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**Performing Place at Ancient Idalion, Cyprus: an anthropological perspective on the Lower City South sanctuary architecture**

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*Abstract: The ancient site of the Lower City South sanctuary of Idalion is a site of place making and identity formation during the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BCE of Cyprus. This archaeological site represents repetitive building patterns and persistent cultic activity that denote a cultural tradition that withstood the changes of administrative control in the Cypro-Classical and Hellenistic periods. Certain architectural elements, like altars and water features, are characteristic of a continued tradition at the ancient site and they are evidence of a recursive building practice that falls into templates of place making and identity formation as introduced by Bourdieu and Giddens. Identities are linked to place and architecture can represent both in the archaeological record. Idalion's Lower City South sanctuary is proof of the relationship of these elements of social behavior.*

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In archaeology, attempts to understand identity are based on theory and are difficult to apply to the material remains of sites. When considering a collection of objects, it is important to consider how they interacted with other objects, people, and places and not just focus on their final context (or find spot). If material objects are considered only according to their find spot and style, then how can pottery from tombs be interpreted as anything more than grave goods? Archaeologists typically define place in neatly constructed contexts with single occupations. These definitions are not practical for use in sites with multiple contexts of use. Consequently, our own perception of place is often marked by repetitive use and emotional attachment through time. As a definition in archaeology, space is the location within which populations build and settle. Place; on the other hand, is this space imbued with meaning through interactions (Rockefeller 2001, Low 2009:29). Therefore a prehistoric site with multiple rebuilds of walls represents a long-term attachment to a specific building thereby making it a place that holds a certain meaning that is worth the energy to rebuild/reinforce over time.

The archaeological site of Idalion, Cyprus contains many different areas of the city-kingdom with dates that span the Late Bronze Age (LBA) through the Byzantine period. The site is not yet fully published as it is actively being excavated. Therefore, the research presented in this paper does not contain broad statements of purpose for the architecture. Alternately, it discusses the recursivity of certain types of architecture in the Lower City South (LCS) sanctuary at Idalion. While identity is not easily defined in archaeological contexts, cultural continuity can be seen in material remains. To understand place and identity at the Lower City South of Idalion, this paper argues that

the repetition of architectural elements like altars, water features, and walls/platforms can be used as a signifier of group identity and place.

### **I. Theoretical Background: cultural theory in archaeological contexts**

Place and group identity are key concepts for the purpose of this paper. Ethnicity (Jones 1997, Sweeney 2009, Knapp 2001, Levine 1999) and group identity (Sherratt 2005:26, Lucy 2005) are two terms used to discuss identity, but neither term is greatly accepted as an approved way to discuss past societies. The major complaint is that both 'identity' and 'ethnicity' are charged with modern meanings (Knapp 2001, Vives-Ferrándiz 2012, Iacovou 2006). Within archaeological discourse, identity is suggested to address the relationship of material culture with other aspects of life in order to present identities in historic and prehistoric contexts. However, one must be wary of assuming that identities are static and that identities represented in one archaeological context will be the same in another.

To define identity, I use a combination of ideas gathered from several authors including Emberling (1997), Jones (1997), Lucy (2005), and Hall (1990). In archaeology, the social significance, related materials, and context of a find are imperative to an understanding of how identity is portrayed through material culture. I do not suggest that one can ever know much beyond the characteristics that define an identity group and most certainly that one can never present a name for such a group. As defining a people based on their presumed ethnic identification name, such as Greek, Phoenician, or Eteocypriot (native Cypriot) on Cyprus more often indicates more about the archaeologist than the people being studied. Archaeological definitions of identity include common ancestry or homeplace as an indicator of ethnicity (Jones 1997), social

relationships linked with ethnicity to make up group identity (Emberling 1997:299) and the ways many types of material culture need to be studied in their context of use (Lucy 2005). Hall's (1990:225) definition of cultural identity as expressed through a process of 'being' and 'becoming' is equally important in archaeological contexts of change. This is because material culture can represent changes in group identity over time through changes in production, use, and/or style of moveable and immoveable objects. Therefore, I define the term group identity as social identity that relies on the transfer of traditions as well as maintenance of existing ones through the interaction with material objects.

Place, as a term in eastern Mediterranean archaeological discourse, has received recent attention through archaeologies of landscape and survey archaeology (Cifani and Stoddart 2012, Iacovou 2004). However, it is equally important in settlements, sanctuaries, and other types of archaeological sites. In modern social theory, place and identity are linked through social practice. Anthony Giddens (1984:2) writes that structuration is based on the ordering of social practices across space and time and also reflects the recursive nature of social practices as social actors recreate social practice by the way they "express themselves as agents." The setting of social practices presents a physical relationship between the shared knowledge of the actors and the social practice being performed. However, Giddens (1984:25) is clear that structures [rules drawn upon for (re)production of actions] do not have subjects or relationships with space and time. Therefore, structuration "governs the continuity or transmutation of structures and therefore reproduces social systems" (Ibid).

Giddens' theory relies on the natural and often subconscious actions of human beings between themselves and while he does not explicitly say so, through their interactions with objects. In an earlier publication, Giddens (1979:144) makes agency obvious in his discussion of structuration saying, "The structural properties of social systems are both the medium and the outcome of the practices that constitute those systems... The same structural characteristics participate in the subject (the actor) as in the object (society)." If a social system is the result of reproducing activities across space and time and that the structural system is dependent on both subjects and objects, there is an implication that material culture is involved.

In research on the archaeology of cult, or ritual, Renfrew (1985:17) determines that patterns are the result of the structure of society and the way that places are created and where they are located. Similarly, Bourdieu (1989:17-19) explains that spatial proximity creates social proximity and Goffman (1959, 1967) recognizes that "one's sense of place" relies upon his social relationships. While this acknowledges place in an indirect way, Leach (2002:282) has explained how architecture can be a part of *habitus*, as it is "objectivated cultural capital." He explains that "through repetitive performativities of various modes of perception... a mirroring can be enacted and a sense of identification with place can be developed and reinforced through habit," (Leach 2002:292). Therefore, consistent interaction with a place makes an individual a part of its significance. Identity is seen through interactions (Hall 1990) and place can also help to illuminate self-identification. *Habitus* (Bourdieu 1977) as a framework for explaining human behavior is a study of agency. In archaeology, agency exists as a

way to explain the presence of material culture and illuminate social practices (Robb 2010).

The reproduction of behavior determines social practice; therefore one can also acknowledge that patterns are the result of group and individual activities. Patterns of building demonstrate shared identities because social interactions perpetuate repetition. Likewise, repetition indicates a consistent type of interaction and agency. Using archaeological theories of identity, material culture often serves the purpose of defining an identity, however other aspects of past cultures, like language and ritual practice need to be considered (Jones 1997, Sweeney 2009:102, Lucy 2005). Ritual practice includes both religious activities and social rituals in secular life, like having a parade to mark the installation into office of the United States president. Repetitive building practice can be considered ritual practice. Renfrew (1985:4-15) discusses the different forms of secular ritual that can be found in archaeological contexts and notes that *place* and *equipment* (sic) can denote secular or religious intent. Religious ritual, or cult, is usually defined through the repetition of symbols and objects/architecture of a specific type: altar, votive offerings, etc. Therefore, cult practice, identity, and place formation are visible through the repetition of certain architectural elements. The next section introduces the historical and archaeological background of Idalion in its context of the Cypriot past and explains some of the architecture from the sanctuary.

## **II. The Lower City South, Idalion, Cyprus: the case for self-identification through repetition in construction and ritual practice**

Place and identity are visible at the site of Idalion and more broadly on Cyprus through an analysis of architecture in the context of the historical past. The site of

Idalion is made up of several sacred areas and work areas spanning dates from the LBA through the Roman Period (Gaber and Dever 1996 and Gaber 2008 for a review of the history of excavations). In the archaeological material of Idalion, there are at least two other sacred areas identified on the East Acropolis and Terrace (Gaber et al forthcoming, Gaber and Morden 1992, Lang 1878:30-46, Gaber and Dever 1996:101-110, Ohnefalsch-Richter 1893:408-417). While these areas also contain rebuilding, they have not yet revealed the same repetition in use through time. This puts the LCS site in a unique position to provide data for research on continuity of practice and social groups. The repetitive use of specific building types (altars, water features, platforms, etc.) shows a common cultural identity that has lasted through changes in leadership and administration. While the final publication of LCS has not been written and the stratigraphy and dating is not published in great detail, I have had first hand experience with the architecture and many conversations with the excavation director, enabling me to make statements about the archaeology of the site.

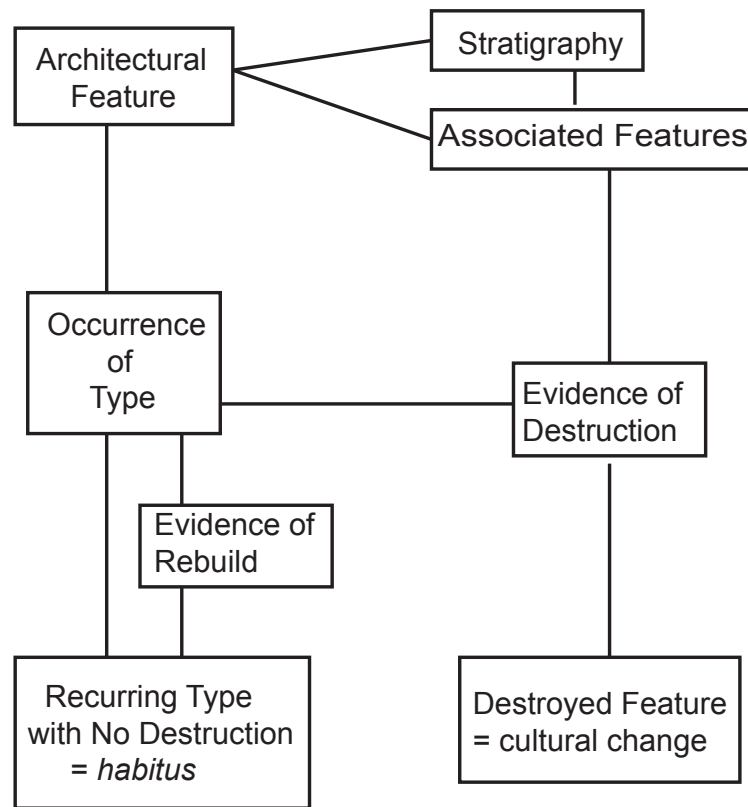
#### A. Methodology

I implemented a methodology that included comparing ground plans from over ten years of excavation and visually interpreting the architectural remains through site walking and photography to understand place and identity at the LCS sanctuary. First, I read field notebooks recorded by different trench supervisors from 2001 to 2012 and copied information from the daily notes, top plans, and data sheets. Top plans are daily records of what the archaeological field unit (5x5m trench) looks like from above. The purpose of this recording is to make all parts of the archaeological process clear and to make a record of things that are removed in the process of digging. For research



purposes, context is very important to understanding the past and is vital to deciphering architecture at sites that have many periods of use. The Lower City South was first opened in 1998 and has been excavated with some breaks (2000-2001, 2006-2007) until the present year. It was not my intention to explore all aspects of the LCS, just those that are repetitive and present cultural continuity through time.

The second phase of research was based on field walking and included detailed spatial analysis of the current state of the site of Idalion. This involved photography, sketching architecture, digitizing top plans, and determining which aspects of site maintain similar meaning or purpose. The purpose of spatial analysis is to insert the individual into the experience of the sanctuary and to identify meaning in the way the sanctuary was built. Also, identifying the role of the sanctuary. Below is the flowchart used for understanding the architecture and its relationship to other features and human activity based on structuration theory and *habitus* (**figure 1**).



**Figure 1. Flowchart of Analysis**

B. The Geographic and Geological Context

The geography of Cyprus is composed of two mountain ranges, the Kyrenia Range and the Troodos Massif. In the following discussion, anything that is not directly cited is from the 1995 Geological Map of Cyprus or from the author's direct experience. The geology of the Kyrenia Range is mainly Cretaceous and Upper Eocene sedimentary with shales, sandstones, dolomites and grey limestones (Bellamy 1905). This is important because the Troodos Massif, located close to Idalion provides more igneous rocks and different types of limestones. The Troodos is a large intrusion of basic and ultra basic igneous rock that can be further divided into three types: Troodos Pillow Lavas, Sheeted Intrusive Complex and Troodos Plutonic Complex (Gass and

Masson-Smith 1963:418). While the specificities of the Troodos Mountain range geological deposits will not be discussed any further, it is important to remember the impact of the Troodos on the landscape of the Mesaoria Plain. The lower pillow lavas abut the limestone hills of the Mesaoria, and in places like Agia Varvara, you can see these two rock types bordering one another in the hills.

The village of Dali is located about 18 kilometers from Lefkosia (Nicosia), the capital city, and at the foothills of the Troodos Mountains as the Mesaoria Plain begins. Chalk and marls (sedimentary rocks) dominate the geology of the region with some ultrabasic rocks from the Troodos Mountains. There are pockets of cherts and flints among the chalk and marl layers in the rounded hills near Dali (Bellamy and Jukes-Brown 1905:26). More specifically, the Mesaoria Plain is geologically sedimentary with sandy marls and shales with areas of bedded conglomerate. Tuff and chalky limestone, which are prone to decomposition when exposed to weather, are also evident in the hills around Dali (Gass 1960:22). Two acropoleis dominate the landscape of Idalion within which a sedimentary deposit of limestone forms the foundation of sediments below the hills. The ancient city was built on the Pakhna geological formation of chalky, white marls, clay marls, and occasional gypsum lies. In 1972, the American expedition to Idalion investigated several limestone quarries to the east of the ancient city and several sandstone quarries to the north of the modern village (Koucky and Bullard 1974:13-15). Nearby (less than 11 km) at Athienou, also within the Pakhna formation, is a location of stronger limestone that deteriorates slower than the local limestone at Idalion. There is also a patch of gypsum alternating with marls nearby Athienou and Petrofani. From a geological perspective this involves a shift in chemical composition; however, from a

socioeconomic perspective it means better building material. Earlier dated parts of Idalion in the Iron Age exhibit more frequent use of local limestone, while later Hellenistic and Roman periods began importing better limestone (see below). In addition, there are three locations of sandstone in the Mesaoria Plain, all farther than 30 km from Idalion.

### C. The Historical Context

Idalion is a site in the central part of the island of Cyprus that is often named as one of the ten city-kingdoms of Iron Age Cyprus (inscription on Prism of Esarhaddon; Pritchard 1955). The dating scheme used in this paper follows that of Knapp 2013 and Karageorghis 1982 (**figure 2**). While the definition of city-kingdom can be at odds with the reality of ancient Cypriot socio-political structures, it is a commonly used name for defining major centers of activity (Rupp 1993). Idalion has existed in the archaeological record since at least 1100 BCE and shows continuity of use through the modern period. The modern village is named Dali and lies north of the remains of the ancient city because the Yialias River moved north and the village continued to stay near to the river. The Bronze Age remains at Idalion include tombs and a site where large pots (pithoi) were made, on a plateau of the west acropolis. The 9<sup>th</sup> century BCE through the first century CE brought phases of development on both the west and east acropoleis and terraces and also the plain below these hills. Sanctuaries, administrative complexes, and domestic-type groupings of architecture are evident in most areas of excavated Idalion (Stager, Walker, and Wright 1974; Hadjicosti 1995; Gaber and Dever 1996; Gaber 1992; Gjerstad 1948).

<b>Phase</b>	<b>Date</b>
Late Cypriot (LBA/LC)	1450 - 1050 BCE
Cypro-Geometric (CG)	1050 - 750 BCE
Cypro-Archaic (CA)	750 - 475 BCE
Cypro-Classical (CC)	475 - 333 BCE
Hellenistic	333 - 58 CE
Roman	58 – 395 CE

**Figure 2. Archaeological Dating**

There is significant evidence, both historical and archaeological, of the changes in administrative control of the ancient city. Cyprus was a source of copper for many Iron Age groups in the region and because of this mineral wealth, the Assyrians, Egyptians, Persians, and Phoenicians came to Cyprus and exacted tribute or established administrative control over parts of the island. While there is not a lot of material culture change because of these foreign rulers in the Iron Age, there are significant architectural shifts because of Hellenistic Greeks and Romans of later periods.

At Idalion, the first real “threat” to the local groups control of the city came in the 5<sup>th</sup> century BCE. A 5km long circuit wall of sandstone blocks was erected at Idalion at about 500 BCE. In 475 BCE the Phoenicians from Kition (Kitians) came to Idalion and tried to siege the city and failed (Marvin 1974:xxvi). Instead, in 450 BCE they succeeded and there is proof of the breach found in the west terrace. In 1987, the University of New Hampshire expedition directed by Pamela Gaber, uncovered destruction debris dating to 450 BCE that likely represents the coming of the Kitians to Idalion (Gaber

1992:172). There is no other destruction debris published that is associated with this event, however the final report of the West Terrace and temenos wall excavations by the Cypriot Department of Antiquities under Dr. Maria Hadjicosti may reveal some breach in the walls on the western part of the site. The west terrace has not been excavated below the Phoenician administrative complex and garrison and therefore it is unclear as to what the purpose of the architecture was before this period. In the 1970s, the American Excavations carried out by Harvard revealed a new administrative complex built of gypsum blocks and re-used sandstones was built on the east terrace during the Hellenistic period, showing a physical shift of power after the Phoenicians relinquished administrative control of Idalion (Doerrman 1974).

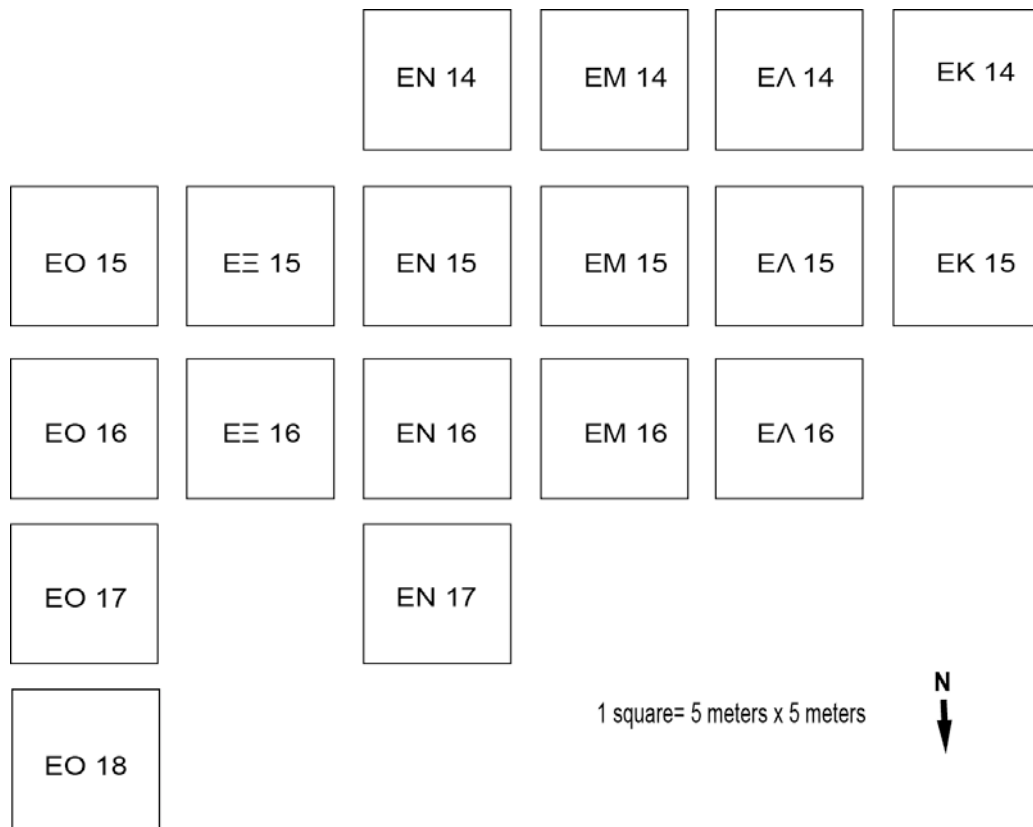
During these periods, a domestic complex existed on the plain below the west and east acropoleis. This complex, called the Lower City North (LCN) by the American excavation team, consisted of small scale installations used to make olive oil, work horns, and possibly dye cloth or make pottery through the use of large settling tanks (Stager and Walker 1981, Gaber and Dever 1996). The small scale design of the industrial elements and the domestic-type architecture in other places (Building A) demonstrate an area of social living, separated from the larger structures on the west and east terraces.

In the late 1990s, the American excavation team sunk new trenches to the south and east of LCN to continue searching for domestic spaces. Concurrently, a sanctuary site was discovered that had not been found previously by antiquaries of the late 1800s and early 1900s. This is the LCS sanctuary site and it has thus far been excavated to 10<sup>th</sup> century BCE levels and its latest layers date to the first century CE. The site is

currently undergoing excavation and the following discussion covers findings through 2013.

D. The Architecture in the Lower City South, Idalion

The Lower City South is arranged in units of five-meter squares with one-meter baulks between squares. The naming of the units is drawn from the Department of Antiquities 1991 establishment of a grid beginning on the West Terrace. Please see **figure 3** below for the layout of grid squares at the Lower City South sanctuary at Idalion.



**Figure 2: Grid square layout, LCS as of summer 2013**

At LCS, there is evidence of repetitive actions and conceptualizations of the cult through time. Three altars, some platforms/walls, and three water features are included in the following discussion of repetition of architectural elements over time. Some of the

ritual elements within the LCS sanctuary have been published briefly (Gaber 2008). Three altars in the central part of the excavated area are significant and seem to be similar to some cult sites in Israel (Gaber 2008:60-61). While this notation of architectural style is important, this paper does not present the LCS architecture as belonging to a specific style. The main purpose of this paper is to point out how repetition is a marker of cultural continuity, but it does not seek to compare architectural elements from a skill standpoint or a marker of specific techniques used by different groups.

Renfrew (1985, 1994) demonstrates the embedded nature of cult in societies and its physical manifestations in archaeology that include specific materials, symbols, places, and also the repetition of symbols. There are three altars in the central part of the excavated area of LCS (**figure 3**). Two of the altars are in close proximity, with the third one located about three meters to the west. The two altars closest together are dated to about the 6<sup>th</sup> century BCE. One, likely placed first of the two, has rounded limestone blocks, gray river stones, and sandstones, while the other is constructed of both local limestone and imported limestone. The two altars are connected with a collection/line of stones which may suggest two different construction events. This is also seen on the East Terrace, where the earlier CA/CC altar is added onto in the Hellenistic Period by adding a wall-like structure to connect the two (Ryckbosch and Gaber forthcoming).





**Figure 3. Photograph of altars, North at NE corner. Photo: P. Gaber 2004**

The third altar to the west of the paired ones is of a 7<sup>th</sup> century BCE date. This altar is dated based on a foundation trench. This altar is constructed of limestone, topped with sandstone in a square shape. While the exact dates of the altars are unknown, their close proximal relationship suggests a consistent ritual practice. It also shows that after the arrival of the Kitians, the LCS sanctuary users continued to use the altars, as there is no evidence of destruction or covering of the preexisting structures. Using Renfrew's (1994:51-52, Renfrew and Bahn 1991: 359-360) list of indicators of cult or religious practice, altars are considered an attention-focusing device and are very important in cultic ritual.

Idalions' LCS sanctuary also has several water features dating from the Cypro-Archaic through Roman Period that could be the remains of water used for ritual cleansing, drainage, storage, or industrial use. These features change dramatically in

construction, but all share a similar concept of water use and storage. First, in the northern part of the excavated sanctuary at Idalion, remains of an Iron Age water installation are found. A large structure, with two gypsum blocks each carved into the shape of an arch, was found cut into bedrock. The structure was a substantial water channel in original purpose. What is unique about the gypsum arches is that it may have altered the original purpose of the Iron Age channel because its stratigraphy suggests it was a later addition to an existing structure. There is a bedrock-cut foundation trench to the south used for the placement of the gypsum arches, but it did not yield any pottery for relative dating. The pottery from between and next to the gypsum arches was field dated as early Hellenistic and Cypro-Classical (CC), however, some Cypro-Geometric pottery was also found in these layers, suggesting that the gypsum blocks were cut into the existing architecture from the Iron Age during the CC period. Unfortunately, the channel does not seem to continue past the barrier wall of the trench, as there is no evidence of continuation at this same level in the next trench over. Therefore, the purpose of channeling water in this area is unknown. Its location near to the sacred area of the sanctuary does suggest some sort of ritual purpose for water. During the first century BCE, this area was covered over with large cobbles and a new water feature was constructed to the southwest of the original one. It is based on a pit cut into bedrock with a channel of small limestone blocks and river stones that would have guided water into the pit. This channel appears cruder in construction. In the 1<sup>st</sup> century CE, another water installation was built to the east perhaps to replace this crude channel.

The water feature to the east is a water basin. It is built out of concrete and seems to have been covered. At its initial excavation, the cover had already collapsed into the body of the basin. The bottom has not yet been excavated. This basin represents a later phase of water storage that may have started with the bedrock cuts associated with the channel to the west. Another nearby channel also dates to the late Hellenistic/early Roman period, perhaps the 1<sup>st</sup> century BCE. This channel was excavated in 2013 and consists of a shallow channel cut out of imported limestone blocks and appears to move from south to north, but begins to turn to the east and continue under a wall at the point where excavation stopped (**figure 4**). The simplistic design of this channel suggests it was more likely to be used for drainage than any of the other water features. While the purpose of these water features is unknown, their recursivity is significant for a discussion of place making.



**Figure 4. water channel excavated summer 2013** (photo by A. Wright 2013)

Other architectural elements in the LCS sanctuary also represent purposeful reuse and repetition. There are several walls in the sanctuary that suggest multiple use

phases and rebuilding. While reconstructing a wall is not abnormal, the purposeful revetment of a wall can be significant. If a specific feature is important through time, making it stronger will increase its significance and maintain its use. For example, in the northwest part of the sanctuary, there is a southeast-northwest wall that dates CG-Roman. This wall has associated floors that date to several hundred years of use and has also been dated through an analysis of phytoliths by the Weizman Institute of Science in Rehovet, Israel. Another wall in this area also begins its life in the CG period and is rebuilt and added onto in the Roman period. In the northeastern most excavated area of the site, another wall has an addition to it, to continue its use through time. The original wall is constructed of large, local limestone blocks and a revetment-type addition is constructed of smaller chunks of limestone built on the western side of the original wall. The current state of the original wall is a good example of how local Idalion limestone decomposes through time. The purpose of these walls is not clear because excavation has not been completed in this area yet.

In the center part of the sanctuary, to the west of the area of the altars, there are a series of platforms that border a room to the south and a possible entrance to the north. Three phases were found during the excavation of these platforms in the early 2000s. The dating of the platforms has been suggested to be CG, CA, and Hellenistic. There was a fair amount of Roman concrete in the top most phasing of the platforms, however this could be more proof of place making because during the Roman period, the users of the sanctuary were reinforcing a structure that was pre-existing. In this way, it is clear that the purpose of the sanctuary remained relatively the same from its early Iron Age construction through its Roman period use.

### **III. Putting Practice into Theory: Cultural Identity at Idalion**

Although the political history of Idalion suggests occasional strife, the archaeology of the LCS sanctuary presents a continuity of cultural traditions because of the repetition of architectural elements. Therefore, cult practice, place making, and group identification were continued through the changes in administrative control. If a population continues to use a sacred location, then their habits are likely to be maintained even with the influx of new cultural groups with differing practices.

Archaeology is the physical representation of human agency. While agency can simply represent purposeful actions of humans, it also considers the mental capacity to maintain traditions and cult practices. Idalion is a great example of an ancient colonial city. In the fifth century BCE, the Phoenician kingdom of Kition appropriated administration of the city-kingdom on the west terrace. At this point, the LCS sanctuary may have revamped its altars and cult practices and a water feature was rebuilt. The cult continued, and new cult objects were placed in the sanctuary, but ultimately the sanctuary was maintained as it was before the Kitian arrival. In the Hellenistic period, the Phoenician group from Kition was replaced and the administration moved to a new location on the opposite terrace and new workshops were established on the plain below this new building. The older water transportation features in the LCS were revamped, or covered up. The Roman period peoples changed parts of the sanctuary, but instead of evidence of colonial destruction like much of the Roman impacted world, they rebuilt walls and platforms recognizing the original importance of the structure. This suggests that the local population adopted Roman building techniques and there was not an influx of Roman peoples to Idalion.

The LCS sanctuary has been phased according to standard dating of the Mediterranean, attributing different time periods to groups called by readily accepted and known names. Phoenicians, Hellenistic peoples, Romans, Cypriots, etc. all suggest that history and archaeology present obvious examples of easily identifiable groups. While this practice is problematic because it assumes a standardized identity, it is difficult to not use these “easy” names in discussions as I did above. In order to re-identify the social groups at the Lower City South it is important to put the architectural practices into a theoretical frame of identity and place making influenced by several types of material remains.

There is a problem with identifying an archaeological group in ethnic terms because archaeology is a series of contexts. As Knapp (2001) explains, ethnicity cannot explain an archaeological group because archaeology is contextual and ethnicity suggests an identity based on a fixed time/place. However, this is not to say indicators of cultural practice cannot be found in archaeology. In fact, Webb and Frankel (1999) argue well for an Anatolian identity in central Cyprus at the beginning of the Bronze Age. To understand change, one must recognize that after the initial introduction of cultural items and traits foreign to a place, these objects and traditions become ‘entangled’ in the broader cultural realm (Stockhammer 2012). Once an object is re-created or a cultural practice is taken into the repertoire, it begins to lose its strangeness. Recently, ‘hybridity’ has been used to determine the adoption of foreign elements into a society (Counts 2008, Iacovou 2008, Voskos and Knapp 2008). While these studies consider the foreign elements as adopted, meaning the use of a known foreign element as part of the local practice, ‘entanglement’ suggests that the foreign

element is instead reassigned as part of the known cultural practice. Therefore, hybridity may not represent the true nature of social practice.

Above I defined (group) identity as social identity that relies on the transfer of traditions as well as maintenance of existing ones through the interaction with material objects. Therefore, the site of Idalion exemplifies a strong case for maintaining tradition during changes in sociopolitical circumstances. This group holds value in its shared past, whether that past began on Cyprus, or was transported to Cyprus from somewhere else. Nevertheless this explains cultural continuity, as opposed to changing of cult practices during the time of administration by the Phoenicians, or the shift to a more Hellenic form of administration in the Hellenistic period. The identity group at Idalion cannot be named, but they can be recognized through cult practice that involves water and the recursive construction of altars nearby. The sanctuary has also not revealed many independent rooms making it different from other Iron Age Cypriot sanctuary sites (Smith 1997, Al-Radi 1983). Therefore users of the LCS sanctuary established a distinct relationship with the architecture through social practices. Sökefeld (1999:430), through ethnography in Pakistan, has found that “the subject, or self, and its agency are understood as a product of discourse and social/historical conditions.” Therefore, there is a clear relationship between human beings, their identity, and the places in which they perform activities. At Idalion, the relationship between the people and the LCS sanctuary reveals a social practice that remains consistent through time also indicating *habitus*. The ancient peoples of Idalion revealed themselves through their interaction and cult practice at the sanctuary below the West Acropolis through ritualistic behaviors involving altars and offering platforms. There are

few fineware vessels, terracottas, or sculptural pieces found in situ at the LCS, as a ritual *bothros*, or pit, located in another area of the site was the final resting place of much of these materials from the Lower City South.

Place and identity are interconnected and recent ethnographic work shows this relationship. Fred Myers (2002: 116-117) determined that the Pintupi considered place as their defining characteristic of identity and that place is socially and politically constructed; one is born into an already existing structure that determines identity through relationships with place. Thus, the Pintupi self identify based on their origins and the places they interact with regularly, and not independently of either. Therefore I suggest that throughout the changes in political administration, Idalion's LCS sanctuary maintained its overall standard usage and its cult practices because these practices were well integrated into the people's social system. This may suggest that the traditions were imported to Idalion in the Bronze Age from a possible Levantine origin as Gaber (2008) has suggested that the altars are similar to some in Israel. This may also indicate the reason for a lack of destruction when the Kitians arrived to Idalion. The people from Kition were Phoenicians when they arrived to the island in the 10<sup>th</sup> century BCE. This ancient group of travellers is from a Semitic origin and are difficult to identify as a coherent group because each of their cities (e.g. Tyre, Sidon, Byblos, Carthage) were independent. The Phoenicians are often related to the Canaanites, making their home base the Levantine (Syro-Palestinian) coast (Markoe 2000). By the time the Kitians came to Idalion, it is likely that they assimilated to Cypriot traditions and need no longer be called Phoenician, but rather Kitian, as I have done above.



The base population of Idalion, an unnamed identity group, was rooted in a tradition that began with the first settlers at the site and through purposeful maintenance, the tradition survived until the sanctuary went out of use. Giddens' (1984) structuration theory allows architectural repetition to be understood as the reproduction of social systems. These social systems are maintained through purposeful agents interacting with materials and one another in a consistent and repetitive nature. At Idalion, the cult practice persists through time and political change and identities are created and maintained through these habitual practices. To further understand the social identity group at Idalion, work on other material remains will illuminate more characteristics.

#### **IV. Limitations, Futures, and Conclusions**

##### Data Limitations

Architectural analysis is a process that can include investigations of style, raw material, phases of construction, and purpose. For this project, I gathered architectural data from archaeological top plans, remains currently visible on site, and field notes to identify repetitions in types of architectural elements. Therefore, this paper does not provide a description of the intricacies of construction, nor the exact purpose of the architecture. The top plans do provide contextual information for each of the architectural elements and so I have suggested phasing of the architecture based on that data. I have also had several discussions with the director of the Idalion excavation project and these conversations are also reflected in the data presentation. The data does not allow for a comparison with other sites although I recognize that this is an important next step in understanding cultural identities in the broader region. By

recognizing that architecture is an institutional practice, I am able to recognize a cultural identity at Idalion, but cannot make statements about this identity in relationship to those nearby.

### Future Research

In archaeological inquiry, style is representative of group agency. Often times, style is discussed in terms of portable material culture like pottery or clothing (Wiessner 1983, Wobst 1977, Plog 1978). Since the last half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, style has been used to explain behavioral patterning as well as material culture patterning (Hodder 1990:46, Conkey and Hastorf 1990:2). These inquiries into the purpose of style allow for an analysis of architecture that recognizes group traditions that are already visible in the archaeological record of Cyprus. Therefore, further research has been planned to investigate material culture practices in the broader region to recognize the material style of the Mesaoria Plain. Material style, as explained by Carr (1995:165), is the style suggested by a group of material culture items and their relationship and not based on one material culture item in isolation. While the data gathered for this project demonstrates how architecture is an important element for identifying group agency and identity, future work should incorporate more material remains to allow for comparative studies.

### Conclusions

The Lower City South sanctuary of Idalion, Cyprus represents an identity group that favors ritual practice involving altars and water use. Sanctuaries in the Mediterranean region are often areas that include workshops nearby to cult practice. Idalion is no different. *Habitus* is visible at Idalion through an understanding of repetitive

building practices carried out by agents that were little affected by changing political systems. The people at Idalion practiced self-identification through the maintenance of ritual practices that required certain architectural features to be maintained in the LCS sanctuary through time. While the people of ancient Idalion should not be named with a specific ethnic identification, they can be recognized through their building practices and persistent practices. The modern village of Dali is located north of the ancient city. The Yialias River began moving north during the Roman period and as time progressed, the village moved farther and farther north to its current location. The LCS sanctuary was in fact buried and therefore cultural continuity in the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BCE eventually did end. However, this is normal for the ancient world because Christianity became the dominant religion and pagan/native ritual practice began to be replaced. Therefore, the place making that the ancient peoples practiced was eventually replaced with place making based on Christian religion, but some vague memory must have survived because the ancient site remained mostly intact into the 20<sup>th</sup> century with few modern developments on the land.

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