

Stephan G. Schmid – Will M. Kennedy (eds.)

The Topography of Ancient Idalion and its Territory

Logos Verlag Berlin



Edition: Stephan G. Schmid, Will M. Kennedy

Bibliographic information published by the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek

The Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliografie; detailed bibliographic data are available on the Internet at <http://dnb.d-nb.de>

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ISBN 978-3-8325-5399-9

ISSN 2567-9228

Cover image: Panorama of Idalion, taken from the western acropolis (*Ampileri*).

Above: Ink-and-pen drawing most likely executed by Max Lübke after photographs taken by MOR in the 1880s (Zentralarchiv, SMB, Z 1179).

Below: The same in October 2020 (S. G. Schmid, S. Götz).

Logos Verlag Berlin GmbH
Georg-Knorr-Str. 4, Gebäude 10
12681 Berlin
Germany
Tel.: +49 (0)30 42 85 10 90
<https://www.logos-verlag.com>

With the generous support of

Embassy of the
Republic of Cyprus in Berlin



Studia Cyprologica Berolinensia e.V.



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DFG Deutsche
Forschungsgemeinschaft
German Research Foundation



View from the north-eastern foothills of the Troodos towards the Kyrenia range and across a part of the Mesaoria plain (S. G. Schmid)

Foreword

Maria Papakyriakou

The publication of the second volume of *Studia Cyprologica Berolinensia* coincides with the 20th anniversary of the Republic of Cyprus' accession to the European Union, as well as the sad commemoration of half a century since the Turkish invasion in Cyprus in 1974. Just as Cyprus' EU membership emphasises its current function as a mediator and hinge between regions, continents and people, this volume, which is dedicated to the topography of Idalion, shows that these functions and their significance have existed since very ancient times.

For much of the 1st millennium BCE, Cyprus was home to a number of small polities, including the kingdom of Idalion. These had to formulate and (re)negotiate their claims and needs through both dialogue as well as periodic conflict, internally with each other and with the outside world. At the same time, the small Cypriot polities played an eminently important role in the international long-distance trade and economic structure of antiquity. As the most important component in the production of bronze, the natural resource copper was of comparable importance to the rare earths and minerals required for the technological needs of our own time. While Idalion, located in the interior of the island, benefitted from its privileged access to the famous Cypriot copper mines, it had to co-operate with coastal centres such as Kition (now Larnaca) in order to guarantee economic growth through maritime trade. This explains why the distant Idalion also appears in written documents of the Assyrian

kings, but also of the Egyptian pharaohs, who were all customers of Cypriot copper.

Significantly, this publication also shows how the modern study of ancient Cyprus can bring people together and unite them. Only through international co-operation between researchers from different disciplines and institutions is it possible to research and understand the human use and transformation of ancient landscapes and, in turn, to gain insights into how we deal with landscapes, their resources and the human interactions with(in) them today. The fact that Cyprus, which is not very large in terms of size, serves as the basis for such exemplary research can fill us all with pride.

Finally, the book also emphasises the never waning (yet continually varying) importance of collections of Cypriot antiquities in the world's museums. The Cypriot collections of the Berlin museums reflect the multifaceted history of Europe and the world, and not only in relation to antiquity. Originating initially as part of Prussian and later German aspirations to join the ranks of the great powers of the 19th century, they have developed into ambassadors of cross-border international co-operation and friendship. The fate of the Berlin *kypriaka* not only bear witness to the effects of two World Wars and the division of Germany – the latter a fate that Cypriots in particular can empathise with –, in recent years they have also developed into exemplary opportunities for current provenance research thanks to the cooperation between the

Berlin museums and the Institute of Archaeology of Humboldt Universität zu Berlin. Only in this way do they attain their full scientific significance and underline the importance of observing archaeological and research historical contexts. The resulting archaeological excavations, which Berlin archaeologists – 140 years after Max Ohnefalsch-Richter – have been carrying out since some years on the eastern acropolis of Idalion in collaboration with the Department of Antiquities of the Republic of Cyprus and the University of Cyprus, arguably represent the quintessence of the points mentioned above.

Before being appointed as the Ambassador of the Republic of Cyprus in Berlin in September 2021, I had the fortune of serving previously in Berlin as a junior Political Officer and Deputy Head of Mission

from 1999 until 2004. During those years, I was honoured to accompany the late Professor Dr. Vassos Karagiorgis, one of the most renowned Cypriot archaeologist and former Director of the Department of Antiquities of the Republic of Cyprus, who, in his then capacity as the Director of the AG Leventis Foundation, came to Germany to retrace Cypriot archaeological artefacts that were scattered in various Museums in Berlin. The aim was to gather these Cypriot artefacts into a collection that is now proudly hosted by the Neues Museum in Berlin.

Maria Papakyriakou

Ambassador of the Republic of Cyprus to the Federal Republic of Germany

Preface by the Editors

This second volume of the *Studia Cyprologica Berolinensia* series started as the publication of the proceedings of a workshop held from 18 – 20 October 2018 entitled “The Topography of Ancient Idalion and its Territory”, kindly funded by the Excellence Cluster “TOPOI – The Formation and Transformation of Space and Knowledge in Ancient Civilizations”¹ and held in the premises of the then TOPOI Building in Berlin (Mitte). The workshop dealt with the difficult question of how to define the territory of the ancient autonomous polities (city-kingdoms) of Iron Age Cyprus, particularly focusing on ancient Idalion, which has been subject of intense research based at Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin and led by Stephan G. Schmid. In recent years, research concerned with territorial issues of Iron Age Cyprus has not only included landscape archaeological approaches applying modern, state-of-the-art spatial analytical methods, but has also reconsidered “old” evidence from a new perspective, thus offering a fresh drive to tackle such questions.

Within the framework of a more general research project that mainly focused on the study and publication of Max Ohnefalsch-Richter’s activities in and around ancient Idalion,² the Berlin workshop³ invited international scholars with expertise in Cypriot antiquity to collectively discuss common issues and to gain additional information

on the topography of the ancient Cypriot polity of Idalion and its hinterland. Research questions that were touched upon during the workshop and are subject of the various contributions of the present volume include general reflections on the organisation and definition of the polity of ancient Idalion based on historical and textual information on the topography and/ or organisation of the polity. They also discuss new information on the location of settlements, necropoleis and sanctuaries in the wider area of Idalion (and thus the general pattern of rural sites associated with Idalion and how they can be distinguished from those belonging to neighbouring polities), issues related to their chronology and function as well as questions concerned with continuity vs. discontinuity, and the possibility of defining regional specifiers in material culture at the transition from the (later) Bronze to the (early) Iron Age.

During the preparation of the workshop’s proceedings, a new research project was developed and implemented, focussing on the relationship between the three Iron Age polities of Kition, Idalion and Tamassos. The German-French project called ‘Kition-Idalion-Tamassos: cities and territories within Cypriot kingdoms during the first millennium BC’ (KIT)⁴ is co-funded by the Agence Nationale de la Recherche (ANR) and the Deutsche

1 | www.topoi.org.

2 | See the first volume of the *Studia Cyprologica Berolinensia* series: S. G. Schmid – S. G. Horacek (eds.), »I don’t know what am I myself, it is so very difficult to explain.« Max Ohnefalsch-Richter (1850–1917) und die Archäologie Zyperns, *Studia Cyprologica Berolinensia* 1 (Berlin 2018).

3 | Co-organized by Sophie Horacek, Caroline Huguenot, Will M. Kennedy, Stephan G. Schmid and Angelika Walther.

4 | Co-directed by S. Fourrier and A. Cannavò (both CNRS Lyon), M. Recke (Universität Frankfurt), and S. G. Schmid (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin).

Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG). This offered a perfect opportunity to slightly enlarge the frame and focus of the publication. Therefore, contributions also reflect upon the natural resources of ancient Idalion and how their availability was guaranteed and safeguarded against the reach of neighbouring polities (mainly, but not exclusively, of Kition and Tamassos) and implications for questions concerning physical territorial control of resources and important communication infrastructures.

First and foremost, our sincere gratitude is owed to all authors who have endured the editorial process of the present volume with great patience. Without their generous understanding and willingness to maintain the timeliness of their contributions in the face of additional evidence and publications becoming available since the completion of the workshop in 2018, this volume would not have been possible. Indeed, this volume is a manifestation of lasting collegial scholarly exchange – also across the various stages of academic careers: Contributions include still on-going and soon-to-be-completed PhD projects, postdoctoral research as well as papers presented by established scholars in the field of Cypriot archaeology. Most notably, we very much thank Vassiliki Kassianidou, Deputy Minister of Culture of the Republic of Cyprus and Giorgos Georgiou, Director of the Department of Antiquities of Cyprus, not only for their superb contributions to this volume but also for their kind and generous support throughout the years and over various stages of their respective careers.

We feel particularly honoured to have been able to present this publication during a meeting between Minister of State for Culture and the Media of the Federal Republic of Germany, Claudia Roth, and Deputy Minister of Culture of the Republic of Cyprus Kassianidou in the Neues Museum in Berlin in June 2024. Matthias Wemhoff, Director of the Neues Museum, is warmly thanked for kindly hosting the event. We would also like to express our sincere gratitude to Her Excellency, Ambassador Maria Papakyriakou for the continued support in conducting and promoting German archaeological research in Cyprus.

The printing of this volume was generously funded by the Kultur-, Sozial- und Bildungswis-

senschaftliche Fakultät of Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin and the *Studia Cyprologica Berolinensia* e.V. Once again, Volkhard Buchholtz and the Logos-Verlag Berlin have made the publication of this second volume of the *Studia Cyprologica Berolinensia* series possible thanks to their energetic devotion and flexible operation. Jennifer Webb and Evangeline Markou provided important help during the preparation of the book.

We would like to express our most sincere gratitude to those mentioned above and all the others who have contributed to the successful publication of this book, which may hopefully offer new insights into the archaeology and history of ancient Idalion and its surroundings and therefore prove useful for further research to come.

As the bulk of contributions laid forward in this volume were first presented at the “The Topography of Ancient Idalion and its Territory” workshop in 2018 in Berlin, naturally, some time has passed until their final publication was possible. This was not only due to unforeseen, critical circumstances – most notably the COVID-19 pandemic – that affected both the editors and contributors in different ways. Another, academically founded reason for the delay was the launch of the new joint German-French project KIT in 2021, which offered great additional value to the original workshop contributions.

In light of these delays, both the editors and contributors were very much driven to update relevant references and other source materials as much as possible within a reasonable framework. However, while the editorial work of this volume strived for comprehensive quality control throughout, ultimately, the individual authors remain responsible for the quality of and the views expressed in their contributions.

For all the patience and endurance throughout the publication process, the editors express their sincere thanks to all contributors who made this volume possible.

Berlin and Athens, June 2024

Stephan G. Schmid
Will M. Kennedy

Introduction

Despina Pilides

The region of Idalion was the focus of 19th century investigations as a source of important finds from the city, its sanctuaries or cemeteries, which to a large extent, were exported to major museums by the antiquarians of the period. Some of the finds, such as the Idalion tablet (now at the *Cabinet des Médailles* in Paris), are unique documents that have been the subject of much research and discussion not only concerning the polity of Idalion but the entire political organization of Cyprus at the time.

The natural landscape was undoubtedly a determining factor for the development of settlement patterns in the Gialias valley. The Gialias river, the second longest river in Cyprus, runs through the plain of Mesaoria and links the inland settlements with the sea, the settlements of Agios Sozomenos, predecessors of Idalion, to Enkomi and, later Idalion to Salamis. At the junction between the Gialias and its tributary Alykos, alluvial valley floors are overlooked by a plateau of hard calcarenite, forming the characteristic topography of the region and diachronically offering the ideal strategic locations for overseeing and controlling resources. In combination with the proximity to the copper producing areas of the Troodos mountains, the water sources were key-factors both in the development of agriculture and the concentration of agrarian production from at least the Late Bronze Age and are deter-

minative of our understanding of the settlement distribution, their floruit and their demise.

The re-evaluation of legacy data such as the archives of Max Ohnefalsch-Richter, who had investigated both the earlier vestiges in the area of Agios Sozomenos and Idalion itself,¹ in combination with later and more recent research can afford new insights into the role of the region of Idalion and, at the same time accentuate the importance of inland Cyprus. Such endeavours primarily redress the long-standing imbalance in archaeological research whereby urban coastal centres monopolized academic interest. Without doubt, inland Cyprus was the backbone of the island's economy and it is now attributed the attention it merits.

The in-depth study of old excavation material from different perspectives and through the use of new technologies, often proves to be more valuable and fruitful than expected, and even with existing lacunae, the re-contextualization of available data leads to a new understanding of the material and social contexts.² In conjunction with empirical data from modern survey/ excavation projects theoretical models of the past, built on less nuanced information, may be re-adjusted.

It is also impressive at times how after years of excavation of a particular site, there is no clear perception of spatial urban organization within the

1 | Myres – Ohnefalsch-Richter 1899, 3–4. 58 and *passim*.

2 | See Webb 2018 for a parallel.

city itself, with its hinterland or its burial grounds. Re-mapping and piecing together old maps and sketches may revive the original architectural web and illuminate social and symbolic aspects of life that otherwise would remain unknown. Reconstructing the cultural topography from the archaeological record may prove to be challenging but geological or other environmental studies may be helpful in gaining a more profound understanding of the use of landscapes, the exploitation of resources and interaction with neighbours or other regions further afield. In this process, evidence for the identification of borders includes the establishment of rural or extra-urban sanctuaries, which not only link the countryside to the urban centres but they also seem to have played an important role in the broader economic organization. The common natural background of inland settlements, the fertile plain of Mesaoria, with its rivers that ensured connectivity between them and the coast, explains why fertility was paramount in cult activities and shows how neighbouring polities share common ideologies.

A further merit of the study of legacy data is the re-identification and re-unification of objects alienated from their context. As a result of practices emanating from outdated legal instruments, objects from the same site may have ended in the collections of museums in different countries. In the cases of both Idalion and Tamassos, objects in the “old collection” of the Cyprus Museum and, in a few cases, fragments from the same object which had lost their provenance for various reasons over time, were re-identified and restored to their original context.

Further work in the Galias and Alykos valley yielded evidence for the history of the region in the Bronze Age. Territoriality as a form of expression of local or supra-regional authority reflects the privileged access to specific resources, fluid through time because of changing circumstances dependent on political, social or environmental factors or a combination of these. It is evident that privileged access to the water sources and agrarian production, to the copper mines of the Troodos foothills and the routes to the sea had a significant impact on the pattern of settlement in the area in this period as well. The

survey and excavation project of Agios Sozomenos spanned the period 2012–2021 and achieved the re-identification and re-evaluation of known sites from old surveys. Excavation at the forts of *Barsak* and *Nikolides* has clarified their nature and relationship to an expansive single settlement incorporating various known localities (*Djirpoulos*, *Ampelia* and, possibly *Glykia Vrysi*).³ The fort at *Barsak*, a robust double wall with a ditch, which would have required control of human and material resources for its construction, was contemporary with the early part of the settlement at its foot. As production intensified, the settlement expanded and there is evidence for central storage at *Ampelia*. The fort at *Barsak* was replaced with that at *Nikolides*, to protect the expanded settlement and, possibly the water sources. The fort at *Nikolides* was partly dismantled and rebuilt in the Hellenistic period, by another regime this time but for very similar reasons. The storage building at *Ampelia* was destroyed by fire and the workshops at *Djirpoulos* suffered destruction in the 12th century BCE, possibly in relation to climatic changes and periods of aridity, as shown by recent studies.⁴ The population moved to Idalion, which developed into a primary urban centre in charge of an extended periphery, possibly also controlling the cupriferous zones and the strategic land routes. The pithos workshops at Idalion most probably continued the tradition of the workshops at *Djirpoulos* and it is interesting to see the retention of a connection with the Bronze Age in the presence of heirlooms in some Cypro-Achaic tombs of the necropolis at Idalion-*Platia* (Georgiadou, Georgiou and Satriki this volume).

The above-cited research on the habitation pattern of the Agios Sozomenos region in the Bronze Age, the modern excavations at Idalion, the material from the various necropoleis and the study of legacy data will undoubtedly enhance our understanding of the topography and the diachronic development of the city and region of Idalion, which appears to continue uninterrupted throughout, from the Bronze Age to the end of the Iron Age.

Despina Pilides
Former Curator of Antiquities
Department of Antiquities, Cyprus
despo_pilides@hotmail.com

3 | Pilides 2018; 2021.

4 | Kaniewski *et al.* 2019.

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