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BRITISH AND AMERICAN TRAVEL ACCOUNTS OF  
“PILGRIMAGES” TO CYPRUS DURING  
THE BRITISH OCCUPATION

ABSTRACT

The aim of this article is to highlight the development of the presence of Cyprus in travel books written by American and British travellers during the 1870s, 80s and 90s through to the beginning of the 20th century. During the 1870s, 80s and 90s there were large numbers of well-to-do American and British invalid travellers who journeyed through some European countries (namely Turkey, Cyprus, Greece, Malta and Italy), North Africa (Egypt) and Eastern countries (Palestine, Syria) in search of their lost health and/or wishing to visit the sites associated with events mentioned in the Bible (especially those from the Acts of the Apostles and more precisely those related to the life and deeds of St Paul). A few of these travellers had their experiences and impressions of the journey published in travel accounts. At first, these travel writers were reluctant to visit the island of Cyprus, even though they were forced to make a stop there (normally at Larnaca) on their way to the Holy Land. However, during the 1880s and 90s, they started to include a more detailed visit of Cyprus and were more generous in describing their accounts of the island's Biblical highlights in their travel accounts. Some even went so far as to dedicate a whole book to the island and thus promoted it as an obligatory visit within Biblical routes. The Biblical allusions made by most travellers whilst in Cyprus concentrated mostly on St Paul's missionary preaching and the Christianization of the island in the company of St Barnabas, St Paul's arrival at Salamis, his martyrdom at Paphos, the conversion of the proconsul Sergius Severis, the first Roman high official to become a Christian, the miracle of the blinding of Elymas, the evil sorcerer, and the discovery of St Barnabas' tomb. Sometimes they also mentioned a visit to the Greek Church of St Lazarus

at Larnaca, where Jesus Christ’s friend was said to have been buried after his second and definitive death, and the monastery of Stavrouni, where St Helena is said to have left a genuine piece of Christ’s Cross. During the 1930’s there was a mild revival of biblical travel accounts on Cyprus thanks mainly to H.V. Morton’s *In the Steps of St Paul* (1936).

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By the end of the 19th century and the first third of the 20th century Cyprus had not only been made a purely “tourist” resort for British high-class hedonists and invalids. By then she had also become an obligatory stop on the Biblical routes to the Holy Land for many British and American travellers. Travelling through the Mediterranean and visiting nearby lands was in fashion. In her popular travel account *A Lady’s Impression of Cyprus in 1893* (1894), the British traveller Mrs Elizabeth A. M. Lewis, for example, comments on the disturbingly large numbers of English tourists going to Egypt, the Holy Land and Athens (1894:11), popular landmarks of sunshine and cultural, historical and religious tourism. Those first Anglophone travellers who headed for Palestine during the 1870s and early 80s were not really interested in setting foot on Cypriot soil, and those that wrote their travel accounts on their “pilgrimage” to Palestine were even apt to recommend their readers not to spend more than a mere few hours visiting the island (just enough to see only Larnaca) if they ever undertook the journey themselves. In spite of this slow start, as time went by, British and American travel writers began to spend more time in Cyprus and chose to describe her Biblical sites with gusto. As far as Americans were concerned one has to mention the travel accounts published by Mrs Straiton and her daughter Emma (1881), the politician and military man Walter Harriman (1883), the businessman Charles McCormick Reeve (1891), the clergymen Dr Henry Martyn Field (1885) and Thomas De Witt Talmage (1892), the New York photographer J. M. Buckley (1895, although he had travelled in the Mediterranean between 1888 and 89) and the doctor Caspar Morris (1896, although he had realised his journey during the 1870s). Among the British travel writers, one should include the accounts of William Hurrell Mallock (1889), a well-known novelist and traveller who, according to Pemble (1988:97), in his famous *In an Enchanted Island or a Winter’s Retreat in*

*Cyprus* (1889) could not avoid seeing the similarities between some Cypriot sites and places mentioned in the Old Testament, and the celebrated Victorian novelist Sir Henry Rider Haggard, protagonist and author of a “pilgrimage” account of Palestine, Italy and Cyprus (1901). But above all, amongst the British, it was H. V. Morton, author of *In the Steps of St Paul* (1936) and a professional traveller himself, who followed St Paul’s routes through the Mediterranean most faithfully and compiled a travel book out of his extensive journeys visiting Palestine, Syria, Turkey, Cyprus, Greece, Malta and Rome, just like St Paul had done many centuries before. Even an Anglo-Romanian lecturer at Budapest, Marcu Beza, author of *Lands of Many Religions* (1934), did not fail to stop at Cyprus when he travelled to Palestine, Syria and Mount Sinai as part of a project to study the legends and miracles of the Holy Land.<sup>1</sup>

Most of the aforementioned travellers, whether British or American, journeyed through Biblical lands for both spiritual and health purposes. The fine weather of the countries to be visited assured these middle-aged pilgrim-travellers an abundance of beneficial effects on their health. The regularity of the steamers travelling from Britain and France towards Eastern lands as well as the success of Thomas Cook’s organised tours in the area contributed to expanding this practical, cultural and spiritual new mode of tourism.<sup>2</sup> These numerous pious English-speaking travellers, imbued with varying degrees of Biblical knowledge, attempted to use the New Testament as a travel guide to the sacred places in the East. Apart from the Greek archipelago (especially Patmos), Malta, Egypt, Turkey and the Holy Land, these travellers finally began to include visits to the Cypriot sites related to events mentioned in The Bible (namely in the Acts of the Apostles), and above all, to those related to St Paul’s life and deeds: his missionary preaching and Christianization of the island whilst accompanied by St Barnabas, St Paul’s arrival at Salamis, his martyrdom at Paphos, the conversion of the proconsul Sergius Severis, the first Roman high official to become a Christian, the miracle of the blinding of Elymas, the evil sorcerer, the discovery of St Barnabas’ tomb, etc. They sometimes mentioned a visit to the Greek Church of St Lazarus at Larnaca, where Jesus Christ’s friend was said to have been buried after his second and definitive death. But even these well-intentioned travellers sometimes doubted the authenticity of a religious site. Reeve, for instance, one of the most critical of these English-speaking “pilgrims”, does not believe that the tomb that

he is shown at Larnaca really holds Lazarus' body: “If [Lazarus] ever visited Larnica (sic) and stayed overnight he did die there - starved to death” (1891:291), he writes.

Caspar Morris (1805-1884) was an American physician who travelled in Europe and the Near East from the spring of 1871 to the summer of 1872 in the company of his wife. He described his experiences in enormous detail in his two volumes of dense letters of travel addressed to his children, Israel W. Morris and Galloway C. Morris. The latter published these letters posthumously in 1896 “solely for distribution to the family”, especially for Caspar Morris' grandchildren and great-grandchildren who did not know him personally (1896, I:4), under the title of *Letters of Travel from Caspar Morris, M.D., 1871-1872, to his Family*. Some letters written by their mother (Ann C. Morris) are included in the books too. The Morris' letters describe their journey through Belgium, Germany, Switzerland, Austria, Italy, Egypt, Palestine, Syria, Cyprus, Turkey, Hungary, France, Holland, Scotland and Wales. The last seven pages of Vol. II constitute an index of the myriad of places visited. However, as far as Cyprus is concerned, Morris does not write much. He dedicates less than one page to the island (II:622-23). On the way from Beirut to the Greek Islands the ship makes a stop at the isle of Cyprus on April, 9, 1872, a few years before the British occupation in 1878. Even though the Cook party travelling with the Morrises had decided to go ashore (no indication of the place of disembarkment is given), the author sees no reason for doing so. He merely describes what he saw from the ship: “The mountains are very repulsive looking. Some palm trees indicate that the climate is warm as they will not grow where there is a winter. There are some other trees, apparently olive, but no indication of culture, though as wine is exported there must be vine culture some where” (II:623). He then recalls “dim shadows of its past greatness” (II:623). He mentions the Egyptian Ptolemies, Roman times and the Venician rule. However, “like every other possession of the Turk it is now in decay” (II:623). He wonders if his children still remember when he used to tell them the story of the Paphian Queen who was fabled to have been born from the foam of the sea. The only Biblical reference made in his travel epistolary is the association of the island to the visit of Barnabas and Paul, who landed at Salamis, as well as the conversion of the Roman Deputy after Elymas the Sorcerer had been stricken with blindness (II:623).

The first English-speaking pilgrim-writers to have travelled to Cyprus – among many other lands – for reasons of health and pilgrimage were the American ladies Mrs M. Straiton and her daughter Emma Straiton. In 1881 they published *Two Lady Tramps Abroad, a Compilation of Letters Descriptive of nearly a Year's Travel in India, Asia Minor, Egypt, in the Holy Land, Turkey, Greece, Italy, Austria, Switzerland, France, England, Ireland, and Scotland*. This book consists of a series of letters written in sixty-one chapters by mother and daughter between January and November 1880 to Mr Straiton, the husband and father of the respective authoresses. As Mr Straiton states in the Preface (1881: iii-iv), he had these letters published in a small and private edition; but some had already been published in *The Flushing Journal* (of Long Island). At the time, this journey was considered to be somewhat daring, taking into account that two women were travelling alone. Mr Straiton's business retained him at home, but he was happy to see that they enjoyed the experience and returned home full of health (iv-v). Both women visited Scotland, Gibraltar, India, Egypt, Syria, Palestine, Lebanon, Cyprus, Turkey, Greece, Italy, Austria, Switzerland, France, England and Ireland. Cyprus is very briefly visited on April 28th, 1880, an experience of merely three hours that Mrs Straiton mentions in chapter XXII, pages 133-134. In spite of such a short time in Cyprus, Mrs Straiton manages to mention several commonplace aspects of the island: their visit to Larnaca, the country's lack of attractions or resources for sight-seeing, the beauty of Cypriot women (even though she admits to not having seen any), the quality of its wine (we are not specifically told that they tried it), a visit to an excavation and the tomb of St Lazarus in a Greek-Orthodox church. However, Mrs Straiton's only declared concern for religious matters while in Cyprus appears in a footnote on page 133: she adds that they visited a Greek church in Larnaca (its name is not given), in which, with the aid of a taper, they saw the Tomb of Lazarus, a visit that she greatly enjoyed. Thus, in both the Morrises and the Straitons' epistolary accounts, which were written originally for private use, the Biblical element is still fairly meagre, their health being the dominant, or the most evident, reason for having undertaken their European-Holy Land journeys.

During the spring-summer of 1882 the American Walter Harriman (1817-1884), a military man and ex-governor of New Hampshire, travelled through Europe to the Holy Land and back. He also visited England, France, Italy, Egypt, Palestine, Syria, Cyprus, Greece, Switzerland, Germany, Belgium and

Scotland. His extensive journey was published in 1883 under the name of *Travels and Observations in the Orient and a Hasty Flight in the Countries of Europe*. In his preface he declares having been especially interested in visiting Palestine, “the land of the Sacred writings, the land of Abraham and his descendants, the land of the Prophets, of the Man of Nazareth, of Paul and Peter” (1883:5-6). He avoids giving precise and detailed descriptions of the places that he visits and makes an evident and most charitable effort to use simple language “which even the unlettered can readily understand” (6). The travel account consists of twenty-eight chapters. Cyprus is dealt with in chapter XXII (278-285) but only two pages are really dedicated to the island (278-280), and it only constituted a mere stop on the three day-trip taken from Beirut to Rhodes and Smyrna. Harriman’s ship, “Vesta”, casts anchor at Larnaca, “the chief town of the island of Cyprus” (278), to discharge freight. The author’s conclusion is that the country “is well-nigh worthless as a place of residence and wholly unattractive as a place of resort” (279). He then mentions the relationship of Cyprus with Biblical history, as she was one of the first countries where Christianity was established. He writes about St Paul and St Barnabas and then describes the former’s miracle in blinding Elymas the sorcerer and the proconsul Sergius Paulus’ conversion to Christianity thanks to St Paul’s intervention (280). He also writes about the Cypriot village of St Barnabas, the disciple’s birthplace. In a convent in this village there is a grotto where the body of Paul the apostle was found together with his autographic manuscript of the Gospel of St Matthew (280). That very night the traveller’s vessel, “Vesta”, headed for Rhodes. Unfortunately, it is now known that Harriman had not really visited the places that he had written about.

Dr Henry Martyn Field (1822-1907) was an American clergyman and an experienced traveller in Egypt and Palestine. In the twenty-five chapters of this book *The Greek Islands and Turkey after the War* (1885; another edition 1893), which cover his journey in 1882 to the East (Cyprus, Greece, Turkey, Bulgaria and Romania), only chapter I (“The Island of Cyprus”, pages 9-20) and part of chapter II (“Along the Shores of Asia Minor”, 21-23) are dedicated to Cyprus. Field considers Cyprus part of the Greek Archipelago. Due to the number of Church of England clergymen that Field notices on board, he talks of the boat as “a pilgrim-ship, as truly as the Mayflower” (1885:9). Among these religious men with whom Field travels is the Bishop of Gibraltar, Dean Howson of Chester,

who was on his way to Cyprus to hold an Episcopal visitation of the churches of the island, as the whole Mare Nostrum was his diocese (10). Field's travel companions on the ship are a Scottish Presbyterian priest, an American religious man, some merchants and a young lord. In Larnaca Field meets the British Commissioner, Mr Hobham (sic, meaning Cobham), who accompanies him on a visit to the Church of St Lazarus (with its tomb, empty to his disappointment) and some archaeological remains. In fact, Field dedicates some pages to explaining and describing Cyprus's history, this subject being, he claims, the chief interest for the increasingly larger number of travellers to the island (13). In relation to Paphos, temple of the Paphian Venus, Field mentions its inevitable relationship with the goddess, who is said to have risen from the sea off this very port (23). He also visited Neo Paphos, where St Paul came after crossing the island from Salamis to encounter Elymas the sorcerer and the convert Sergius Paulus, the Roman proconsul (23). Field appears to be the first travel writer who actually visited the Biblical sites that he described.

W. H. Mallock (1849-1923), author of *In an Enchanted Island or a Winter's Retreat in Cyprus* (1889; other editions 1889, 1892, c.1908) is better known as a writer of politico-economic novels or Socialist novels, and as a poet and a social theorist. He travelled to Cyprus in December, 1887, and spent the winter there. He calls his travel account on Cyprus "a very slight book of travels" (1889:1). He is the first of these pilgrim-travellers to dedicate his book almost exclusively to Cyprus. He begins by expressing his hope to be considered a "true traveller", not a mere "excursionist" (2). His aim in travelling, he declares, is "to escape from all that is homely and habitual" and therefore to be able to find new colours on the mountains, new scents in the atmosphere, forests of unknown borders, roads that lead into mystery, castles that rise from the mists of an enchanted past and men whose aims and characters one cannot despise, not knowing them. Travelling in this manner is, he feels, like being born again (3). There is a clear spiritual intention to his Cypriot journey, in what he calls "a voyage to Dreamland" (3). He was to be the guest of the Chief Secretary in Nicosia (36). Mallock cannot help mentally reciting the roll of civilizations and names connected to the island's legends and history: ancient Egypt and Greece, Rome, Byzantium, the crusades, Adonis, Balaam and Ezekiel, Solomon and Alexander the Great, St Paul, Catherine Cornaro of Venice, Sultan Selim, etc (36). To this Victorian traveller

Larnaca is merely “a mud-built village half a mile from the sea” (278) with little else to see or comment on but the Marina, the second tomb of Lazarus and the tombs of the English consuls and merchants who had died there during the previous centuries (279). He also visits the Monastery of Stavro Vouni, or the Holy Cross, where a fragment of the Cross of the Calvary is kept thanks to St Helena (280). He finally leaves the island from Larnaca. The main issues depicted in Mallock’s travel account are the observation of the quality of Cypriot life in the second decade of the British rule and the country’s ideal combination of beautiful landscape and its high sense of the past, a fact that is evident in the efficient way that the population has preserved the island’s monuments. He stresses the paradisiacal and idealised status of the country which, he believes, is due to its detachment from the modern world. He himself deliberately turned away from museums, galleries, monuments and ruins, as his main aim was to observe the natives and make contact with uncontaminated forms of nature. However, Pemble notes (1988:123), Mallock was only eager to show the similarities of some places in Cyprus with those of the Old Testament: Nicosia is compared to a town in the days of Abraham and the vapours in the Troodos Mountains remind one of the Sinai (Mallock, 116-17). Indeed, his poetic descriptions of the landscapes are usually abundant in Biblical references.

The next traveller to Cyprus to be found was the American businessman Charles McCormick Reeve, author of *How We Went and What We Saw: a Flying Trip through Egypt [,] Syria, and the Aegean Islands* (1891). He was born in 1847, the son of General I. V. D. Reeve. His travel account, whose motto is “From lands of snow to lands of sun, / In search of knowledge, rest, and fun”, is a classic representative of a do-it-yourself-family winter trip of eleven members of different ages (from ten to sixty) and tastes in the 1880’s. Practicality rules over spirituality in Reeve’s travel account. Reeve and his travelling party set foot in the following countries and islands: France (Paris), Italy (Brindisi), Egypt (Alexandria, Cairo, the Nile, Thebes, Karnak), Palestine (Beirut), Lebanon, Syria (Damascus), Cyprus, Rhodes, Turkey (Smyrna, the Bosphorus, Constantinople) and Greece (Athens). The travel account depicts the world seen from the wide and at the same time shrewd eyes of the American tourist. The last chapter (XXVIII), called “Practical Hints”, consists of a collection of commentaries made by Reeves himself on prices and routes for the more conventional tourist – not the



“Biblical” one at all. His interest in Cyprus’s Biblical past is almost non-existent, and when he feels compelled to mention it, he often does so in a sarcastic manner. Chapter XXII, titled “Cyprus, Rhodes, and the Aegean Islands”, covers pages 286-302, among which only a little more than four pages are dedicated to Cyprus (from 287 to 291). The only Cypriot place visited was “the capital city” of Larnaca, where they disembarked for a few hours, had a very inadequate and expensive breakfast and took a stroll in the town, “appropriately named after *Larnax*, meaning coffin”, being “the deadest place [he] ever saw” (1891:291). At Larnaca they bought a few antiquities of very doubtful authenticity, visited the Greek church of St. Lazarus, where they were shown the tomb of Mary and Martha’s brother (a fact that he is reluctant to believe, as he had been told in Marseilles that he died in Larnaca but his remains were taken to France) (290). Reeve is therefore sarcastic about the connection of Lazarus with Larnaca (291). He finally does refer to the various mentions of Cyprus in the Bible, a fact for which he nevertheless admits to feeling absolute indifference (289). He thought of visiting a famous *iconostatis* in Kiti, a village six miles from Larnaca. As nobody in the party knew what that was, he decided to refrain from this visit too: “I decided not to put my life at hazard by going to look at it” (291). In relation to Cyprus Reeve only recommends the exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum in New York, where General Cesnola’s magnificent collection of antiquities can be seen and admired (290). His advice to travellers is “to give Cyprus no more time than the few hours during which the steamer lies at anchor in the roadstead of Larnica (sic)” (290).

One of the most enthusiastic biblical travellers was Thomas De Witt Talmage (1832-1902), an American clergyman who visited Egypt, Malta, Cyprus, Turkey and Greece between December 1889 and May 1890. In 1892 he published *From the Pyramids to the Acropolis. Sacred Places Seen through Biblical Spectacles*. His journey consisted of a tour through the Middle East against the backdrop of Biblical history and religious context. He used the New Testament as a travel guide to the sacred places in the East as much as other travellers had used Brawdshaw’s Guide and Rand’s Railroad Guides (1892:xxii). The different chapters are introduced with a Biblical quotation that mentions the site to visit or an event known to have taken place at that particular spot. Talmage deals with Cyprus in Chapter V, entitled “The Gospel Archipelago” (pages 135-155), and

more specifically from pages 138 to 142. This chapter is preceded by the following Biblical quotes: “When we had discovered Cyprus, we left it on the left hand” (Acts xxi.3) and “I. John was in the isle that is called Patmos” (Rev. i. 9.). As well as Field before, Talmage considers Cyprus as part of the Greek Archipelago. In reference to St Paul’s visit to the island, Talmage states that, whereas the saints left Cyprus on the left, his party and himself were travelling in the opposite direction and were therefore leaving it on the right (138). They soon land on Cyprus in a boat that the natives rowed standing up, “as is the custom” (139). He then writes about the island’s relationship with Barnabas, a native of the island, and his parting from Paul over a bitter controversy at Antioch (139). Talmage then explains Lord Beaconsfield’s acquisition of the island “under a lease which was as good as a purchase”, thus converting it into another jewel in Victoria’s crown (139-140). With religious prosperity, he adds, the country will prosper, for Christ will give her unlimited prosperity (141). The only place in Cyprus where Talmage sets foot is Larnaca, full of filthy streets (142), where he spends a few hours, but he is at least aware of Cyprus’s key relationship to many Biblical events. At night the steamer headed for the island of Rhodes. After leaving Egypt on the steamer “Minerva”, Talmage headed for the Greek Archipelago to visit the islands which had connections with the New Testament, St Paul and the Apostle St John.

Another American traveller, the New York photographer James Monroe Buckley (1836-1920), embarked on a six-month journey through Southern Europe and the Mediterranean from November 1888 to May 1889 visiting England, France, Spain, Morocco, Gibraltar, Algeria, Italy, Egypt, Lybia, Palestine, Syria, Cyprus, Turkey, Greece, Bulgaria, Serbia, Hungary and Austria. In spite of the sixty-seven chapters of *Travels in Three Continents* (1895), his rushed journey to the sunshine, to cultural sights and to Biblical sites left little space for a proper visit to Cyprus, which he discusses in only two pages (497-99), in chapter LX. From Beirut he arrived at Larnaca, visited the Greek Church of St Lazarus, made a few cliché remarks on the island (its women of proverbial beauty, its decadence in spite of the British takeover and its bountiful God-given nature and little more), and then made for Rhodes.

The most famous of the “pilgrim” travellers of the time was Sir Henry Rider Haggard (1856-1925), the renowned British author of celebrated adventure

novels such as *King Salomon's Mines*, *She*, or *Allan Quatermain*. He was also the author of the travel account *A Winter Pilgrimage. Being an Account of Travels through Palestine, Italy, and the Island of Cyprus, accomplished in the Year 1900* (1901; other editions in 1902, 1904 and 1904, giving evidence to its popularity and commercial success). He travelled in the Mediterranean with his nephew on board the "Flora", an ugly-looking vessel of the Austrian-Lloyd line, which was in charge of taking the mail to Cyprus (59). Out of the 23 chapters of this travel account, the ones dedicated to Cyprus are the following: V ("Naples to Larnaca"), VI ("Colossi"), VII ("A Cypriote Wedding"), VIII ("Amathus"), IX ("Curium"), X ("Limasol to Acheritou"), XI ("Famagusta"), XII ("The Siege and Salamis") and XIII ("Nicosia and Kyrenia"), that is, from page 59 to page 187. He includes numerous illustrations of Cyprus: "Cathedral of St. Sophia, Famagusta" (Frontispiece), "Curtain Wall, Famagusta" (to face page 65), "Tower of Colossi" (75), "Cyprian Farriers" (88), "Cyprian Boot-shop" (91), "On Trooidos" (sic) (112), "Wall of New Reservoir, Acheritou" (139), "Ancient Sluice Gate at Acheritou" (139), "Desdemona's Tower, Famagusta" (153), "Ruins of Ancient Church, Famagusta" (153), "St. Hilarion" (176), "Monastery of Bella Pais" (178), "Heights of Hilarion" (181) and "Door of St. Nicholas, Nicosia" (189). In spite of the pilgrimage-like character that he grants to his journey in the very title given to his travel account of Biblical lands (Italy, Palestine and Cyprus), the religious element in the narration of his visit to the British colony is almost inexistent. The only subject containing religious content which he writes about concerns St Helena and the Cross of the Good Thief (the Cross of Dysma). He admitted to having taken all his information from Aubrey Stewart's translation of "Palestine Pilgrims' Text Society", a book not readily accessible to the general public (1901:61). Haggard states that he did not visit the site where the relic is kept either on this occasion or on his former journey fourteen years before.

When the pilgrimage journeys seemed to have gone out of fashion, a Rumanian lecturer, Marcu Beza, published *Lands of Many Religions* (1934) on a journey through Palestine, Syria, Cyprus and Mount Sinai; and soon after a professional British traveller, Henry Canova Vollam Morton, better known as H. V. Morton, published *In the Steps of St. Paul* in 1936 (another London edition in 1936; a New York edition in 1936 too; more editions in 1937, 1946, 1948, 1955, 1956 and 1963; a French translation, *Sur le Pas de Saint Paul*, c.1948).

Beza was a Bucharest lecturer of Rumanian and of English culture and institutions as well as a lecturer of Popular Literature at King’s College. He was an expert on paganism and folklore. In his Preface Beza admits that this book was the consequence of a preparatory journey he had made to the Holy Land to study its legends and miracles (1934:v). He dedicates two chapters to Cyprus: chapter XVII to Famagusta and Salamis (86-91) and XVIII to Paphos (92-96) out of a total of 19 chapters. He includes black and white photographs, among which there are four of Cyprus: the Church of St Barnabas (between pages 86-87), a wall-painting in the Church of St Barnabas (90-91), Othello’s Tower, Famagusta (92-93) and the Old Byzantine Church of Hrisoleusa, New Paphos (92-93). Beza had arrived on the island at the end of May 1934. From page 89 Beza talks about his visit to Salamis and cannot help comparing it to Famagusta: “At least the old town of Salamis appears more cheerful in its state of complete obliteration; it is overgrown with thickets” (89). He walks among the ruins and the abandoned excavations of the old city recalling St Paul and St Barnabas. He states that the latter even died there for preaching Christianity (90). Beza then talks about an archbishop of Salamis of the 5th century, Anthenias, who had a dream in which Barnabas told him where the site of his tomb was. Having gone there, the archbishop found the gospel of St Matthew written by the apostle Barnabas and presented it to the emperor Zeno in Constantinople (91). Beza visits Paphos from Olympus and the village of Kouklia. He talks about Aphrodite and Pygmalion, the Church of the Virgin Mary (until not long ago called Aphroditisa) and the pillar where the apostle Paul was bound and beaten (92-93). He goes to New Paphos, visits a cave with frescoes and is impressed by the image of Mary under the name of Solomoni. He then visits the oldest monasteries in Cyprus (Manchera and Chicu, sic), whose fame reaches Romania, and describes their monks (94). Beza then writes about the persistent presence of Aphrodite in the area (especially at Fontana Amorosa) (95). He describes the site appraisingly: “I offer you my homage, O Goddess Aphrodite!” (96)

Morton’s travel book, *In the Steps of St Paul*, is divided into different parts: an Introduction, ten chapters, an Appendix (with information on the chronology of St Paul’s life, how Paul came to write his epistles, the imprisonment epistles, and the pastoral Epistles), as well as a Bibliography, an Index, and two maps, one of the Roman world at the time and another one of the places visited by the author.

In the Introduction Morton claims to have used the Acts of the Apostles as his guidebook (1936:1), but he states that the theological aspect of St Paul lies beyond the scope of the book (2). Morton's journey covered Palestine, Syria, Turkey, Cyprus, Greece, Malta and Italy. The author finished his journey at the saint's tomb in Rome. Although Morton dedicates chapter four to his experiences and impressions of Cyprus, he also dedicates a paragraph in the Introduction to praising the island's potential as a tourist resort. He claims that it deserves much greater popularity with the British travelling public, although he realises that its distance from the metropolis is a drawback. However, he insists on its excellent roads, the quality of its small but admirable hotels, its superb winter climate and the perfection of its bathing (2). The book has some photographs taken by Morton himself and his wife Mary: "Forum, Salamis" (facing page 112), "Village Priest, Cyprus" (facing 116), "Painter of Ikons" (facing 120), "Cyprian Monks dipping sheep" (page between 124 and 125), "St Paul's Pillar, Cyprus" (page facing 128), "Bell Tower, Kykko" (facing 130) and "The Ikon of Kykko" (facing 136).

Morton himself summarises the contents of chapter four (pages 102-142) by giving it the following title: "Describes how I sailed to Cyprus in a cargo-boat, how I met a well distinguished Pauline student, and visited the ruins of Salamis and the crusading town of Famagusta. I see the Paphian goddess in a museum at Nicosia, spend a night in the mountain monastery of Kykko, and stand amid the ruins of Paphos, where St Paul addressed the Roman Governor and confounded his astrologer..." (102). On the way to Cyprus Morton talks to the only Englishman on board. He is an expatriate living in Palestine who travels to Cyprus to buy oranges for his business. He believes that the reason why there are so many Arabs going to Cyprus is to buy wives: "Not only are Cypriot women highly esteemed – Cyprus was always famous for love, you know – but wives cost less than in Syria and Palestine" (103). Morton's fellow traveller used to be a headmaster who had carried out research on St Paul as a human being (104). They both agree on St Paul's opinion of women: "What Paul hated was the degradation of women in the pagan world" (105). He describes the city of Famagusta at night, its eventful history as well as its main monuments and historic landmarks: St George Cathedral, the city fortifications, the history of the Venetian hero Marc Antonio Bragandino, brutally martyred by the Turks, the Monastery of St Barnabas, a few miles from

the city, St Barnabas' tomb, the history of the saint and of the Church in Cyprus in general and the history of Commandaria wine (114-123). Morton then goes to Nicosia, whose streets he explores (123-24). He visits the Museum and St. Sophia Cathedral (now a mosque). He says that the outside of the Greek Orthodox Cathedral looks like a jewel box (125-26). Afterwards Morton moves on to Kykko (127), passes through Politiko, Pera (129) and guesses at the origin of the name “Cyprus”, which he believes is a corruption of the word “aes cyprium”, a term that developed to “cypram” (129). He talks about St Herakleides and St Mnason, colleagues of St Paul and St Barnabas, both mentioned in the Act of the Apostles (130). He visits Mount Troodos, Kykko Monastery, describes his lodgings at the monastery and converses with a monk about St Paul (131-136). He then heads for Paphos (137), visits the ruins of the Temple of Aphrodite, on the outskirts of Paphos (138), narrates the story of this goddess and explores the ancient town (139-40). Morton finishes his relation of his visit to Paphos by narrating the story of Sergius Paulus the Proconsul (140). He dedicates some paragraphs to writing about the presence of St Paul at Paphos. He states that it was in Paphos where the saint decided to take the Roman name Paulus and cease to use the name Saul (141). Morton's *Middle East: a Record of Travel in the Countries of Egypt, Palestine, Iraq, Turkey and Greece* (1941) includes passages from *In the Steps of St Paul*.

Finally, if we are to try to sum up the development of the presence of Cyprus in the travel books under study we see a progressive interest and appeal described. The first travellers at the end of the 19th century were uninterested in Cyprus and saw it as a mere stop in their way to Palestine. Travellers such as Caspar Morris and Mrs M. Straiton and Miss Emma Straiton undertook their journey for reasons of health. Morris did not even disembark and the Straitons did not believe Cyprus attractive in their three-hour visit. The Straitons were the first English-speaking pilgrim writers of the period studied. Similarly Walter Harriman, who did not visit the places that he wrote about, labelled the island worthless and unattractive. However, Dr. Henry Martyn Field is enthusiastic about Cyprus' history and is the first to visit the Biblical sites that he mentions. W. H. Mallock, by dedicating his book almost exclusively to Cyprus, describes his spiritual journey there with gusto, matching poetic descriptions of Cyprus with Biblical references. On the other hand, Charles McCormick Reeves' account of his visit of a few hours in Larnaca oozes sarcasm and, like Harriman, he describes Cyprus as worth-

less. Thomas De Witt Talmage uses the Old Testament as a travel guide but only visits Larnaca, comments on her dirty streets but emphasises Cyprus' key Biblical history. James Monroe Buckley only visited Larnaca's Church of Lazarus, commented on its decadence and left. Sir Henry Rider Haggard's travel account does not reflect a spiritual journey despite its title, yet he dedicates several chapters to Cyprus. Marcu Beza visits the island well and appears to have liked what he saw and H. M. Morton praises Cyprus and comments on her being more deserving of popularity in his interesting and detailed account of the isle. This summary serves to highlight the initial reluctance and slow progression towards more increasingly detailed accounts of Cyprus and the island's Biblical sites and events.

This article also emphasises the growing presence of Cyprus in travel books written by American and British – mostly invalid – travellers who set foot on the island during the 1870s, 80s and 90s on their way to Palestine in order to visit the sites associated with Biblical events, and how these accounts were mostly monopolised by Lazarus' tomb and St Paul and St Barnabas' lives and deeds. Although negative attitudes and clichés abounded at the beginning, when Cyprus was only a minor protagonist in “pilgrimage” journeys to the Holy Land, it became a major protagonist at the end of the century and the first third of the 20th century.

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## ENDNOTES

- 1 In order to identify and locate the travel books consulted and quoted in this article see the following bibliographical works: for American travellers, Smith (1999); for British travellers, Cobham (1929); for both American and British travellers, Demetriou and Ruiz Mas (2004). For a summarised analysis of British travellers in Cyprus during the 19th and 20th centuries, see Demetriou (2006).
- 2 Two guidebooks were very popular for travellers journeying through Eastern lands during the last quarter of the 19th century: John Murray's fourth edition of *Handbook for Travellers in Turkey in Asia, including Constantinople, the Bosphorus, Plain of Troy, Isles of Cyprus, Rhodes, &c., Smyrna, Ephesus, and the Routes to Persia, Bagdad, Moosool, &c., with General Hints for Travellers in Turkey, Vocabulary, &c.*, (1878); and Lieutenant-Colonel R. L. Playfair's *Handbook for Travellers, Mediterranean. Handbook to the Mediterranean: Its Cities, Coasts and Islands. For the Use of General Travellers and Yachtmen* (1881).