from his initial chivalric use in the Most Noble Order of the Garter).
Henry II by Pope Benedict VIII in 1014. Moreover his successor Henry III appears in an eleventh-century Echternach miniature of his royal coronation (5 June 1040) holding the *Reichsapfel* (aurum pommum with cross as *globus cruciger*) in his left hand while grasping the eagle sceptre in his right (each arm being supported by a leading abbot). This symbol of sovereign rule appears again at the imperial coronations of Henry V by Paschal II (under duress) in 1111 and of Henry VI by Celestine III in 1191. And, quite striking for present purposes, in the early sixteenth century the papacy began to locate its own *globus cruciger* on the very apex of the papal tiara. In each and every instance the ‘golden apple’ as *globus cruciger* has been a Christian emblem of terrestrial sovereignty. Furthermore, it was an object that rulers held in their left hand (the sceptre being in the right hand) during coronations and this remained so even after it was miniaturised and added to the crowns of

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48 Rodulfus Glaber, *Rodulf Glaber historiarum libri quinque*, ed. John France, Oxford 1989, 312-13, contains Pope Benedict’s instructions on the manufacture of the *aurum pommum* and its significance, and this was noted by the English antiquarian John Selden (1584–1654) in his Titles of honor and nobility, London 1614, repr. Clark, NJ 2006, 142–3. Surely the golden *globus cruciger* was considered no different from the imperial crown itself by both papal and imperial parties: the former seeing the giving of them as constitutive acts of papal authority and the latter as not signifying that the empire was in the hands of the pope to grant. Benzo of Alba made as much clear from the emperor’s side: ‘Portans in sinistra aureum pomum, Quod significat monachiam regnorum, In dextera vero sceptrum imperii, De more Iulii, Octaviani et Tiberii’: *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores* xi. 602–3.

49 Christophe Stiegemann and Martin Kroker (eds), *Für Königtum und Himmelreich: 1000 Jahre Bischof Meinwerk von Paderborn*, Regensburg 2009, 153 (taken from the Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek, Bremen, ms b21, fo. 3v). Henry III’s actual *Reichsapfel* (made of iron, wood and beeswax) remains preserved at his burial site in Speyer Cathedral. In a miniature from a manuscript in the Vatican Library Emperor Frederick I Barbarossa is also depicted as a crusader king holding the *aurum pommum* in his left hand and with a crusader’s shield carrying a red cross behind him to his immediate right: Vat. Lat., Rome, ms 2001 dated 1188.

50 A manuscript of Ekkehard of Aura’s world chronicle, once in the possession of Henry v’s English wife Matilda, contains an illustration of Pascal II giving Henry v the orb as a sign of global rule: Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, ms 373, fo. 83r. See Irene Schmale-Ort, ‘Die Rezension C der Weltchronik Ekkehards’, *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters* xii (1956), 363–87. Percy Ernst Schramm recounts the first written source of such an object of *Herrschaftszeichen* used in the imperial coronation of Henry VI by Pope Celestine III in 1191: *Sphaira, Globus, Reichsapfel: Wanderung und Wandlung eines Herrschaftszeichens von Caesar bis zu Elisabeth II: ein Beitrag zum ‘Nachleben’ der Antike*, Stuttgart 1958, 75–96. Here the *Reichsapfel* was an orb surmounted by a cross, the very symbol that remains on the top of the archbishop of Cyprus’ staff today.

51 The costly tiara of Pope Julius II (reigned 1503–13) was surmounted in this fashion.
early modern and modern European monarchs (the orb here is referred to as the ‘monde’). So Florio Bustron asserts that the archbishop of Cyprus was privileged not only to make ritual use of the imperial sceptre and the *aureum pomum* (two of the three standard imperial regalia objects), but also to combine them in an unprecedented manner to fashion a wholly new and unique insignia – one more akin to the *globus cruciger* finial on early modern papal tiaras and European crowns than to any Byzantine regalia. The *globus cruciger* was never placed in miniature on Byzantine imperial crowns, nor was it even considered a regalia object for ritual purposes as in the West. Furthermore, the ‘baston imperiale, con il pomo in cima’ combines them in a manner unheard of anywhere else in Christendom: sceptres in both the Byzantine and Latin Middle Ages were very often tipped with a cross (known as a *scepter cruciger*), but not with a complete though miniaturised *globus cruciger*. Again, it was customary for the orb

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52 Monarchs throughout Europe have made use of this miniature cross-surmounted orb as a finial on their crowns in concert with the *Reichsapfel Globus Cruciger*. Both can still be seen in the Holy Crown, Sceptre and *Globus Cruciger* of Hungary in the Hungarian Parliament Building, among the Austrian crown jewels in the *Schatzkammer* of the Hofburg Palace in Vienna, and in Britain’s Imperial State Crown and Sovereign’s Orb among the crown jewels at the Tower of London. This latter set is best seen as ensemble with the sceptre in Queen Elizabeth II’s official coronation photographs.

53 Among the many Byzantine emperors who could be cited as an example, a silver Byzantine *miliaresion* of Emperor Romanos III Argyros (dated c. 1030 in Constantinople) depicts on the reverse an ‘Emperor, wearing a modified *loros* and a crown with a cross and *pendoulia*, stands facing on a round cushion, holding in his right hand a long patriarchal cross and in the left a *globus cruciger* surmounted by a patriarchal cross’: Helen C. Evans and William D. Wixom (eds), *The glory of Byzantium: art and culture in the middle Byzantine era, A.D. 843–1261*, New York 1997, 213, no. 174F with image at p. 214. The seals of Romanos III Argyros also employ this design: J. W. Nesbitt (ed.), *Catalogue of Byzantine seals at Dumbarton Oaks and in the Fogg Museum of Art, VI: Emperors, patriarchs of Constantinople, addenda*, Washington, DC 2009, 199, no. 71-1. Though Byzantine crowns often did have a cross attached on the top, it was not mounted on a *globus/aureum pomum*. For details on the crowns and *globus cruciger* in Byzantine regalia see Philip Grierson and Alfred Raymond Bellinger (eds), *Catalogue of Byzantine coins in the Dumbarton Oaks collection and in the Whittemore collection: Leo III to Nicephorus III*, 717–1041, Washington, DC 1993, i/3, 127–33.

54 In medieval France the royal sceptre came to be tipped with the fleur-de-lis or the hand of justice, while elsewhere sceptres were surmounted with crosses, flowers (like the St Fo Window of Chartres Cathedral or the twelfth-century Lichfield cathedral ivory plaque now in the British Museum), imperial eagles, hawks, doves (like the one Earl Richard of Cornwall gave to Aachen Cathedral in 1262), precious stones, even statuettes of Charlemagne (on the sceptre of Charles V of France) or even patron saints and the Madonna with Child (on the 1494 Sceptre of Scotland). In short there are innumerable medieval examples of the *scepter cruciger* and the *globus cruciger*, but not one of a *scepter* with a finial *globus cruciger*. In the modern period it remains unique as well, the exception being the ‘St Edward’s Sceptre’ made for the coronation of
to be held in one hand and the sceptre in the other; these two objects were never combined to create a new insignia.

There is therefore a striking anachronism in this stylised sceptre, which draws its finial design from Renaissance papal tiaras and European crowns rather than fifth-century Byzantine regalia, and even then it exhibits a *scepter-globus cruciger* ornamentation unknown elsewhere in Christendom. Either a wholly new invention of Emperor Zeno, or of Florio Bustron, this insignia clearly bears the elements of Bustron’s age and cultural orientation rather than of Zeno’s. Further confirmation of Florio Bustron’s invention of the imperial privileges appears in a Cypriot icon of St Barnabas from the church of Agios Loukas in Nicosia, dated exactly to the time of Florio Bustron’s *Historia overo commentarii de Cipro* in the mid-sixteenth century. The icon includes a donor portrait of a Greek bishop kneeling before him, and Barnabas is depicted in his traditional Greek iconography with ecclesiastical vestments – yet without any imperial regalia. In recent years this icon has been repaired and displayed in the archiepiscopal *synedikon* or great Synod Hall in Nicosia, and it was also reproduced in 1966 (six years after independence from British rule) in a Cypriot government stamp set commemorating the 1,900th anniversary of St Barnabas’s martyrdom. The set also included a stamp depicting Emperor Zeno granting the imperial privileges to Archbishop Anthemius. In sum, St Barnabas was an apostolic founder-saint to the Greek Cypriots until the end of the sixteenth century; but to Florio Bustron’s intended Italian-speaking, Catholic Venetian audience he now took on the trappings of temporal regalian authority like western European bishops, archbishops and popes.

In addition to elements in their design, the ideological significance of the regalia privileges must also be considered as further evidence of origin. Neither in the Orthodox nor Latin Churches is a pre-modern episcopal claim to such symbols of imperial terrestrial sovereignty to be found, let alone a claim to the exercise of such sovereignty, except for the Roman pontiffs in the Papal States. In a well-known effort to shore up its fragile

Charles II of Great Britain in 1661 and remodelled in 1905 to hold the Cullinan Diamond.

The archbishops of Cyprus still today use a sceptre with a finial *globus cruciger* in lieu of an episcopal crosier and include it on the archiepiscopal coat of arms. In an interesting historical twist, the Cypriot Maronite archbishop of his tiny church community (some 6,000 as of 2013) also maintains the use of this type of sceptre both as his pastoral staff as well as on the Maronite archiepiscopal coat of arms.

The colouring is bright, and the icon shows good work in the Byzanto-Cypriot style. It is to be dated about the middle of the sixteenth century: David Talbot Rice, Rupert Gunnis and Tamara Talbot Rice, *The Icons of Cyprus*, London 1937, 262 and plate xlv, no. 128. I thank Barbara McNulty for her generous help in documenting this icon’s provenance.
status in those territories granted to the papacy by Charlemagne’s father King Pepin after vanquishing the Lombard threat, some enterprising cleric famously forged a charter by Emperor Constantine at some point around the mid-eighth or early ninth century. Supposedly in thanks for Pope Sylvester’s healing his leprosy and converting him to Christianity, the emperor therein granted terrestrial privileges to the papacy which retroactively redefined Pepin’s grant as a restoration rather than an original benefaction. For the specific purposes of this article one particular portion of the Donation of Constantine is relevant:

We concede and, by this present, do confer, our imperial Lateran palace ... then a diadem, that is, the crown of our head, and at the same time the tiara; and, also, the shoulder band, that is, the collar that usually surrounds our imperial neck; and also the purple mantle, and crimson tunic, and all the imperial raiment; and the same rank as those presiding over the imperial cavalry; conferring also the imperial sceptres, and, at the same time, the spears and standards; also the banners and different imperial ornaments, and all the advantage of our high imperial position, and the glory of our power ... we placed upon his most holy head, with our own hands, a tiara of gleaming splendour representing the glorious resurrection of our Lord. And, holding the bridle of his horse, out of reverence for St Peter we performed for him the duty of groom; decreeing that all the pontiffs his successors, and they alone, may use that tiara in processions. In imitation of our power, in order that for that cause the supreme pontificate may not deteriorate, but may rather be adorned with power and glory even more than is the dignity of an earthly rule: behold we—giving over to the oft-mentioned most blessed pontiff, our father Sylvester and the universal pope, as well our palace, as has been said, as also the city of Rome and all the provinces, districts and cities of Italy or of the western regions; and relinquishing them, by our inviolable gift, to the power and sway of himself or the pontiffs his successors—do decree, by this our godlike charter and imperial constitution, that it shall be (so) arranged; and do concede that they (the palaces, provinces, etc.) shall lawfully remain with the holy Roman church.57

Papal assertion of this charter’s validity subsequently led not only to the Great Schism between the Latin and Greek Churches in 1054, but also (in the heat of the Investiture Contest in the next generation) to Pope Gregory vii’s insertion of the so-called Dictatus Papae into the papal register in 1075, which was a summa of twenty-seven assertions of papal power embodying Gregory’s reform principles.58 And among those powers claimed by the papacy—based clearly on the Donation of Constantine—was privilege number eight: ‘That he alone may use the imperial

insignia.’ Now the claims to terrestrial imperial privileges for the popes of Rome make those of Florio Bustron’s imperial privileges for the archbishop of Cyprus seem quite modest in comparison. Yet the difference of scale should not obscure the similarities between the two: (1) both secured unique privileges regarding use of imperial regalia (i.e. imperial dress and sceptre); (2) both also secured at least the ideological groundwork for imperially licensed territorial independence as a physical manifestation of these insignia rights; (3) both rediscovered pasts were appropriated (not unlike at St Barnabas’s miraculous appearance in the fifth century) at a time of great anxiety about the Church’s future autocephaly both temporal and spiritual; (4) both relied on ancient claims belied by anachronisms in the details of the imperial donations.

The homeland of Florio Bustron was obviously threatened by the instability of a rapidly eroding Venetian empire, and given the centuries of Latin control of the island and his own family’s professional relationship to the French and Venetian ruling elite, he had to have known in detail about papal claims to terrestrial sovereignty and to sustaining Romanitas in the West. Indeed, he also knew very well the papacy’s authority to move Latin Christians into crusading ventures to recover lost Christian lands in the eastern Mediterranean. Given that the primary audience for his Italian-language history of Cyprus was Catholic Venetian nobles and their associated Italian colonists, not the island’s majority population of Greek-speaking Orthodox Cypriots, it does not require excessive exertion

59 The symbols of imperial regalia were quite well known in medieval Europe. See, for example, from Godfrey of Viterbo’s *Pantheon*: ‘Quae sint insignia imperialia, et quid significet unumquodque, videbit sancta crux, sancta lancea et gladius imperialis et sceptrum et corona et aureum pomum’; ‘Quid significat globus aureus, qui regum manibus gestatur? Aureus ille globus pomum vel palla [i.e. ‘ball’ from Old High German ‘balla’] vocatur, Unde figuratum mundum gestare putatur, Quando coronatur, palla ferenda datur, Significat mundum forma peribente rotundum, Intus habet plenum terrestri pondere fundum, Quem tenet arcanum pella ferenda manu. Hec fuit ex terris mundi collecta quaternis; Ut foret imperii manibus gestanda supernis, Hac tulit imperium Iulius arte suum. Taliter hunc mundum gestat manus una rotundum, Regius includit sic omnia climata pugnis, Taliter omne quod est regia pompa tenet’: Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores xxii. 272, 274-5.

60 Arbel, ‘Cyprus on the eve of the Ottoman conquest’, 47.

61 In this context Florio Bustron would also have known about the widespread debate during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries concerning the authenticity of the Donation of Constantine, which had been initiated by Lorenzo Valla, Cardinal Nicolaus of Cusa and Bishop Reginald Pecock of Chichester. Universal Catholic acceptance of the Donation as a forgery developed only after Cesare Baronius’ recognition in his *Annales ecclesiastici* published between 1588 and 1607.

62 Benjamin Arbel documents evidence indicating that only five or six Greek Cypriot families were among the roughly sixty noble families of the island in the late Venetian era, and that these came to such status through administrative, mercantile or medical service to the Venetian government: ‘The Cypriot nobility’, 175–97. This is a small
to suspect that Florio Bustron’s recovery and embellishment of the St Barnabas autocephaly tradition had intentional and immediate purpose.

Florio Bustron chose to dedicate the history to ‘Alli Illustri Signori, Conti, Cavaglieri, et Nobili Ciprii’, of which the last class, the Latinised Greek Cypriot nobility, comprised a very small community whose illustrious social status, like that of Bustron himself, depended on their service to the Venetian government. Yet since his loyalty to the Serenissima did not eclipse his own patriotic desire to see a renaissance of Cyprus’ noble and ancient culture, Bustron wrote an Italian-language history primarily in order to educate the Catholic Venetian and other Italian colonists about the antiquity and cultural greatness of Cyprus. Of course he no doubt also hoped to stir the patriotism of his small circle of fellow Greek Cypriot intellectual and political elites to strive for a renewed and vital Cyprus, but this ideal was clearly set within a larger, colonised Renaissance Italian context as his neologism Ciprio (an Italian equivalent for the Greek Kypraios) symbolises.

One cannot postulate from silence, and so we shall never know for sure. But it is quite plausible that Bustron turned to Cyprus’ apostolic founding saint just as the papacy had turned to the power of St Peter. Both apostolic founding saints had drawn temporal privileges for their Churches (in collaboration with their earthly heirs, Archbishop Anthemius and Pope Sylvester respectively) from emperors in their Church’s time of need. And the time of need was once again upon his island as the window of Venetian rule was closing, so Florio Bustron wrote primarily to an Italian-speaking, Latin church audience of nobles and clergy with urgency and in ecclesiastical terms that they could understand. Byzantine authority had not been exercised on the island for centuries, not unlike on the Italian peninsula in the eighth century, and the only source of support (albeit at the risk of continued subjugation) was Latin Christendom – it should not be forgotten that by this time a century had passed since the

audience indeed for Florio Bustron’s history when compared to the larger body of native-speaking Venetian and Italian-speaking nobles of Cyprus.

63 ‘Bustron redasse le proprie opere in italiano sia perché a metà Cinquecento questa era la linga più diffusa a Cipro dopo il greco, sia perché intendeva rendere accessibile la propria opera ai veneziani per far loro comprendere il carattere del regno di Cipro e le istituzioni con cui governarlo’: Skoufari, Cipro veneniana, 144. See also Grivaud, ‘Florio Bustron’, p. x, and Entrelacs Chiprois, 269 where Grivaud concludes that Lusignan was motivated by ‘une volonté d’affirmer la particularité de l’identité chypriote vis-à-vis du pouvoir vénitien … l’Historia entend prouver l’ancienneté de la civilisation insulaire, et souligner la dignité de ses institutions, en dépit d’un statut politique humiliant’.

collapse of the Byzantine Empire. And so it is not too much to conclude that the regalia privileges of the archbishops of Cyprus have their historical origins in Florio Bustron’s ‘Donation of Zeno’. Like his predecessor Alexander the Monk, this Cypriot civil servant in the Venetian government whose world was becoming increasingly unstable called upon an ancient Cypriot hero in a new way – this time, however, in an Italian Catholic liturgical idiom – to secure continued Latin defence of the island. But the value added by the claims to imperial rights to temporal authority, although completely anachronistic for the mid-sixteenth century, laid an additional claim of sovereignty independent of Venetian power. Bustron would not be the only Cypriot writer to attempt to persuade a Catholic audience of Cyprus’ significance and sanctity, based on its historical antiquity and apostolic ancestry.

Étienne de Lusignan continued to work on his Chorography as the month of November 1570 drew to a close. Although it appears that his early drafts of the history had been produced in Cyprus, by the time of the bloody Ottoman conquest of that year he had already been travelling abroad for several months. And so he tried urgently to polish an admittedly incomplete editing job in Naples, writing in an Italian tongue of which he was admittedly no master, while the siege of Famagusta was in its third month (one of his brothers would die in that siege). Born into the ruling Lusignan family of old, he had entered the Dominican Order in his youth (he was now in his late forties) and had served as the vicar of the Latin bishop of Limassol (1562–8) while a brother became a Basilian monk and a sister a Basilian nun, and two of his cousins were Latin canons of Paphos and archdeacons of Limassol. With a family thoroughly shaped by a complex Cypriot identity, Étienne was a Roman Catholic cleric

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65 Excerpta Cypria, 123. Lusignan, who was on a trip to Venice when the Ottomans invaded Cyprus in 1570, worked unceasingly to raise funds in Italy and France to ransom those Cypriots who were imprisoned by the Turks, including four of his brothers and two sisters: ‘Étienne désirait sensibiliser l’opinion occidentale au sort de Chypriotes après la conquête ottomane, afin de recueillir les sommes indispensables au rachat des esclaves’: Grivaud, Entrelacs Chypriotes, 289, 292. See also Wipertus-Hugo Rudt de Collenberg, ‘Les Litterae Hortatoriae accordées par les papes en faveur de la rédemption des Chypriotes captifs des Turcs (1570–1597), d’après les fonds de l’Archivio Segreto Vaticano’, Epetzris tou Kentrou Epistidion Ereunon xii (1981–2), 60.


67 Lusignan records that his brother Giovanni was a ‘monaco di San Basilio’ and his sister Isabella a ‘monaca di San Basilio chiamata Athanasia’: Chorographia et breve historia universale dell’isola de Cipro principiando al tempo di Noè per in fino al 1572, Bologna 1573, repr. Famagusta 1973, Nicosia 2004, fo. 79r; Hill, A history of Cyprus, iii. 1110.
deeply distressed by the end of Latin rule on the island and so wrote his history for Italian and French Catholics as an impassioned call to arms on behalf of his suffering homeland. To aid this purpose, he dedicated the *Chorography*, ‘To the most Christian and Glorious Charles ix, King of France, and to the Most Happy and Victorious Henry, Recent King of Poland’, as he hoped to capitalise on the Valois dynasty’s historical ties to the Lusignan house and to French crusading. He hastened to remind the royal brothers that the French crusading Lusignans had once come to Cyprus to light that extinguished schismatic lamp with the true, catholic and very holy Latin rite and kept its flame for about three hundred years, until it was taken and ruled by the Venetian Republic. Later, alas, it fell and was extinguished, having sunk like a pearl into the wickedness of the enemy of Christianity, so we can rightly say along with the Prophet, ‘The crown of our leaders has fallen, woe to us who have sinned!’

It soon becomes clear that Lusignan was recommending a crown ripe for the taking by the French monarchy through a latter-day crusade to recover a holy land – and he impresses in making his case with a strong rhetorical strategy that involves St Barnabas. Lusignan inserts a different miracle of power story from the *Acts of Barnabas* which parallels Florio Bustron’s account of the destruction of the theatre at Kourion. Angry at pagan nakedness at the temple of Venus in Old Paphos, ‘he said a prayer and immediately the temple fell to the ground’. This legend was a common story told to pilgrims visiting the island and builds on the biblical account of the preaching visit by

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68 Lorenzo Calvelli considers Étienne de Lusignan’s own Renaissance intellectual milieu and evaluates him as equal to Florio Bustron in education yet not sharing in Bustron’s administrative culture: *Cipro e la memoria*, 134–9. Evangelia Skoufari concludes that, along with those of their compatriot Francesco Attar, the works of Étienne de Lusignan and Florio Bustron ‘sono la prova della diffusione fra la popolazione cipriota della cultura italofona che sostituì presto l’utilizzo del francese, lasciando però, benché limitato, uno spazio di creazione letteraria al greco’: *Cipro veneniana*, 145–6. Gilles Grivaud, emphasises Lusignan’s Cypriot patriotism, and concludes both that ‘Étienne est une source indispensable pour comprendre la formation de l’identité chypriote à l’époque de la Renaissance’, and that ‘Dès lors, les arrière-pensées d’Étienne se dévoilent nettement, car son but inavoué reste bien de sensibiliser les puissants princes d’Europe à une reconquête de l’île’: *Entrelacs Chiprois*, 287–8, 298.

69 Étienne de Lusignan, *Chorographia*, fo. 1r. Henry was the younger brother of Charles ix, and duke of Anjou before his election as Henry iii of Poland. He would succeed his brother as Henry iii of France (1574–89) and become mired in the religious battles of his day (the St Bartholomew Day Massacre took place on 24 August 1572).

St Paul and St Barnabas to Paphos where they encountered Barjesus (Acts xiii. 6–12). But as if to provide a contemporary lie of the land for any French monarch contemplating an invasion of the island, Lusignan hastens to point out as well that

In past years this city had two strong castles on the coast, which were more strongly fortified than any others at the time of the Lusignan kings. When the Venetian noblemen got the island, they destroyed them, because they were afraid of potential treason. They could be fortified again, but it would be quite expensive.

A few pages further on he considers the city of Salamis as the city of St Barnabas, wherein it becomes clear that he is familiar with Alexander the Monk’s *Laudatio* story, yet he employs the island legend of the apostolic saint as a healer of head ailments (as his own experience testifies) rather than as the founder and patron saint of Cyprus’ autocephaly:

There was also the church of Saint Barnabas the Apostle, which is large and beautiful, and near where he was martyred. There is also a cave or well in which he was placed by his cousin Mark (also called John), and with him the book of Saint Matthew the Evangelist, written in Saint Matthew’s own hand. Around the years [sic] of our Lord 473 the body and book were found and recovered. They put them in a nobler place. Then, they built a little chapel in the cave where there is a well of water, which heals any sort of illness in the head. I have tried many remedies but none worked, except the above mentioned water. ‘Quia gloriosus Deus in sanctis suis’.

Lusignan is intent on emphasising what a holy island Cyprus was, given all the sacred history that it had experienced, rather than on making an appeal for the integral independence of the island itself. He obscures Emperor Zeno’s role and suggests that the martyr’s body and gospel book were merely put ‘in a nobler place’, and erroneously ascribes the inscription of the gospel to St Matthew rather than to St Barnabas. But,

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71 Étienne de Lusignan, *Lusignan’s chorography*, 10. Iohannis Cotovicus (van Kootwyck), a professor of canon and civil law at the University of Utrecht, spent a fortnight in Cyprus in August 1598, and heard this story there; he begins his own rendering of it with the words, ‘tradition holds that it [the temple to Venus] fell at the prayer of the Apostle Barnabas’: *Excerpta Cypria*, 193. See also Öhler, *Barnabas*, 166–7, and Kollmann, *Barnabas*, 76–82.

72 Joan Du Plat Taylor provides archaeological evidence for the historical reality of a cistern of fresh water, complete with paintings, located at the site of St Barnabas’s discovered tomb: ‘A water cistern with Byzantine paintings, Salamis, Cyprus’, *Antiquaries Journal* xiii/2 (Apr. 1933), 97–108. A striking inscription survives, ‘Barnabas the Apostle is our foundation. Epiphanius our great governor’. Calvelli recounts a variant description of St Barnabas’s cistern of fresh water as a healing agent for fevers: *Cipro e la memoria*, 299.

above all else, the subject here is the island of Cyprus and its holy history, not St Barnabas:

As he [God] said to His dearest children: ‘Ego dixi Di estis’, and ‘filii excelsi omnes, vos estis’. The [vessel] of election [i.e. St Paul] says to his companions, ‘Vos estis templum Dei, et spiritus Dei habitat.’ And the friend of Christ, which is the island of Cyprus, as the bishop Leontiđe says, has produced a great number of these [illustrious] men, of all kinds, and it has put them in the heavenly and eternal palace to contemplate their author and contemplator. He [God] always protected his friend from greedy hands, although he has given it tribulations and sufferings. We do not have to be astonished about that, because, God being in love with the island, his lover, says: ‘Quos amo, corrigo et castigo.’ Therefore, you, sacred island with a double holiness, do not have to suffer and to be desperate in the present time. Take as example our holy mother Jerusalem in every respect, and you can hope in the fact that you will be soon consoled. And you, divine religious Mendicants, who have carried the fruits of Jerusalem to Cyprus and called it a province of the Holy Land. It is indeed connected with the Holy Land, sanctified and producing fruits, in general as well as those mentioned above.74

This is powerful rhetoric in which Cyprus is given personhood: it is a child of God, a friend of Christ, even God’s own lover who has borne much holy fruit to the enrichment of the Holy Land. Indeed, Cyprus is ‘a province of the Holy Land’, a spiritual and material extension of Jerusalem, which was always considered the heart and soul of the crusading movement by Latin Christians. Lusignan takes on the role of the prophet Isaiah consoling Jerusalem in a time of suffering: ‘you can hope in the fact that you will be soon consoled’. What the holy island lacked was a Christian monarch worthy and ready enough to rescue God’s beloved land.

In his patriotic narrative Lusignan is quick to give credit to St Barnabas and thereby the Cypriots for the conversion of Antioch,75 and after briefly recounting St Barnabas’s ministry with St Paul in Antioch, he quickly moves to the two apocryphal legends about Barnabas from third-century Syria: Pseudo-Clementine’s Recognitiones, in which the Cypriot apostle was said to preach in Rome leading to the conversion of St Clement, whom Lusignan says St Barnabas then sent to Antioch to be baptised by St Peter; and Pseudo-Epiphanius’ Index apostolorum, which records Barnabas as the first bishop of Milan subsequent to his preaching in Rome (which would seem to belie his martyrdom in Salamis).76 These were carefully

74 Ibid. 30–1.
75 Ibid. 32.
chosen inclusions in his narrative, given Lusignan’s intended reading audience and avowed reason for writing. He makes their import clear in a rather blunt fashion:

So you can imagine how much the city of Antioch has to be grateful to the Cypriots, and how much Christianity owes to Cyprus. But what will we say about you, Holy Rome, which have received the first principle of your holiness mainly from Barnabas? And you, Milan, which received such grace from him, as well as you, Bergamo and Brescia [where Barnabas also preached while in Italy]? Here you see, therefore, how Cyprus is Christ’s friend and a true province of the Holy Land, because it was the main reason that Rome was sanctified as head of the world.

What a tour-de-force. In one master stroke St Barnabas is refashioned not as the patron saint of Cypriot independence, but rather as the patron saint who founded Christianity in Antioch, Rome, Bergamo, Brescia and Milan. The preeminent pioneer of Christianity who apparently outdid both St Paul and St Peter in apostolic preaching and ministry to the Church, to whom all Christians owe so much, was now the apostle whose homeland was in need of the aid of all Christendom. One can easily say that Étienne de Lusignan joined Alexander the Monk and Florio Bustron as a troika of visionaries who reinterpreted the apostolic power and meaning of St Barnabas in the context of urgent moments of conflict on the island of Cyprus. Yet even though Lusignan had Florio Bustron’s claimed imperial privileges available for inclusion in this grandiose characterisation of St Barnabas, he never employed them to bolster his argument for the surpassing apostolicity of his hero saint. It is hard to imagine that he would have chosen to forego them if they were widely known and recognised in 1572.77

Unfortunately for Lusignan, the apostolic authority of St Barnabas did not prove sufficient to overcome growing internal religious conflicts in Europe and to sustain the already long-diminished crusading movement.


77 Lusignan made use of Florio Bustron’s history and followed Bustron’s geographical approach to telling the glorious history of Cyprus, and so he was clearly aware of the latter’s claim to the imperial privileges. He also made use of the chronicle of George Bustron: Grivaud, Entrelacs Chiprois, 292–3.
Alas, this descendant of crusaders turned in vain to his fellow Latin Christians with a plea for one more crusade as a blessing for all Christendom. Six years later he tried once again, this time in the French language: he corrected the several errors in his Italian edition and then translated the history while residing in the Dominican house of Saint-Jacques in Paris from May to November of 1578. He had the French edition published in Paris in 1580 under the title *Description de toute l’île de Cypre.* Yet no crusaders went forth, and just as in Jerusalem, so in Cyprus, the Turks ruled. It seemed that the saints grew silent well before Étienne de Lusignan did at his death in 1590. At this anxious, urgent moment when Lusignan employed every spiritual, historical and rhetorical leverage that he could muster on behalf of his beloved Cyprus, not once did he ever refer either to the Cypriot Church’s heritage of autocephaly or to any archiepiscopal privileges of imperial regalia. These were not useful arguments at the time.

The imperial regalia privileges were therefore not possessed by the archbishops of Cyprus *ab anticking*, but rather only make their first appearance in Florio Bustron’s mid sixteenth-century claim to these ‘immunities’ for the blessed and holy island of Cyprus. This is also the first point at which the autocephaly tradition is bundled with the imperial regalia privileges. It is instructive to note that this first claim to imperial privileges combined with apostolicity was directed to Italian readers during the violent transition from western European rule to that of the Ottoman Empire. Bustron’s

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78 Étienne de Lusignan, *Description de toute l’île de Cypre et des rois, princes, et seigneurs, tant payens que Christiens, qui ont commandé en icelle,* Paris 1580, repr. Famagusta 1968, Nicosia 2004, fo. 23or. In this French edition Lusignan made major improvements to his flawed Italian edition, and provided more details of the St Barnabas miracle story, including the name of the Emperor Zeno. But he did not insert any mention of the emperor granting imperial privileges to the archbishop of Cyprus (fo. 46r v).

79 The only result was an aborted attempt by Guy de Saint-Gélais, the pretender to the Lusignan throne of Cyprus whose claim Étienne had recognised, to lead a naval expedition against the Turks in order to recover the island kingdom. Guy was Étienne’s last, best hope, as is evidenced by the fact that the latter had dedicated his French edition (*Description de toute l’île de Cypre*) to Guy’s father, Louis de Saint-Gélais of Lanzac: Hill, *A history of Cyprus,* iv. 39–40. As a kind yet merely honorary gesture, on 27 April 1588 Pope Sixtus iv appointed Étienne de Lusignan bishop of Limassol *in partibus*, which title the exiled Dominican bore until his death in 1590: Wipertus-Hugo Rudt de Collenberg, ’Les Lusignan de Chypre*, *Epétris tou Kentrou Epistimokion Erevoun* (1979–80), i. 252.

80 Instead he tried to remind the western ruling elites of their historical ties to the Levant through his genealogical publications in Paris: *Les Généalogies de soixante et sept très-nobles et trèsillustres maisons, partie de France, partie étrangères,* Paris 1586; *Les Droits, autorités et prérogatives que prennent au royaume de Hierusalem, les princes et seigneurs spirituels et temporels cy apres nommés: le pape, patriarche, empereur, rois de France, Angleterre, Aragon, Naples, Hongrie, Cypre et Arménie, les Républiques de Venise, et Genes, les ducs d’Anjou, Bourbon, Savoye, Lorraine et Montferrat, les comtes de Brienne, Laval et autres,* Paris 1586.
account therefore was directed to an Italian-speaking audience fully familiar with the Donation of Constantine and with a history of Catholic crusading against Muslims in the eastern Mediterranean. In those turbulent times, so grandiose a claim to immunities and to status as a holy land did not carry the day either in Renaissance Italy or on Cyprus. As the medieval popes had already discovered, high claims to imperial terrestrial sovereignty without the protection of a cooperative earthly power often proved difficult to sustain. Yet, like the rediscovery of St Barnabas’s relics at a more opportune time of need, Bustron’s claim to imperial privileges would be recovered in later modern historical contexts where it would bear much more fruit. Ironically, this would all take place under the auspices of two new imperial authorities: the Ottoman and British governments.