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*From Artifact to Narrative:
Viewing the Cypriot past in the Cypriot present*

The eastern Mediterranean island of Cyprus has long been a cultural thoroughfare. It was the starting, stopping, and midway hot spot for many ancient seafaring cultures- the Myceneans, the Minoans, the Phoenicians, the Greeks, the Romans- and more modern shippers such as the Ottomans, and the British. The combination of the island's location and its rich natural resources made it the target of many neighboring colonial powers, leading to multiple instances of settlement, invasion, and colonization- a situation that often overwhelmed the sovereignty of the indigenous peoples. The new settlers and colonists extracted, consumed, and exported both raw goods and finished products. These waves of settlement make Cyprus an excellent laboratory for studying processes of cultural continuity and, especially, for investigating changes that occurred as a result of colonization and contact with culturally differentiated populations.

The island's historical role as a nexus of trade routes and as a cultural melting pot of ethnicities is illustrated by the vast array of material culture and traditions that became enmeshed within the lives of the Cypriot people, past and present (Hobsbawm 1992). The purpose of this paper is to delineate the extent to which archaeological interpretations of social movements traced with artifacts and explicated by theoretical models of occupation and ethnic identity have an impact on constructions of contemporary identity in forums of heritage preservation and presentation (Dietler 2005).

At an Archaeological Institute of America (AIA) conference, archaeologist and theorist, Lynn Meskell, uttered a statement that may have lasting implications for

anthropological archaeologists across the board. She stated: “Future archaeological questions could be directed toward the ways in which meanings and identities are attributed and negotiated, rather than in the direction of origins. (Meskell 1999; Kane 2003:8).¹ General consensus often assumes that archaeologists only deal with the past in terms of ‘stones and bones’; however if given the chance to explain themselves most archaeologists will provide a discourse about the unearthing of material culture artifacts as only one small part of an excavation (Trigger 1984).

An archaeologist would continue building the argument by listing the important pieces left out of the above scenario, such as the reinterpretation of the peoples who created the artifacts and the landscape on which they left their mark. Unfortunately, because of human error, hubris, and conjecture there will forever be an air of skepticism that surrounds interpretation. Neil Silberman warns against just this in his book *Between Past and Present*, “We must ask whether archaeological reconstructions reflect more the worldview of the excavator than the excavated and invent a nonexistent past that ‘fulfills the dreams of the present’ (Silberman 1989)” (Herbert 2003:103). And so it is for an interpretation that lies on the middle ground between projection and truth that most archaeological investigations settle.

I have conceptualized a project that moved beyond excavation and interpretation alone to better engage archaeological field methods with contemporary Cypriot heritage narratives. This project also considers the modern theoretical constructions of colonialism, nationalism, and identity in relation to understandings of the past in the present. By

¹ Meskell made these remarks in a paper at the AIA annual meeting, Dec. 1999. Kane quoted more of Meskell’s statement as follows: “...Yet... there are often disjunctures between these *imaginary* landscapes... Together they form a mosaic of possible histories and a corresponding mélange of presents and potential futures”

involving literatures of heritage, identity, and social memory with those of spatiality, ethnicity, and materiality I created an archaeo-ethnographic approach and perspective within my research.

Colonialism

In order to contest postulation as a method of archaeological interpretation, a number of postcolonial archaeologists now argue for the decolonization of archaeology as a field. Michael Dietler, in his considerations of ancient colonialism as carried out by the great civilizations of Greece and Rome, has pinpointed the harsh reality of colonizing methods used in archaeological practice. In describing the archaeology of colonization, he wrote:

“Archaeologists attempting to study ancient Greek and Roman colonialism (or indeed ancient colonialism in general) risk unconsciously imposing the attitudes and assumptions of ancient colonists, filtered and reconstituted through a modern interpolating prism of colonial ideology and experience and absorbed as part of the Western intellectual *habitus*, back onto the ancient situation. Ironically, this would constitute a kind of second colonization of the non-Greco-Roman peoples of the ancient Mediterranean, but one even more pervasive than the first in that all access to indigenous experience of the encounter would have been finally suppressed under a hegemonic interpretive discourse” (Dietler 2005: 34).

Colonialism is just as much or more of an imposition on the archaeological record in the present as it was on the social structures of ancient complex societies.

The attribution of ethnic identities within ancient civilizations requires further scrutiny of the archaeological record. When ascribing the characteristics of a specific ethnic

identity that was once confined by a colonial boundary the amalgamation of specific cultural traditions and the assimilation of a subordinate culture group may also be readily apparent. It is then a further analysis of the landscape that will further inform the methods of colonial coercion that define the multiple ethnic identities that contributed to the formation of the landscape. Colonial coercion can be defined as the way in which the identity of the seemingly compliant group and that of a dominant culture group coalesced.

Through this coalescence, facets of culture, such as religion, ideology, lingual and artistic expression, and scientific investigation, can be altered and manipulated to inform, create, and justify modern nationalism. If the colonizer intentionally deprives a culture group of their right to identify with their ethnic heritage this can be labeled cultural violence. The colonized culture group is often explained as having been relegated to operation within the margins of the state. Dietler detests this assessment, and feels that it is therefore necessary “to deconstruct the very idea of a center and to dismantle the entrenched binary categories that undergird the center/periphery concept.” (Dietler 2005: 59). Interpretation is the only means we have left to assign meaning and significance to the past. It is therefore also the only means by which we can attribute identities and behaviors to the actions of distinct culture groups in the past.

Materiality and social identity

Since the inception of modern (scientifically minded) archaeology the practice has been focused on sites, artifacts and the context of the past as equated with ethnic categories that can be gleaned from them. The archaeologists’ interpretations cause controversy and tension. The meaning of material objects is connected to an understanding of social

relationships and practices and social significance is conveyed through a construal of the conscious decisions around their production (Chilton 1998).

“People build emotional and cognitive relationships with objects; they use them to express symbolic meanings, to signify identities, relationships and perceptions. Materiality may be understood as the expression of social identity and group behavior through the use of specific objects and related social practices” (Gkiasta 2010).

Artifacts and the landscapes on which they are found clarify webs of production processes and social networks (Meskell 2005). Artifact diasporas let archaeologists track people’s movements and encounters and move toward understanding the experience of ‘meeting the other’ in either a colonial or moved locality sense (Gkiasta 2010). Research has shown that typically, particular ethnic groups use certain material artifacts “in a way similar to language and religion in order to underline their boundaries and set themselves apart from the rest of the population, particularly when their collective identity is undermined or threatened” (Leriu 2007). I will illustrate the above points more clearly later on in the paper, but for now I would like to move on to further discuss the relationship between artifacts, archaeological process, and the construction of identity narratives in contemporary Cyprus.

Different archaeologies (i.e. colonialist, nationalist, and imperialist) provide alternative interpretations of the past (Trigger 1984). In order to outline contemporary national identities and their relationship with archaeology, I borrowed from the postprocessual school of archaeological thought. Postprocessual interpretations of sites investigate the way in which built landscapes influence “concepts of time, memory,

ancestry and identity amongst communities and individuals” (Greene 2010). Site interpretations are highly politicized and often “speak” to contemporary populations (site visitors) as successors and perpetrators of a continuous national history narrative.

Nationalism

Nationalism is not just a term or an entity, it is a process that redefines and reinterprets collective ethnic identity (DiGiacomo 1985). Nationalism cannot always remark upon the past because in its purest form it was created as a descriptor of nation-state identity (A. Bernard Knapp and Antoniadou 1998; Bialor ND; Pi-Sunyer ND; Silberman 1989). Ethnic identity in the ancient Mediterranean world was created in the midst of expanding and receding empires and colonial domination (A. Bernard Knapp and Antoniadou 1998; Cohen 2000; Dietler 2009; Kane 2003; Oka 2009). Cultural continuity, ethnic boundaries and nation-state boundaries vary in significance and permeability across time and history (Ross 2007; Silberman 1989) The semiotics of modern nationalism are apparent in built and/or modified landscapes, national and state flags, even maps, or other identifiers that situate individual and collective association to a site, region, or state.

After a preliminary discussion and analysis of the formation and intensification of nation-ness and nationalism, Benedict Anderson (1983) defined a nation as “an imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign.” In a similar vein Eric Hobsbawm (1992) described the national entity as “a sufficiently large body of people whose members regard themselves as members of a ‘nation’.” Both definitions leave a sense of intangibility around the nation or Nation (Anderson 1983). How then should heritage professionals make nation-ness less abstract?

Methods

At the start of my fieldwork experience in the spring of 2011, ethnography and the interview method of transect walking were both new to me, the archaeologist. Transect walking is an interview method that incorporates an informant's verbal description of a particular space or object as he or she is prompted by and interviewer with specific questions. The inspiration to try this new method came from discussions of spatial relationships and landscapes archaeological sites and museums (Low 2003).

My choice in methodology was reinforced by the overwhelming amount of tourist pamphlets I collected in Cyprus during my fieldwork; these brochures referenced cultural routes, pavement markers, wine trails, nature trails, and directional street signs.

I chose to conduct the transect walks with heritage preservation specialists - the archaeologists and curators - because theirs are the voices heard through the interpretations of the archaeological sites and museum displays. My academic background and practical experience as an archaeologist has ingrained in me that with any description of an artifact comes a discussion of its findspot - its relation to the landscape within which it was found - and a discussion around the context of the artifact within/on the landscape.

Much of the discussion that follows stems from prior academic research that has used concentrations of artifacts to investigate how population movements occur, what changes in political structure look like and the effect interpretations of archaeological excavations have on presentation of heritage in the present. Throughout the rest of the paper I have interspersed data collected during transect walks with informants with the research based archaeological interpretation of colonialism and nationalism at the ancient Cypriot city-kingdom of Idalion.

Sorting Sherds, Sorting Ethnicities

Cyprus is mentioned in numerous documents from the Near East, Greece, and Egypt, and archaeological research has been taking place there for well over a century. My own archaeological field experience has been primarily at the inland city of Idalion, a site whose history offers an excellent opportunity to investigate the possibility that ceramic attribute and distribution analyses can identify social boundaries within a single city.

Idalion was situated in a geographically and culturally central position on the island. It was an inland production center and distribution hub as well as a cultic center from the Late Bronze Age (12th century BCE) through the Hellenistic period (3rd - late 1st century BCE). The city straddles the major road leading to the Phoenician port of Kition (modern Larnaca) to the south; through Ledra (modern Nicosia), and on to the Northern coastal city of Lapithos. Idalion is about four kilometers southwest of the Mesaoria plain which is the major thoroughfare to the east coast and the major ancient ports of Enkomi and Salamis (modern Famagusta).

A six kilometer long stone wall surrounded Idalion in the Iron Age, and the city had two acropoleis on natural high points: the West Terrace and the East Terrace. From the founding of the city-kingdom in the 12th century BCE, through the annexation of Idalion by the Phoenicians in 450 BCE, up until the 323 BCE conquest by the Ptolemaic Empire of Egypt, the administrative complex was located on the West Terrace.

The religious complex—a sacred grove confined by a wall—was on the East Terrace. Each of the latter political shifts (the Phoenician and Ptolemaic) was marked by an increase in the number of major building projects.

Many archaeologists at sites around the Mediterranean have looked for decisive destruction layers to substantiate documentary evidence of battles, invasions, and annexations. No evidence of this kind has been unearthed at Idalion. The goal of both the Phoenician and Ptolemaic conquests was to gain economic control over the city's resource collection and its production of trade goods, so why would either invader destroy the city?

Rather than look for military destructions, I am trying to find evidence indicating nonviolent shifts in the city's socio-economic structure. One part of this research is our attempt to identify Cypriot and foreign populations in the city in the wake of each historically attested invasion.

Numismatic evidence, together with a bronze tablet found on the West Terrace by locals in the mid-nineteenth century, identify a king named Stasikypros as the last independent ruler of Idalion. Shortly thereafter the city was annexed by the coastal kingdom of Kition as can be seen in documents in which 'Oziba'al (ca. 450-425) a Phoenician king of Kition, claimed dominion over both Kition and Idalion. Idalion's history was enmeshed with that of Kition until the conquest of the city 150 years later by the Ptolemaic Egyptian empire.

Inscriptions from the period between the annexations attest to a growing Hellenistic Greek influence in Idalion, though the extent to which this represents economic, political, or population shifts is unclear at the moment.

Site tour of the West terrace administrative complex

This past spring, I returned to Idalion with a voice recorder, rather than a trowel in hand. I met with, Anna, a recently graduated PhD student from the University of Cyprus.

Anna is a Cypriot who has worked at Idalion for a number of field seasons under the direction of the Cypriot Department of Antiquities.

As we transected the site Anna guided me past the ancient storerooms – where the largest Phoenician archive ever recovered at a Mediterranean site was found in 2003 – she instructed me to step carefully over an ancient drainage ditch, still damp from a recent rain. As we walked we discussed what it must have been like to walk through the street in antiquity – we marveled at the wagon wheel worn corners of the buildings abutting the narrow road and lingered to ponder the ingenuity and technical skill used to construct the large ramp and gate that perforated the western defensive wall of the complex. I could sense Anna’s imagination working to describe Idalion as a thriving production site, storage facility, and politically charged administrative complex.

I asked Anna what she would be most excited to find while excavating at Idalion. Anna responded, like some who recently finished writing a dissertation: “What I expect from this excavation is a Greek inscription. I need to find a stone inscription in Greek.” Anna’s dissertation focused on the Greek (Ptolemaic) rule of the city, and unfortunately for her (albeit completed) dissertation, all of the inscriptions found at Idalion thus far have been written in Eteo-Cypriot, Phoenician, or Greek.

Anna’s response corresponds with the colonial narrative of affiliation with the Greek homeland. This narrative describes Cypriot identity as a direct descendent of Greek identity. Her having expressed a desire to find identifiably Greek artifacts corresponds to her association with Greek identity.

Phoenician Colonialism

In order to further understand the assimilation of Cypriotes at Idalion into

Phoenician culture, *Phoenicianization*, it is obligatory to first delineate indigenous Cypriote identity. Other volumes considering colonization and indigenous identity in Cyprus also recognize this need. In their article on population movements, Webb and Frankel stated, “Together with associated concepts of technology transfer the [identification of population movements by everyday practice] provides the basis for arguing for a movement of people to Cyprus, bearing with them the modes of behavior which develop to form those that characterize cultural formation we call the Bronze Age.” (Webb and Frankel 2007: 189). It is within this delineation of formation and transformation that we will then distinguish colonial coercion within the administrative system implemented in the subsequent historical period by the Phoenicians at Idalion.

One oddity in the Phoenician colonization of the island is the extended time period during which the Phoenicians let the Cypriotes at Idalion remain in control. There has not yet been a definitive explanation in the archaeological record other than a number of vague references to tribute in inscriptions from the administrative centers at both Idalion and Kition. There may be more to discern from the above stated hypothesis if we regard a path laid by ethnological anthropologist Marc Howard Ross, he implores a focus on “the role of cultural expression and enactment and [to] link them to conflict expansion and settlement” (Ross 2007: 312). With this focus on enactment it becomes evident that in other instances similar to the conquest of Idalion, the Phoenicians decided to acquire control through force for economic rather than political reasons.

There is no destruction layer associated with the Phoenician conquest of Idalion in 475 BCE, but rather the execution of a large-scale administration and storage complex on the West Terrace of Idalion. Within the complex the Phoenician overlords incorporated a larger

more efficient olive oil press, production, and storage area. The structure also overlooks the west lower city; it was in the lower city that the industrial fabrication of metal tools, weapons, and sculptures took place, as well as the carving of ivory and horn objects, pottery construction, and other mass produced items were produced for trade and religious rituals.

Can material culture artifacts be primary evidence of archaeological interpretation and can these artifacts justifiably imply characteristics of ethnic identity that produced them? (Herbert 2003: 104-105). The discovery of foreign imports during archaeological excavations at Idalion connect this city-kingdom to the greater Eastern Mediterranean region, but more telling is the identification of Phoenician influence in art and artifacts with supporting archaeological evidence found both inside and outside the walls of Idalion. (Hadjicosti November 1997: 57). The 2009 excavations unearthed a Phoenician helmet and sword, could these two soldierly items be associated with a garrison within the administrative complex?

However, as of yet the interpretation of the material culture from this industrial area, rather than the administrative complex higher up on the terrace, has not inferred a Phoenicianization of the goods produced. A change in technique or style of the goods produced would have solidified an argument that the Cypriotes at Idalion were assimilated into Phoenician culture. However if the Phoenicians were only invested in Idalion for the economic gain, the ethnic identity of the Cypriotes at Idalion may have been left to thrive with little influence from their Phoenician overseers as long as they maintained the quantity and quality of produced goods. These goods would have then been shipped to Kition, the major Phoenician port just to the south for exportation all over the

Mediterranean.

Firmly grounded as stepping-stones on the path to social complexity for the Phoenician occupation of Idalion is the modification of industrial process and social order within the West Terrace administrative complex. Iacovou illustrates with a statement from Webb: “We may therefore conclude that it was the connection with the centralized economies of the empires and palatial states of the Mediterranean that triggered the urban process” (Iacovou 2005: 19). What then can we infer about the Phoenician occupation of the rest of Idalion? Were there ways in which peoples on the periphery of the Phoenician administration may have adopted Phoenician interpretations of themselves and their past?

One such stylized symbolic figure that was part of Cypriote culture and later took on a more Phoenician and later Greek form was the master of animals/Wanax, the supreme male deity. Known as Melqart to the Phoenicians, as Herakles to the Greeks, and as various other names across the Mediterranean and Near East, this figure is symbolic of dominant man and control over nature. Some Cypriote goddess figures also took on ‘imported characteristics’ to become part of the local native tradition, for example the supreme female deity known as the mistress of animals/Wanassa to the Cypriotes, Astarte to the Phoenicians, Ishtar to the Assyrians; she represented power and control over fertility of the earth and body. It is within a religious context that we witness the period of Phoenicianization as experimental and seemingly non-disruptive.

The goddesses in the museum

The Cyprus museum seemed to be a logical space to transect because it is where so much of the island’s archaeological history is stored (under one roof including artifacts from all over the island collected before the division). My informant Dimitris, an illustrator

of archaeological artifacts and artist, and I began our walk with a discussion of early religion on the island.

Aphrodite, the goddess having been born from the sea onto the island, has inspired his more recent art pieces. In describing the artifact-artwork connection he said: "These things not only remind me of the history, they give me a clue as to who I am. I identify with this stuff, you know because it gives me a sense of place. And when I touch these things, when I am drawing them I come into that presence, sense of presences, you know for me there is a real longing because I don't really know who I am – you know my Greek father – I don't know who he was. My mother never told me anything about him. So this to me – it almost belongs to me, do you know what I mean? That is a stupid thing to say but it almost belongs to me – you know I come from the same earth as this stuff."

Dimitris's personal identity narrative exemplified some of the effects of colonialism on the landscape and on personhood over time. Cyprus was a British colony for much of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Dimitris artistically and tangibly identifies with his Cypriot heritage even though he grew up removed from it in Exeter, England, with his English mother and never having known his Greek-Cypriot father. Within his 'imagined' national connection reverberates the historical legacy of colonialism and its effect upon the construction of the smallest scale personal histories.

Ethnic boundaries at Idalion

From a discussion of contemporary boundaries, we now return to an investigation and interpretation of past boundaries. The next question to be answered then is one of the levels of permeability of ethnic boundaries. According to Anthony Paul Cohen, both historical narratives and myths are constructed in similar manners and often both

aggrandized to the level of propagandistic in order to colonize the consciousness of social groups (Cohen 2000). This colonization of consciousness does not have to be from an outside source of power. So while texts and inscriptions offer insight into cultural behaviors, there is also the possibility that they were compromised by imagination and fable. In the case of Idalion, material culture might then at least validate that there was growing acquaintance with Phoenician practices and wares, but its association with infliction and implantation of violent practice has as yet gone undiscovered.

The Phoenician occupation of Idalion ended abruptly in 312 BCE when the fifty-year reign of Pumayyaton, King of Kition and Idalion, was curtailed by the Ptolemaic incursion of the city. To date hundreds of Phoenician inscriptions have been found in the West Terrace administrative complex, the majority of them if not all document accounts and tabulate the storage of goods. There are no blatant textual references to dominance over the indigenous peoples, only the typical iconographic displays of control, such as the man conquering the lion or the lion conquering a stag (Hadjicosti November 1997: 57).

Is it then logical to assume that the native populations of Idalion were allowed to maintain and cultivate their ethnic identity with instances of assimilation only apparent in artistic forms? Some archaeologists even believe that the Phoenicians were the original Cypriotes and that the ninth and fifth century waves of infiltration were in sense just new recruits meant to maintain and sustain the production and trade so vital to the Phoenician existence. This explanation seems to be a stretch and yet if the Myceneans were the first Cypriotes, then the same would be true of the subsequent Greek invasions. It seems that these colonizing movements are best described as economic, political, and religious forays meant to regain and preserve supremacy.

Even into the twentieth century Cyprus is in the midst of colonial coercion that threatens ethnic identity. Held as a British colony until 1960, conflict once again broke out in Cyprus in 1963 with a Turkish invasion. The Turks hold the northern third of the island to this day. In the sense that they are indebted to the Greeks for their support, the Cypriotes refer to themselves as Greek-Cypriotes; it was Greeks who came to their aid during the Ottoman, British and Turkish occupations. Dietler would articulate that it was the Greeks that have captured and colonized the ethnic consciousness of the Cypriotes not the Phoenicians (Dietler 2005). Even the name names – Cyprus and Idalion – illustrate Greek national identity. No one, academics nor Cypriotes, are sure which came first the name of the metal (Copper) or the name of the island. And the name of the city, Idalion (idou alion) translated means “I see the sun”; legend says the city was founded and given its name by king Chalcanor, an Achaean-Greek, after the Trojan war (1194 BC- 1184 BC).

Cypriote Donkeys

At certain points throughout this paper I have been investigating the role of colonial and local narratives in the formation of national identities (past and present). In Cyprus, the local narratives have the potential to appear as rebellion against the colonial strong-arming of Britain, Turkey, and Greece. The compiled local narratives are also reactions to the prior use of museums and sites as propaganda promotion of the colonial narratives. Both types of narratives are presented at the archaeological sites and museums across the island, it just depends on which side of the border the site or museum is and who is involved, i.e. the state or heritage preservation organizations.

The Greek-Cypriot State recently allotted funds for the creation of the Pan-Cyprian Gymnasium Museum within some of the former school buildings; the school is still in

operation in the adjacent buildings. In transecting the halls of the museum with its curator, Michalis, I was afforded the opportunity to 'see' his perspective and impressions of Cypriot national identity through his descriptions of the collections.

In the archaeology collection rooms of the museum Michalis and I began talking about the existence or non-existence of Cypriot identity. In response to my prompt Michalis said: "There is no Cypriot identity. No Cypriot identity." Then he pointed to a small terracotta donkey and quoted a Turkish politician as having said: "Well there are no Cypriots on Cyprus, we have Turks and Greeks. Maybe the only thing Cypriots are the donkeys."

There are donkey sanctuaries meant to preserve the limited number of donkeys left on the island and the archaeological record reports many terracotta sculptures of quadrupeds have been found on the island, but I am not convinced that this quip was meant as laudatory or derogatory to either Greek-Cypriot or Turkish-Cypriot populations. I think what Michalis meant by quoting the Turkish-Cypriot politician was to reference the constructed nature and imagined form of nationalism. Even Benedict Anderson further situated the ontological creation of nation-ness: "My point of departure is that nationality, or, as one might prefer to put it in view of that word's multiple significations, nation-ness, as well as nationalism, are cultural artefacts of a particular kind" (Anderson 1983).

A sort of conclusion

Through my fieldwork, I discovered that most Cypriots are not sure what makes them Cypriot but many of my informants were willing and able to discuss their relationship with Greece or Turkey respectively. In this political instance where the postcolonial independent nation's historical narrative has been and is still influenced by the colonial

narratives of Greek and Turkish attributes I was unable to conclusively determine purely Cypriot characteristics.

Cyprus like many other former colonies (whether the colonizers were ancient or modern) is one of the 'old nations' Anderson refers to as now dealing with and "challenged by 'sub'-nationalism within their borders" (Anderson 1983). It can be concluded then that Cypriot identity exists, but it is not easily bounded nor is it a static entity. Cypriot identity with its linguistic, nationalistic, religious, and political inclusions is still (and will probably always be) in process of being constituted. While Cyprus is the only nation to celebrate the independence day of another nation, I am sure it is not the only nation to celebrate and respect the holidays and traditions of other nations especially because of the globalized, hybrid time and space we are currently living.

Susan Kane reasonably explains the task of current archaeological excavation as the exploration of "issues as well as artifacts" (Kane 2003: 2). For Cypriote archaeologists this necessitates and incorporates the investigation of numerous forms of material culture, multiple sites, and nearby comparative regions to denote characteristics of cultural behavior and identity. Expatriate nomad Lawrence Durrell wrote a poetic memoir of his experience adapting to life on the island in the town of Bellapaeis in northern Cyprus. His epic tale is a heartfelt account of the community members with whom he identified and endured part of their struggle to maintain jurisdiction under British control and Turkish insurgency (Durrell 1957). Due in part to its location, its overabundant supply of natural resources, and the history of conflict and occupation it is more than evident that the political dynamic will forever be intertwined in the daily life, religious practice and tolerance, and research on the island of Cyprus.

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