

Where East met West: To What Extent do Manifestations and Conceptions of Cultural Identity on Early Iron Age Cyprus Support the Existence of a Unique Cultural Identity

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Abstract

This paper endeavours to conduct an investigation into the cultural and ethnic identity of Early Iron Age Cyprus, finding its primary influences and assessing the extent to which it can be classified as distinctly Cypriot. The time period examined lasts from roughly 1100 BC, when the cultural landscape was significantly changed by large-scale Aegean immigration, to 497 BC. This end date has been chosen because, with it, finishes the participation of Cyprus in the Ionian revolt - from then on, the island becomes more ingrained in the wider Greek political world and once more changes its cultural direction. This leaves on with a period of around 600 years where the island suffered no direct invasions and remained fairly stable. In order to undertake said examination, I examine the archaeological and material remains of the island from the aforementioned time period, the linguistic identity of Cyprus, references to identity on the island in the literature of the wider ancient world and finally the religious practices (including funerary and burial rites) on the island. This is done through an extensive literature review of relevant books, journal articles and archaeological surveys. The evidence leads one to a fairly straightforward conclusion that the cultural identity of the island was engendered from a myriad of sources and, in many ways, was somewhat of an amalgamation of the cultural expressions of the Aegean and Levanto-Egyptian worlds. However, one risks that, when examining the particular features of Cypriot expressions of identity in the Early Iron Age, most of which were imported, the entirety of the culture, which was distinctly Cypriot, is neglected. Furthermore, another key finding is that, while the island was culturally homogenous, each Kingdom maintained fiercely their own identity and the idea of a unified Cypriot culture does not seem to have existed (at least not strongly) in Cyprus itself.

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Abbreviations

LBA – Late Bronze Age (circa 1500 BC – 1100 BC)

EIA – Early Iron Age (circa 1100 BC – 497 BC)

CG - Cypro-Geometric period (circa 1100-707 BC)

CA - Cypro-Archaic period (707-497 BC)

Introduction

The cultural identity of Early Iron Age Cyprus is a truly fascinating subject to examine: Cypriot society retained strong connections in its society to other Eastern Mediterranean lands, resulting in the development of a multifaceted culture exhibiting signs of the influence of a wide number of different nations on Cypriot culture. The main manifestations of Cypriot culture that do reveal this are the material culture, language, and religious practises of the island, which, though in the past obscure, have been illuminated in the past 100 years through successive archaeological digs on the island. The island suffered large scale Aegean migration in the 12th century, a Phoenician colonization in the 9th century followed by domination by successive Near Eastern empires for 400 years (Counts, 2008). The aim of this paper is to investigate this cultural mix, discovering exactly what the Cypriots saw their own identity as, what other saw it as and finally using the benefit of hindsight 2,500 years to determine whether or not Cypriot culture can really be called unique. One of the most novel responses to this has been proposed recently by Voskos and Knapp, who proposed to apply the relatively recent postcolonial theory to EIA Cyprus in order to understand cultural development there (Voskos & Knapp, 2008). While I disagree in principle to the application of postcolonial theory as a whole to EIA Cyprus due to the differences in context, their conclusion is useful insofar as the postcolonial concept of hybridity works excellently when examining the cultural identity of Cyprus. Hybridity is the idea whereby with enough influence exerted by a foreign power¹, an indigenous culture may absorb elements of it to create a hybrid, culture, part indigenous, part colonial, but unique in its own right. For the purposes of this topic, I feel that the concept of hybridity is certainly apt as while the cultural identity of Cyprus was a “by-product of Mediterranean globalisation” (Counts, 2008, p.5), it must be remembered that the amalgam of different cultures in Cyprus actually creates a distinct Cypriot culture that would have stood out from all its immediate neighbours, reinforced by continuation of certain indigenous traditions.

¹ The economic reliance of Cyprus on foreign empires for trade, in particular selling the copper that abounded on Cyprus, in my view, could fulfil this, which otherwise does not seem particularly applicable to Cyprus.

Thus, a close examination of the evidence, as undertaken below, does support a unique cultural identity.

Archaeology and Artistic Expression

The archaeological record is crucial to being able to find evidence that supports the existence of a unique Cypriot identity, as one can examine the remains in detail to find the influence of foreign cultures. Indeed, material culture is integral to identity as people become closely linked to artistic traditions, even if only subconsciously; in the end contributing to the individual's worldview, and often the artistic traditions they choose to employ tell us something about how they see their own identity.

A small but persistent trade with the Greek world remained through the CG, especially with the urban centre Lefkandi, and several Greek artefacts have been found in Cypriot tombs from the time. However, it is curious to note that these Greek imports found are geared towards a Cypriot taste: tree of life motifs are very rare in Geometric Greece yet several of the Attic *kantharoi* present contain it (Buitron-Oliver, 1997). This is highly suggestive of a Cypriot taste for Near Eastern design within a framework of Greek art, a trait supportive of the concept of cultural hybridity and the development of a unique Cypriot culture from two different, non-Cypriot cultural influences. With sculptures, Cypriot art once again shows signs of influence from both the Aegean world and the Near East. The unique anthropomorphic bronze statues of Idalion, another Greek city, exhibit great similarity to Levantine models (Reyes, 1992). Limestone sculptures across the island are also very similar to Levantine models in the early stages, although both these and those in bronze do become more Hellenic in style² through the course of the 6th century BC (Reyes, 1992). This results in a real mix of artistic styles – the position of the statue remains Near Eastern, and the clothing Egyptian (see appendix A for more detail), but the definition of the sculpture and working technique remain Greek (Satraki, 2013). Nevertheless, despite this distinctively Cypriot art form, it is worth noting that statues, often used as visual manifestations of royal power, are distributed in cult places dedicated to “national” deities and heroes. They were distributed around the entirety of each Kingdom where they were, thus asserting “the identity of each polity and displaying its privileged relationship with the deities” (Caubet, 2014, p.258). This illustrates that, while culture may have been uniform across the island, each Kingdom was fiercely promoting its own unique identity. At Golgoi, a sanctuary situated on the borders of several Kingdoms, the sanctuary seems to have had different Kingdoms represented in different parts of the sanctuary with no place for universal worship - this is particularly curious as it suggests almost an active unwillingness to create a pan-Cypriot sanctuary, and a clear desire to maintain strong Kingdom-linked identities (Reyes, 1994). By the 8th century BC, pottery in Cyprus also begins to crystallize into a singular form, called Proto-White Painted Ware by archaeologists, maintaining both Greek and Phoenician features alongside indigenous tradition (Coldstream, 2012). It is notable that there is comparatively little Greek pottery imported in this period, none at all in some cities, suggesting an identity disassociated with mainland culture by the end of the CG (Childs,

² This is notable through a higher quality of muscle definition and the introduction of a more frontal emphasis for the statues.

1997). Even the very layout of cities in the EIA is evocative of a combination of ideas from different sources, with a mix of Mycenaean and Levantine influences replacing for the most part the Bronze Age Cypriot city designs (Voskos & Knapp, 2008)³. Indeed, the adoption of ashlar masonry all over the island during the CG illustrates a strong Levantine influence, and even the walls and dog-leg gates are more reminiscent of Hittite and Anatolian tradition than Aegean (Voskos & Knapp, 2008). Nevertheless, the layout of administrative centres and the palace are remarkably similar to that in the Mycenaean world, especially with the inclusion of a *megaron*, suggesting that some Mycenaean royal tradition was maintained, as does the presence of bathrooms (see appendix B for more detail) and hearths (Voskos & Knapp, 2008). It is a testament to the truth of the concept of hybridity that the royal centres of Cyprus contained Mycenaean cultural features built in Levantine architecture. This is actually repeated in other areas of cross-cultural influence. For instance, Mycenaean pots are often used as wine sets for distinctively Near Eastern parties (Hamilakis & Sherratt, 2012). Cypriots do however seem to have been able to fit into the cultural milieu of Greek Naukratis without problems (see appendix C). Sanctuary decoration is also notable for an incredible combination of cultural influences. Capitals in sanctuaries have a strong Levantine influence in volutes that spring from a central triangle. However, distinctively Cypriot features exist in a simple version which is simply the volutes plus a small top, a second set of volutes above with decoration, showing the development of a unique Cypriot artistic tradition with contributions from elsewhere (Reyes, 1994). Likewise, artistic decoration in tombs is a key source. Tombs at Tamassos show interesting decoration: Aeolic capitals alongside cavetto cornices appear, as well as a lotus and palmetto chain above the doorway to Tomb 5, all of which are redolent of Egyptian design (Reyes, 1994). Nevertheless, Relief plaques were often positioned in the tomb on the inner side of the entrance or above the door, very rare at the time outside Cyprus, although the subjects of the relief are, in truth, very Greek in style (Reyes, 1994). Indeed, at Trachonas, a relief plaque has quite a striking decoration of two male figures facing each other in some sort of ritualistic dance - this appears like Greek *komasts*, suggesting a cultural remnant from Mycenaean times due to the shortage of large-scale contact with the Greek world at this time (Reyes, 1994).

The iconography of Cypriot art is important with concern to the elites of Cypriot society, as the iconography in art they commissioned symbolises the identity that they want to be associated with. The iconography of Cypriot statues highlights the desire of Cypriot rulers to be associated with their Near Eastern counterparts (see appendix D for more detail), but it is in burials that we perhaps find the most crucial parts. In particular, the Royal Tombs of Salamis provide extremely useful evidence: very important as burials signify what the dead want to be associated with after their life. Among the *kterismata* found inside the tombs are imported carved ivory plaques decorating wooden furniture, and hammered and incised metal objects in Egyptianizing or Near Eastern character (Satraki, 2013). Here, sphinxes and

³ Domestic quarters at Enkomi IIIA, arranged around large open areas, were replaced with a grid-style road system and architecture utilising ashlar masonry to mark public and sacred edifices, and a Cyclopean style wall was put up. Such changes appear Aegean, but close examination reveals the new city to appear startlingly like Ras Ibn Hani, the coastal port of Ugarit and, given the close relation between Alashiya (Cyprus) and Ugarit at the time, it seems more reasonable to put down the changes to this, although some Aegean influence, is certainly not impossible.

griffins are displayed alongside sacred tree images, a Pharaoh smiting his enemies, a kilt-clad man fighting a lion or griffin with a sword or spear, and a male figure clad in a lion skin wrestling with a lion in what are all strongly Egyptianizing motifs (Satraki, 2013). While it is true that these finds only occur in the graves of the wealthiest, it is also true that these elites were ethnic Greeks and archaeological records attest to their Greek names, titles and language (Satraki, 2013). Additionally, while actual depictions of the monarchs are rare they contain some key features of iconography which help us reconstruct their identity. A bowl that belonged to Akestor, King of Paphos, uses both Assyrian and Egyptian iconography (including the double crown of Egypt) to convey the power of the ruler, while also highlighting the cultural milieu the royal families were immersed in (Satraki, 2013)⁴. Perhaps the most striking feature of this bowl however is the use of fake hieroglyphics⁵, underlining the strong desire of the King to look Egyptian but the lack of knowledge in Cyprus of Egyptian culture (Satraki, 2013). Furthermore, it is certainly worth noting the introduction of the so-called iconography of triumph, which was almost certainly imitated from Assyrian designs (Caubet, 2014). This includes the promulgation of scenes of war and hunting on Cypriot art, and more rarely depictions of banqueting. Many of the scenes of triumph on pottery or bowls seem to replicate the triumphal scenes on the walls of the Assyrian palaces: scenes of military parades or besieged cities were totally unknown in earlier Mycenaean-inspired pottery, and can only “bring to mind the calculated horrors of Assyrian iconography” (Caubet, 2014, p.255). The chariot scenes provide good evidence for this, as the depictions of chariots in the art are built in the Assyrian way – actual Cypriot chariots in this period, although rare, were constructed in the old Mycenaean fashion and it would make little sense not to depict them in that way unless deliberately imitating another work (Reyes, 1994). The iconography of Hathor was also adapted for Cyprus, probably being used to represent local deities (Hermay, 2013). Hathor heads become exceedingly common on pottery and in use as capitals: this inspiration was almost certainly directly from Egypt (Reyes, 1994)⁶. This once again underlines the theory of hybridity, as a foreign influence is thoroughly adapted into a distinct culture, serving to distinguish it further from other neighbours.

Language

The second feature of EIA Cypriot identity this paper examines is language. Understanding the language spoken by the Cypriots is crucial to understanding their ethnic identity and their cultural interactions, especially due to its visibility in everyday life. Nevertheless, Cyprus was in many places as much as trilingual, with Greek, Phoenician, and Eteocypriot (probably the survival of the indigenous language) being spoken well into the 1st millennium. The unique writing system also is important to understanding the distinctiveness of Cypriot

⁴ In particular, the griffins and the central winged figure are clearly lifted from Assyrian art, probably the friezes within the Royal Palace. The image of the King being protected by the goddess Isis and the depiction of the Pharaoh in a characteristic scene whipping his rivals in one of the outer circles are more Egyptian.

⁵ These are a crude attempt by the Cypriot artist to imitate a language he had little knowledge in

⁶ Unlike many other Egyptianizing features of Cypriot art, which were probably introduced through a Phoenician intermediary

culture. In this I examine Cyprus in the literary sources of others to try to understand how others saw Cyprus, and to try to glean any information possible about them from it.

Most Cypriots of the EIA spoke a form of Greek. This is perhaps best demonstrated by the titles of the rulers of the island, all but one of whom used the Greek title *Basileus*, with only Kition, a Phoenician colony, using an alternative title, in this case *mlk*, meaning King in Phoenician (Counts & Iacovou, 2013). Even Amathus uses the title *Basileus*, which is striking given that the city was consistently issuing bilingual documents in Greek and another, undeciphered language, and even occasionally monolingual documents in the latter (Aupert, 1997). However, in all likelihood it seems likely, based on literary references that mark out Amathus as a city populated by indigenous Cypriots, not Greeks or Phoenicians, that this language, Eteocypriot, was one descended from that spoken on the island in the LBA (Aupert, 1997). While there is no conclusive proof that Eteocypriot is the original language of LBA Cyprus and was gradually reduced by the encroachment of Greek a final bastion of Amathus, this hypothesis seems by far the most likely. The Kourion area provides some evidence for a indigenous Cypriot community in the 6th century. This comes from 6 rock-cut inscriptions at Yerakarka and At Meydan that yield names that are certainly not of Greek origin, but probably Eteocypriot (Buitron-Oliver, 1997). By the time that states had crystallised though in the 7th century, it seems likely that only one still had a large enough Eteocypriot population to support the language officially (Iacovou, 2008). Indeed, it is quite possible Eteocypriot was promoted in Amathus even if there was a Greek ruling class in order to distinguish Amathus from its neighbours and, crucially, give legitimacy to any military campaigns (Iacovou, 2008). Indeed, it has even been proposed that the name of Amathus on the stele set up by the Assyrian emperor Esarhaddon reporting his dominance over the island in 673 BC, *Noure*, is actually a form of *Ki-Noure*, probably meaning “the city of Kinyras”, the mythological indigenous King of the island, in order to try to prove their native credentials (Iacovou, 2006). This in turn supports the premise that each city was strongly protective of their own individual identity, shunning a greater Cypriot identity. The scholar Given has consistently denied the existence of an Eteocypriot language or identity on the island, instead saying it was a creation of imperialist-minded excavators of Cyprus during the 30s seeking to sap support for *enosis* (Given, 1998). While it is true the “Eteocypriot” is only attested from the 7th century onwards, this does not mean it was not on the island before - there are far fewer Cypriot syllabic records of any language before that time, and none from Amathus, and the possibility of it being the language of an immigrant community is more or less disproved by contemporary literary references to Amathus as autochthonous. Despite the presence of what was likely a linguistic “holdout” group from LBA Cyprus, the presence of Greek on the island did go back a long time, and was similar unique in its own way, with the dialect in particular being quite distinctive (see appendix E for more detail). The adoption of Cypriot Syllabic as a script is particularly striking for this case of immigrant speakers of a language foreign to Cyprus, and even more so when it was the Cypriots who adopted the language of the immigrants (Davies & Oliver, 2012). By giving their language a scribal tool, their linguistic identity was preserved, isolating them culturally from their Greek cousins across the sea and identifying themselves as Cypriot above all else (Iacovou, 2008). In fact, the script they adopted was simply a variant

of that written during the LBA (Davies & Oliver, 2012). The way in which the script persevered for such a long time, despite its clunky and outdated syllabic nature and sheer inefficiency when compared with the Greek or Phoenician alphabets (Iacovou, 2008). Syllabic persevered through the introduction of the Greek alphabet by Evagoras of Salamis at the end of the 5th century and through a concerted Ptolemaic campaign to eliminate it, with the last known inscription⁷ coming at the end of the 1st century BC, when Cyprus was under Roman domination (Iacovou, 2008). Strikingly, its use seems engrained with Cypriot identity and it is one of the few things that really bound Cypriots together – it was well known enough to be used by Cypriot mercenaries in Egypt, as graffiti in Abu Simbel highlights (Boardman, 1964). This suggests that Greco-Cypriots actively did not want to be seen as simply Greeks. Linguistically, there also seems to have been crossover between Greeks and Phoenicians. Notably, in Kition, archaeological records show the setting up of a *trpy* near the city - this is probably a transliteration of Greek *tropaion*, a trophy set up to commemorate a military victory (Yon & Childs, 1997). This is fascinating as it shows the city with the strongest Phoenician credentials fully engaging with a Greek cultural practice, thus providing further evidence for cultural hybridity.

Similarly important to what the Cypriots actually spoke is what was said about them by others. Despite the fact that by the end of the Archaic period a majority of Cypriots were probably speaking Greek, to mainlanders they were still seen as foreign and more eastern. The late 2nd century AD rhetorician Athenaeus quotes ancient authors impressed by the luxurious lifestyles of Cypriot Kings, mentioning flatterers (*kolakes*) who, particularly in Salamis, worked as informants for the Kings (2.255-6b, 6.257d-f and 12.542b-d). This is a stereotypical Greek view of an oriental lifestyle (Greeks saw the Egyptians and Persians like this) and consequently this source marks the Cypriot cultural identity out from the Greeks of the Aegean. Furthermore, classical authors stress the indigenesness of the city of Amathus. Theopompus of Chios, a 4th century BC historian, in a fragment quoted by Photius (a 9th century AD historian) in his *Bibliotheca* 176.120a, states the Amathusians were the descendants of the original Cypriots, forced out by the Greeks. Pseudo-Scylax (103), another 4th century BC historian, describes the Amathusians as autochthonous as well, again suggesting an older origin for them, predating the Greeks and Phoenicians. This really does suggest another identity on Cyprus - an Eteocypriot one, as supported by the discovery of the language. While the island was also home to a substantial Phoenician population who retained close political ties to Tyre, it seem as though, “irrespective of their linguistic identity or the incessant conflict amongst the territorial monarchies of Cyprus, the different *ethne* of the island identified themselves, and were collectively identified as *Kyprioi*” (Iacovou, 2006). Assyrian sources, while few, do however seem to signal more of a Greek identity. A stele set up by Esarhaddon in 673 BC lists 10 Kingdoms and the names of their Kings, and it is certainly striking that well over half have Greek names (Iacovou, 2013). Likewise, it is quite interesting to note the Assyrian word for Cyprus, *ladnana*, an innovation as they seem to have disregarded the traditional LBA word *Alashiya*, suggesting a change in Cyprus itself, possibly the Mycenaean migration (Iacovou, 2008). The likelihood is that *ladnana* means “land of the Greeks”, quite probably from the Greek ethnonym *Danaans*

⁷ There may be more from later, but none have been found

(Iacovou, 2008). This creates an interesting paradox whereby the Assyrians see the island as Greek and the Greeks see it as Near Eastern – an honest testimony to the cultural mixing and extent of cultural hybridity on the island.

Religion

The final aspect of cultural identity in EIA Cyprus that this paper examines is religion. Religion is integral to understanding the identity of Cyprus as religion, especially before the modern age, profoundly affected the daily lives and material culture of people. In Cyprus, religion also illuminates hybridity almost as well as anything else, as well as illustrating the strong desire for independence of each Kingdom.

Cyprus was certainly willing to accept foreign gods, or at the very least features of foreign gods, into its pantheon. The instances of this are numerous, and I have placed the notable cult of Herakles-Melqart into appendix F. For now, this paper will focus on the cult of Aphrodite/Ashtart, perhaps the best example to underline the cultural hybridity of the island. The concept of a powerful female fertility goddess was strong on Cyprus in the LBA, but Aphrodite/Ashtart was herself only introduced with the Phoenicians in the 9th century BC (Budin, 2004). Her worship was certainly island-wide⁸, with almost all cities introducing her cult and some, notably Amathus, combining it with existing cults of the Indigenous “Great-Goddess” (Budin, 2004). This creates the fascinating scenario where all three ethnic groups on the island are united in the worship of a uniquely Cypriot goddess. An example from Kition, where Phoenician Ashtart was the primary deity, highlights the scale of such religious syncretism. A bowl records the visiting of a Greek from Tamassos to fulfill a vow to the goddess, highlighting that the Greeks of the island felt their Aphrodite was exactly the same as Phoenician Ashtart (Reyes, 1994). Indeed, it is interesting to note that the temple of Ashtart at Kition was built directly on top of a LBA temple of the “Great Goddess”, suggesting a real awareness of religious continuity, and the fact that Ashtart was promoted to the position of top deity in Kition despite Melqart holding that role in her mother city of Tyre (Reyes, 1994). Even the way the Cypriots worshipped was unique – they had open air sanctuaries based around large open spaces, a ritual not found anywhere else in the entire Mediterranean at the time, but an old Cypriot tradition stretching back already 1,000 years by the end of the CA (Reyes, 1994). While religion is certainly one of the things that brought Cypriots together in a more united cultural identity, it was also used by Kingdoms to keep them apart. Religion and administration of states seem to have been intrinsically linked. Excavations at the Ayia Irini and Achna sanctuaries, both in relatively rural parts of their Kingdoms, demonstrate they were probably “a centre of economic control for the community”, with industrial spaces, storage spaces as well as areas of display for votive offerings (Papantoniou, 2013, p.39). Furthermore, the highest qualities of Cypriot monumental limestone sculpture also come from extra-urban sanctuaries, likely because “the purpose of monumental statues was twofold - one, as a votive offering to the god; two,

⁸ While the worship of Aphrodite/Ashtart was island wide, the most notable sanctuary was in Paphos, where she was referred to as the *wanassa* and the King himself drew legitimacy from being her high priest. Paphos is also highlighted even in very old literary sources, such as *Odyssey* 8.362, to be the cult centre of her worship

as a conveyor of a social message” (Papantoniou, 2013, p.44). In particular, the distribution of the royal image was crucial to stressing the domination of one dynasty over a particular area by linking it to supreme divine authority. Such extra-urban sanctuaries became so linked with identity that when Kition conquered Amathus in the 4th century, they dismantled the Temple of Athena/Anat (the main deity of Idalion) at Idalion and disestablished the cult, instead promoting Apollo/Reshef (Fourrier, 2013). This demonstrates the importance of religion to Cypriot Kingdoms in maintaining a distinct identity.

Burial practices and funerary rites are another crucial religious aspect of culture, as they signify how the dead want to be remembered. Lavish burials are seen with the “Royal” Tombs of Salamis, and the discovery of horse bones inside, alongside chariots, in tombs 79 and 3 suggest the dead were taken inside by chariot, and many other tombs contain the remains of either horses or chariots (Montoya, 2013). The animals seem to have been ritually killed after bearing the deceased into the chamber, in order to then serve their master in the afterlife (Montoya, 2013)⁹. It is worth noting the link with Uratu, where a 7th century tomb in Altintepe has surfaced containing a bronze cauldron, a war chariot, horse trappings and furniture, a very similar array of finds to what was found in Tomb 79 (Montoya, 2013). Furthermore, it is precisely around this time that the Assyrians began to engage with a nascent equestrian culture, and promulgate the fact by placing great emphasis on horse iconography in their palaces and artwork (Negbi, 1992). This suggests once again that the palatial culture of Cyprus was probably more in tune with that of the Near East than Greece, despite its origins in the latter. Despite the fact that the Cypriots were incorporating many foreign influences in their religion, there does seem to have been a concerted attempt to legitimize it by harking back. There is evidence for the reuse of tombs across the island, where many Iron Age artefacts have been discovered in LBA tombs. This reuse was likely not for its simplicity and economy but a deliberate choice of use of older tombs which could legitimize incomers by linking them to conspicuously established groups (Keswani, 2012). Hero cults also likely existed, as offerings burnt outside tombs have been found at Kouklia-Scales and Salamis-Kellarka for a long time after the internment of the deceased, and a tomb at Amathus deliberately preserved and later made into a temple is also suggestive of the fact in what would be a very Greek practice, although here it would be done with specific Cypriot ancestors in mind; a wonderful example of religious hybridity (Keswani, 2012). Despite this link to faraway practices, Cypriot mortuary customs also served to reinforce national identity with tomb sites are often moved outside of cities in a manner less connected with the Aegean (Voskos & Knapp, 2008). This actually seems to be to highlight local identity above anything else, as in the places where the cities became surrounded by tombs a communal identity would be projected onto anyone entering the city (Janes, 2013). Indeed, at Amathus-Anemos and Agia Varvara the tombs are made to be

⁹ This has often been compared to burial rituals in the *Iliad*, as the burial with chariot is very close to the Homeric burial of heroes (the funeral of Patroclus does bear really startling similarities to this), strongly suggesting a cultural practice with Mycenaean origins. However, a closer examination of the evidence shows this unlikely as horse sacrifices and burials went out of practice in Cyprus during the 12th century, right when the Mycenaean immigrants were arriving, and only reappeared in the 8th century.

in places highly visible to all approaching the city itself from either hinterland or sea, presenting a visual statement of identity (Janes, 2013)¹⁰. Overall however, burial practices remain testament to Cypriot identity – they are truly a mix of cultural influences including things from the Near East and Greece, creating a uniquely Cypriot tradition.

Conclusion

To conclude, it is clear that Cyprus did have a unique cultural identity in the EIA, but one that was formed through the incorporation of numerous other aspects from foreign cultures. No cultural influence really dominated entirely, although it is certainly arguable that, at least visually, there was a dominance of Near Eastern tradition. Counter to this however runs the fact that, at least by the CA, most people, or at least the elites, were speaking Greek. This highlights a further problem thrown up by the research – it is very difficult to come to a conclusion about what the average Cypriot would have felt, as they were not writing or engaging in the high artistic culture of their elite rulers, leaving us with no real idea of their fundamental identity. Nevertheless, it seems likely that it would have been more state-orientated, due to the extensive, almost propagandistic, promulgation of the state in Cyprus, especially through religion, to try to foster loyalty. While ultimately it is very difficult to determine the cultural identity of the island, it is also worth noting that there have been many cases in history where cultural identity is somewhat separate from ethnicity, with different ethnicities working under the same culture. A fascinating question arises though with the cultural shift following the Ionian revolt, and the closer political ties to the Aegean – it seems strange that this occurred so rapidly, as Cypriot identity as researched in this paper seems strong, or at least solid. Indeed, an enigma is found that Greek influence in Cyprus really increases during the time of Egyptian domination – something strange indeed! Thus, while it must be concluded that Cyprus maintained throughout the EIA a distinct culture, questions remain on how it was so quickly able to be fully Hellenised.

Appendix A – Clothing of EIA Cyprus

The clothing of limestone Cypriot statues is an interesting element of Cypriot artistic tradition as it does tell us important things about what the elite of Cyprus was wearing and who they were trying to emulate with fashion. Indeed, the clothing, mainly composed on the *shenti* (kilt) and *usekh* (collar) seems to have been almost entirely Egyptian in style (Satraki, 2013). Even in a Greek-style vase from the late CA one can see men in eastern vestments in a scene reminiscent of a Near Eastern court. While court dress seems closely linked to Assyria and Egypt, military gear bears more similarity to the Greek world, with one wonderful example of a bowl with an Assyrian-style siege scene containing Cypriot soldiers dressed in the manner of Greek 6th century hoplites (Boardman, 1964).

Appendix B – Bathhouse

There are several interesting instances of bathhouses in EIA Cyprus, and the complexity of these marks it out from its neighbours at the time with a distinctive Cypriot practice. The

¹⁰ Admittedly, this may be for religious reasons, but the stated reason seems more likely as there does not seem any reason for such a rapid religious change, especially one so localised

Palace of Vouni in particular has revealed an astonishing, albeit small, bathhouse complex within its site. This utilises several hydraulic innovations to produce a series of bathing rooms at varied temperature, some hot (rooms 40,42) and others a sort of Cypriot *frigidarium* (21-23), producing a bathing complex truly unique for the time (Hermay, 2013).

Appendix C – Cypriots in Naukratis

The city of Naukratis in Egypt was set up in the late 7th century precisely as an ethnic Greek colony to enable trade between the Greek and Egyptian world, under what was essentially a charter controlled by the Egyptians - this was a city only for Greeks and this rule was strictly enforced, evidence tells us (Boardman, 1964). However, It is interesting to note that archaeological evidence suggests a distinct Cypriot community there, and that literary references in Herodotus back this up (Reyes, 1994). This may highlight that, while the Greeks were happy to deride the Cypriots as eastern, they were at least willing to grudgingly acknowledge common descent.

Appendix D – Iconography of Statues

Statue iconography provides an interesting insight into how the local elites wanted to project their power and the identity that they wanted to portray themselves as. In particular, a large number of statues maintain their arms raised in the so-called “smiting position” (Reyes, 1992). This smiting position is also replicated in many bowls other decorative pieces (Caubet, 2014). This gesture is strongly Near Eastern and, in Egypt, the place of its origin where it had been since the 3rd millennium, it was associated closely with the image of the Pharaoh himself (Reyes, 1992), and in the rest of the Near East, the Levant in particular, it was associated with the Storm God (Caubet, 2014). This was somewhat of an iconographical power play, as it were, by linking the Cypriot Kings, hardly the most powerful people in the Mediterranean, to some of the most economically and militarily influential nations at the time. Nevertheless, it does highlight who Cypriot royalty wanted to be associated with.

Appendix E – Arcado-Cypriot Greek

The dialect of Greek on the island is also interesting for its roots. It is a very archaizing form of Greek which is very similar to Greek spoken on the mainland before the LBA collapse. Indeed, by the Archaic Period the most similar dialect was that spoken in isolated Arcadia in the Peloponnesian mountains, leading to suggestions the two were closely linked through direct descent from Linear B (Davies & Oliver, 2012). This tells us a lot about the origins of the Greco-Cypriots and by extension reveals parts of their identity.

Appendix F – Cult of Herakles/Melqart

Herakles/Melqart is an excellent example of a god introduced into Cypriot religion which incorporates a variety of foreign influences (Miles, 2011). In depictions of deities, a male god clad in lion skin clasping a small lion occupies a prominent place, especially from the 6th century onwards (Counts, 2008). This seems to have transcended cultural divides, becoming popular throughout the island, both in Greek and Phoenician areas due to religious syncretism and blending (Counts, 2008). Indeed, while iconography and cult remain the same across the island, the name consistently changes - at Kition it is Melqart, at Tamassos Reshef and Idalion Apollo (Counts, 2008). The iconographic traits apparent in the Master of the Lion type are easily documented as translations of existing iconographical modes,

common in the Aegean and eastern Mediterranean, into a distinctively Cypriot god (Counts, 2008). In images, the smiting stance is one lifted directly from Assyrian and Egyptian images, but the lionskin being worn is taken from Greek depictions of Herakles as Near Eastern images of Melqart are rarely shown wearing a lionskin (Counts, 2008). Thus we see religious blending of East and West to create a distinctly Cypriot religious identity.

Appendix G – Glyptics

Glyptics are another area where multicultural additions serve to help to create a unique Cypriot style. The hard stones like cornelians, quartzes and jaspers they are made of are clearly allied with the Levantine rather than Egyptian tradition, as the latter rarely cut hard stones for seals (Reyes, 1994). However, the fashion for seals with gemstones may have originated in the Levant, and was certainly most popular there during the first half of the first millenium BC - Ezekial 28:13 reports the King of Tyre as renowned for collecting gemstones. Indeed, the collection found in Kition contains many originally made in Phoenicia (Reyes, 1994). Indeed even on locally made seals, the Egyptianizing motifs often do show signs that they have been lifted from Levantine seals rather than directly from Egyptian ones (Reyes, 1994). Greek influences in turn become prevalent after around 700 BC (Reyes, 1994). This creates a fascinating artistic paradox - the technique remains recognisably eastern and thus, any quick glance at the seals would bring the conclusion that they were Near Easter, but the topics displayed do become very Greek (the motif of a flying Eros in particular becomes common) - here is a real cultural mix showing an affinity in making art with the Near East but on interests with Greece!

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