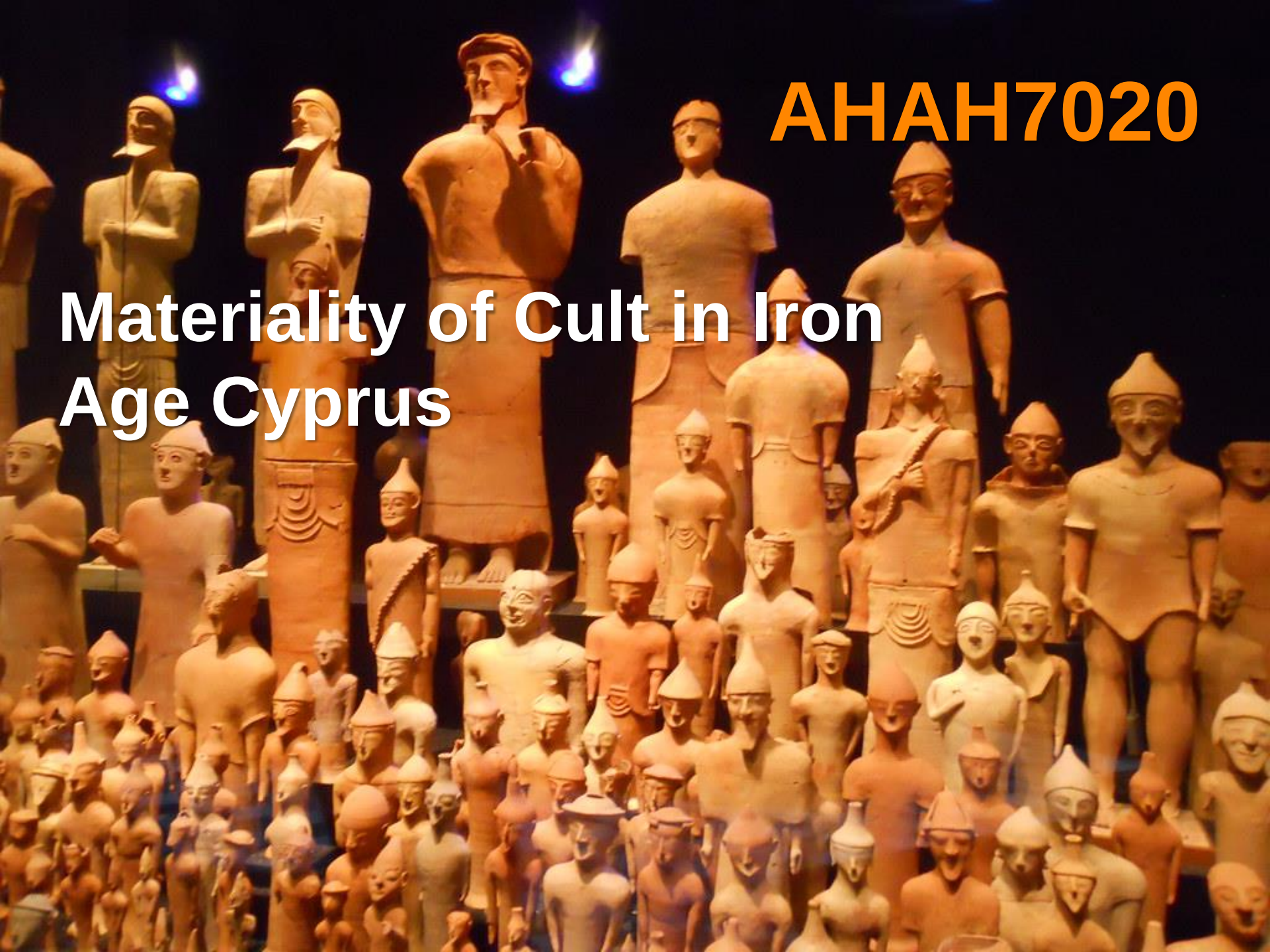


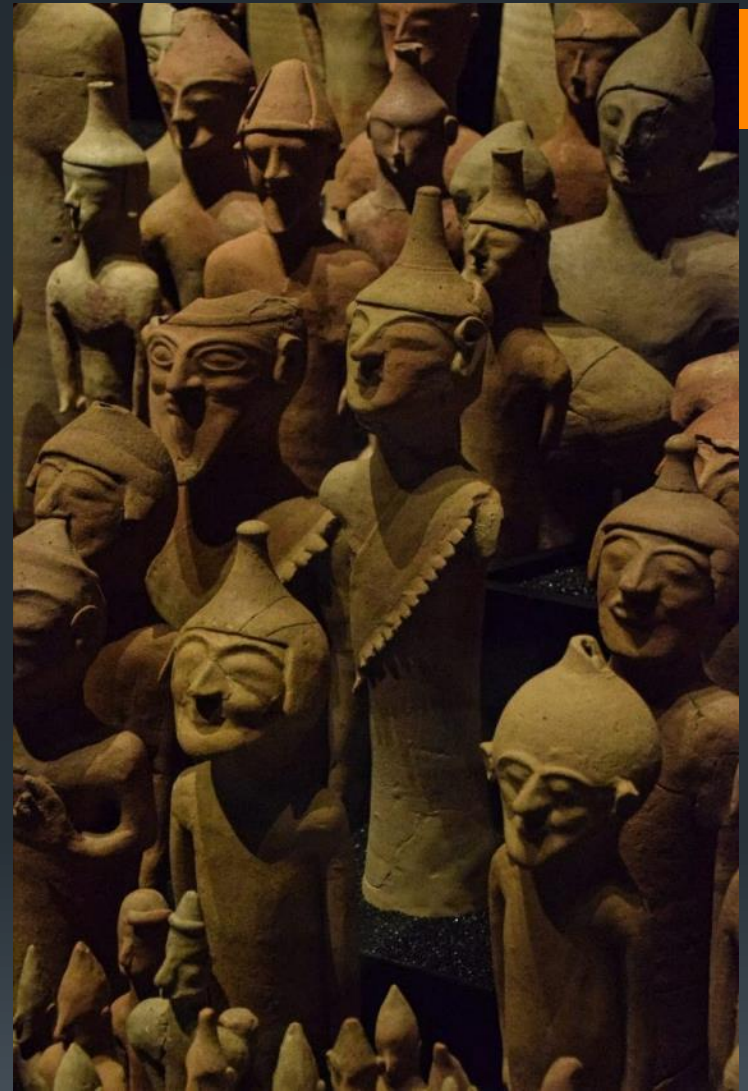
A large collection of Iron Age Cyprus terracotta figurines displayed in a museum setting. The figurines are arranged in several rows, with larger ones in the back and smaller ones in the front. They are made of reddish-brown clay and have various shapes, including standing male figures, seated figures, and small child-like figures. Many have distinct facial features and some wear hats or headgear. The background is dark, and there are blue spotlights illuminating the display.

AHAH7020

Materiality of Cult in Iron Age Cyprus

Materiality

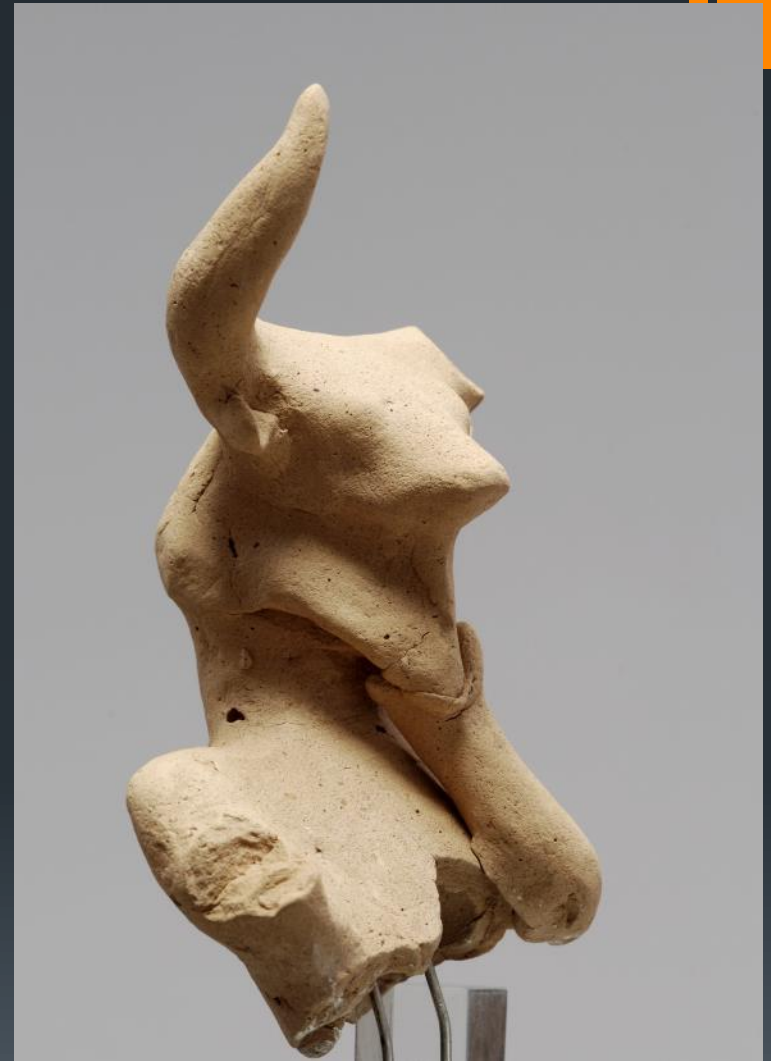
- The “two faces of materiality” (Ingold 2013, 27)
 - Physical properties or thingness of things
 - The engagement of human agents & things
- Recognises objects as social & relational beings entangled in complex human-thing networks
- Agency of objects



Detail of terracotta figures
from Ayia Irini

Materiality

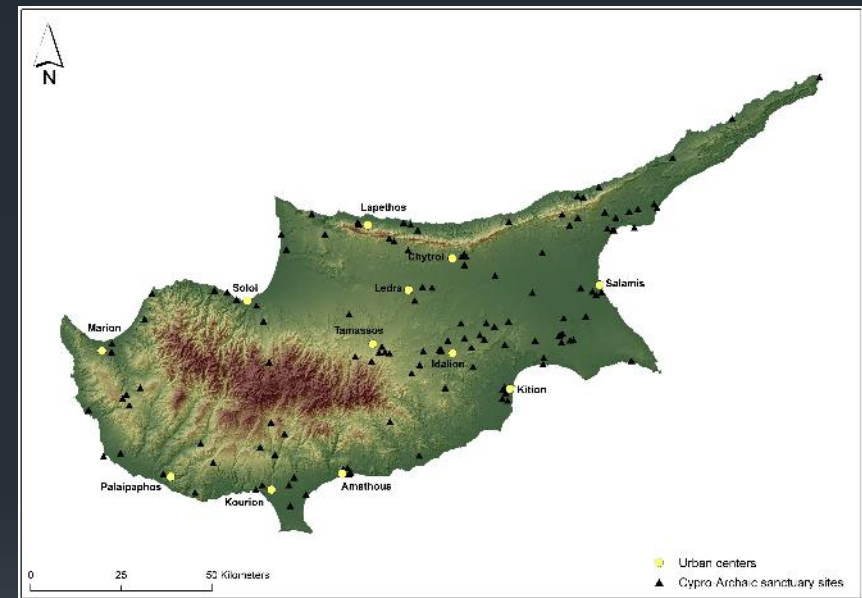
- Recursive relationship between people & things:
 - An understanding that objects shape people as much as people shape objects
 - Objects are embedded in the ways in which we shape our social worlds
- Objects have **social lives**:
 - They gain meaning through social praxis
 - Constantly being shaped, changed & renegotiated through their life-use



Masked human figurine,
Ayia Irini

Iron Age Cyprus

- Cypro-Geometric period:
 - CG I: 1050-950 BCE
 - CG II: 950-900 BCE
 - CG III: 900-750 BCE
- Cypro-Archaic period:
 - 750-600 BCE
 - 600-480 BCE
- Establishment of city kingdoms:
 - Greek
 - Eteo-Cypriot
 - Phoenician
- 19th century excavations, SCE & recent fieldwork



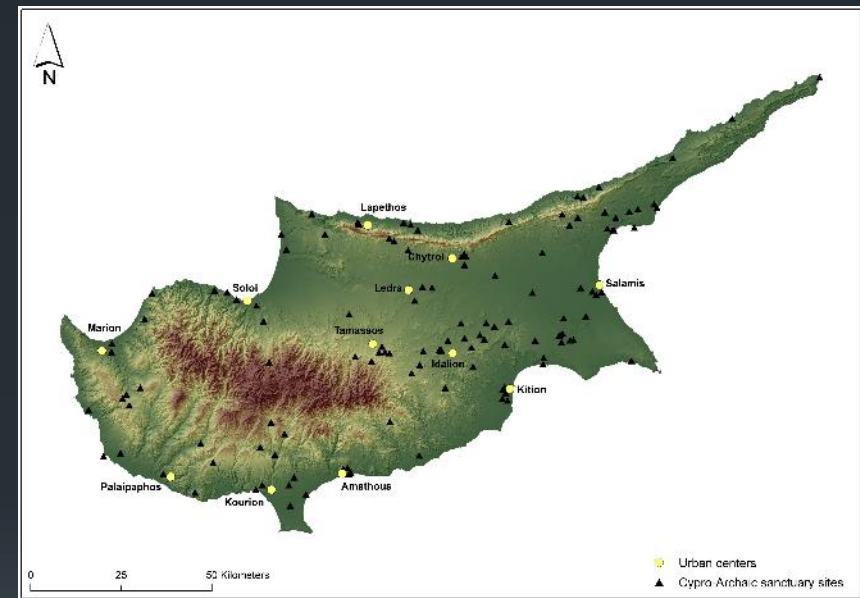
Map of Cyprus

Sacred Landscapes

- Highlights the ideational dimensions of the natural & cultural landscape:
 - Sacred mountains, springs
 - Sanctuaries, temples & monuments
- Intimate relationship between religion, politics, identity & memory
 - People associate features in the landscapes with their own memories, meanings or emotions
- Memory is crucial in the process of socialising landscape & naturalising cultural features
 - Repeated movement of the body throughout the landscape
 - Process through which people perceive & understand the world.
 - Meaning is usually attached to place through memory & ritual

Iron Age Cyprus

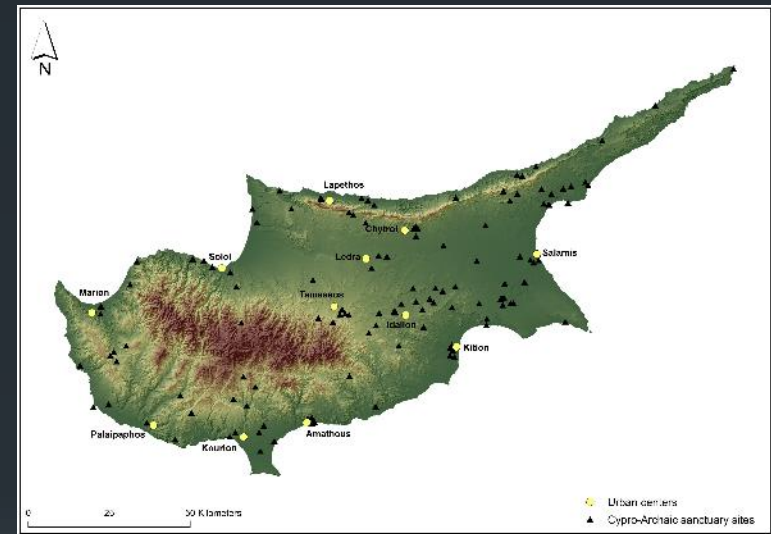
- 11th century: establishment of an urban sanctuary at Salamis
- CG III: creation of Cypriot sacred landscape
 - Increase in religious activity in urban centres: Kition, Amathus, Idalion & Kourion
 - First rural sanctuary at Ayia Irini
- CA: increased in extra-urban sanctuaries:
 - Open air temenos sites
 - Court with an altar, enclosed by a peribolos wall



Map of Cyprus

Political Role of Sanctuaries

- Urban sanctuaries:
 - Communal religious centres
 - Social, cultural & political identities materialised
- Rural sanctuaries:
 - Located along long-distance communication routes & in frontier' zones
 - Important role establishing political & territorial boundaries of the city kingdoms
 - Creating liminal zones between the city-kingdoms



Map of Cyprus

Terracotta Votives

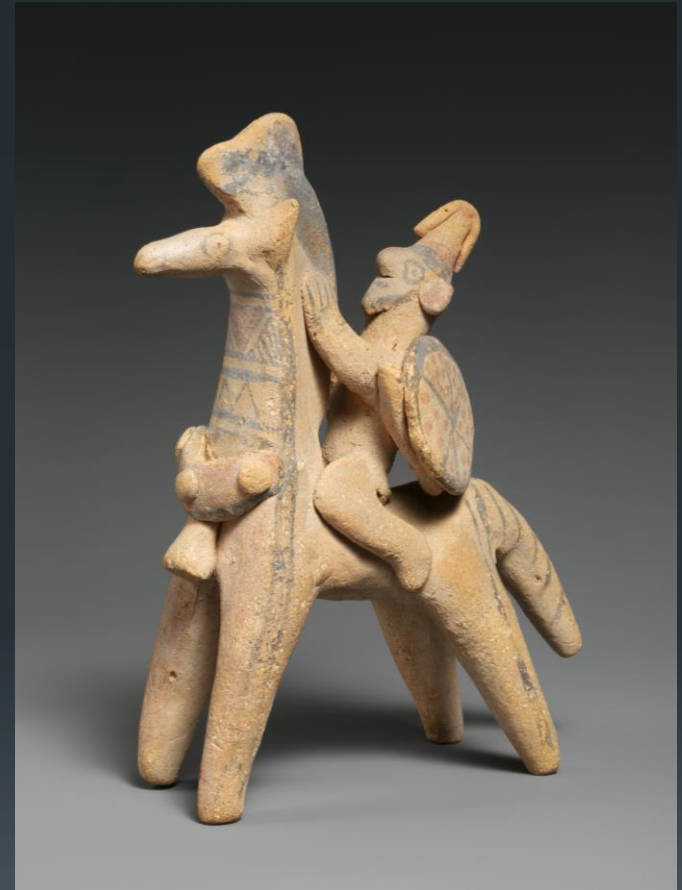
- Integral element of Iron Age Cypriot cult (dating back to 11th century)
- CG III-CA: development of distinctive terracotta votives at urban & rural sanctuaries
- Repetition of religious imagery:
 - Permanent dedications to the gods
 - Mimetic images of cult practices
 - “created & affirmed socio-religious traditions & values” (Averett 2011: 133)



CA terracottas, Cyprus Museum

Terracotta Votives

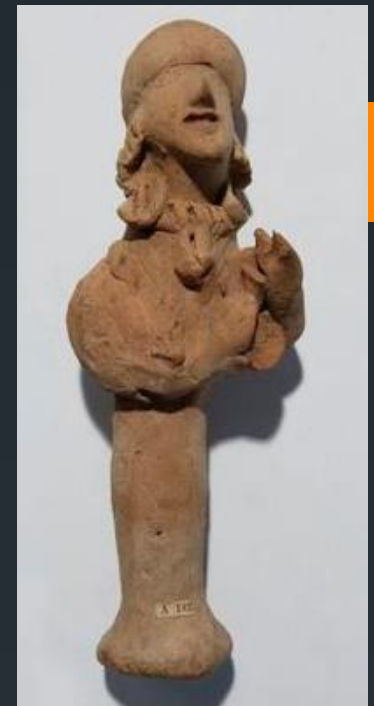
- Gendered practices or appropriate for cult?
- Male deities:
 - Received male worshippers, priests, warriors, horsemen
- Female deities:
 - Elaborately dressed women
 - Pregnant women
 - Kourotrophoi



CA terracotta horse and rider

Terracotta Votives

- Various types identified
- Vary in size:
 - Small, hand-held portable objects
 - Life size statues
- Humans:
 - Men: warriors, musicians, charioteers, horse & riders, masked men
 - Women: elaborately dressed, musicians
 - Animals: rams, bulls, birds, lions (sacrificial offerings?)
 - Mythical beasts: sphinxes etc.



Female figurine



Figurines, Kition Kamelarga

Terracottas of Ayia Irini

- 2000 figures found in situ:
 - Reveals staged display
 - Sanctuary literary peopled in clay – sensory experience



Figures in situ around limestone altar

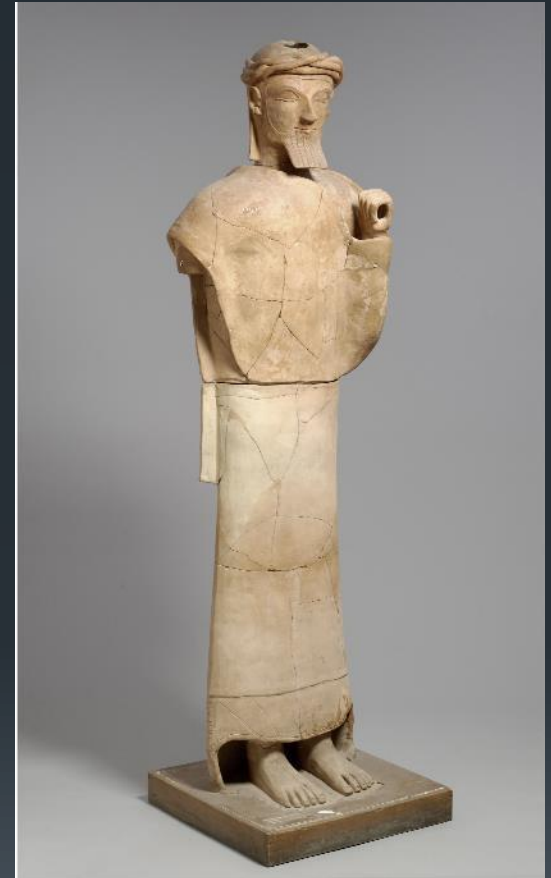


Figures on display in Medelhavsmuseet & Cyprus Museum



Teracottas of Ayia Irini

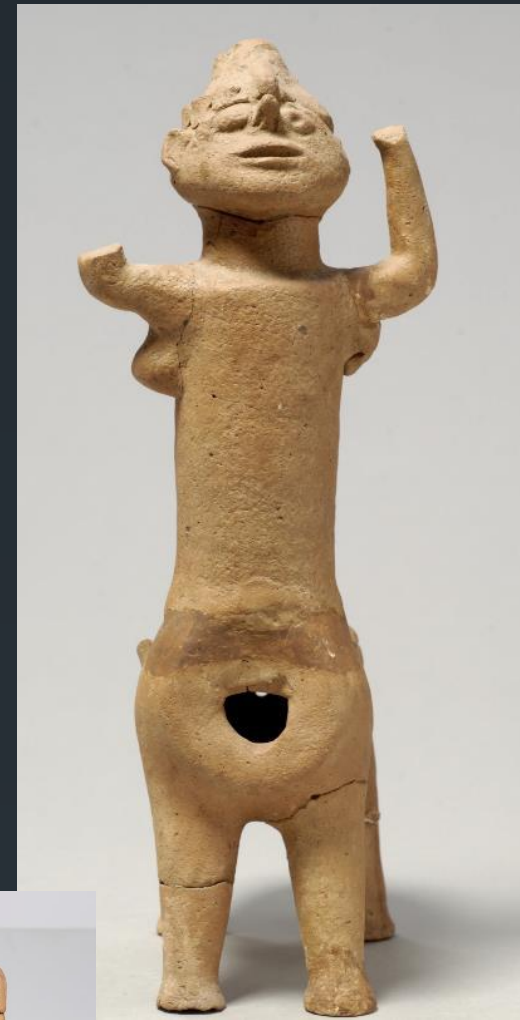
- Stands out for number & scale of terracotta figures & figurines offered in CG III & CA I (peak)
 - Reflecting “the competitive & formative political setting of Early Iron Age Cyprus” (Papantoniou & Bourogiannis 2018)
 - Characterised by “size & austere, virile appearance” (Papantoniou & Bourogiannis 2018)
 - “awe-inspiring symbols of power & control” (Papantoniou & Bourogiannis 2018)
- A performative place where elite ideology was materialised in terracotta & displayed in a negotiation of social identities



Male statue wearing a turban-like headdress

Teracottas of Ayia Irini

- Different scales from life-size statues to hand held figurines
- Variety of themes:
 - Militaristic: Infantry & warriors; charioteers
 - Performative: Group of dancers in a ring; masked figures, musicians (flutes & tambourines)
 - Bulls (dedicated in CG III)
 - Sphinxes & centaurs/minotaurs



“minotaur”?



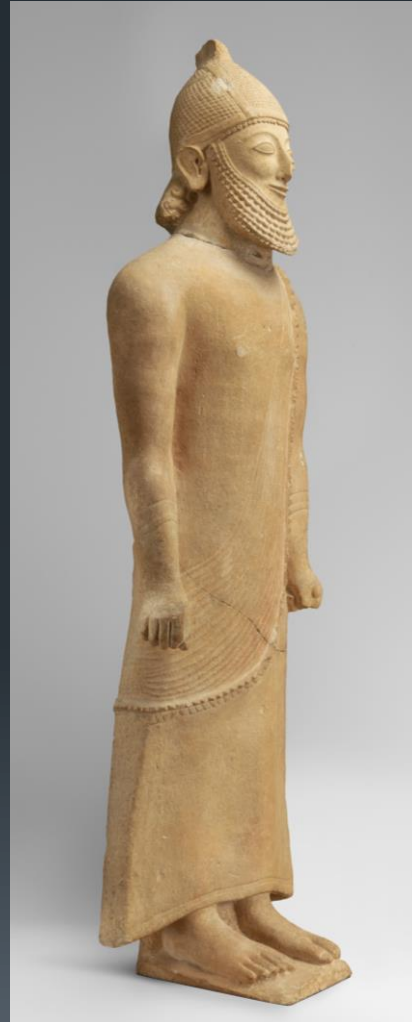
Dancing group



Charioteers

Limestone Sculptures

- By 6th century BCE limestone sculpture surpasses terracotta dedications:
 - Peopled in stone:
 - External influences?
- Development of distinctive Cypriot style
- Male & female dedicants, standing in for the worshippers?
 - Frontal position
 - Distinguished by details of dress, jewellery & hairstyle
 - Sometimes playing instruments or holding offerings
- Reflect the wealth & social position of the dedicant



Cesnola Collection, MET

Limestone Sculpture

- Diverse themes:
- Dedicants:
 - Males of different statuses, indicated by dress
 - Egyptianising
 - Women of high status
 - Kourotrophos
- Practitioners of cult:
 - Musicians (male & female)
 - Masked figures

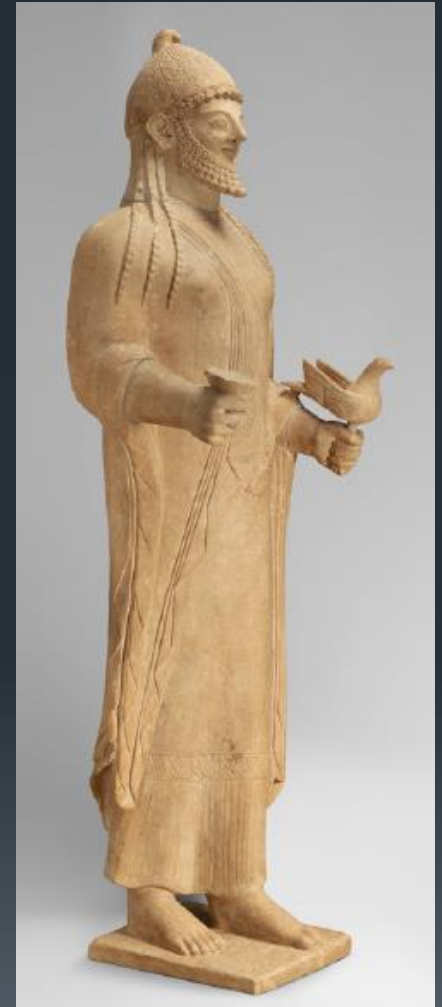
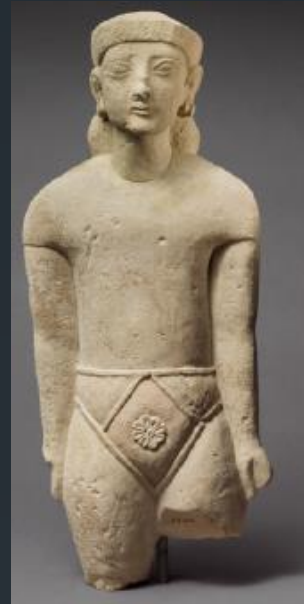


Masked figure, Golgoi

Egyptianising male,
Golgoi



Male Sculptures, Golgoi

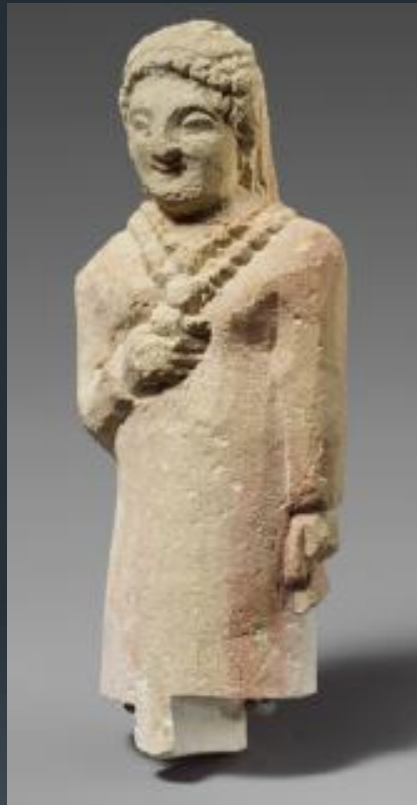


“priest with dove”

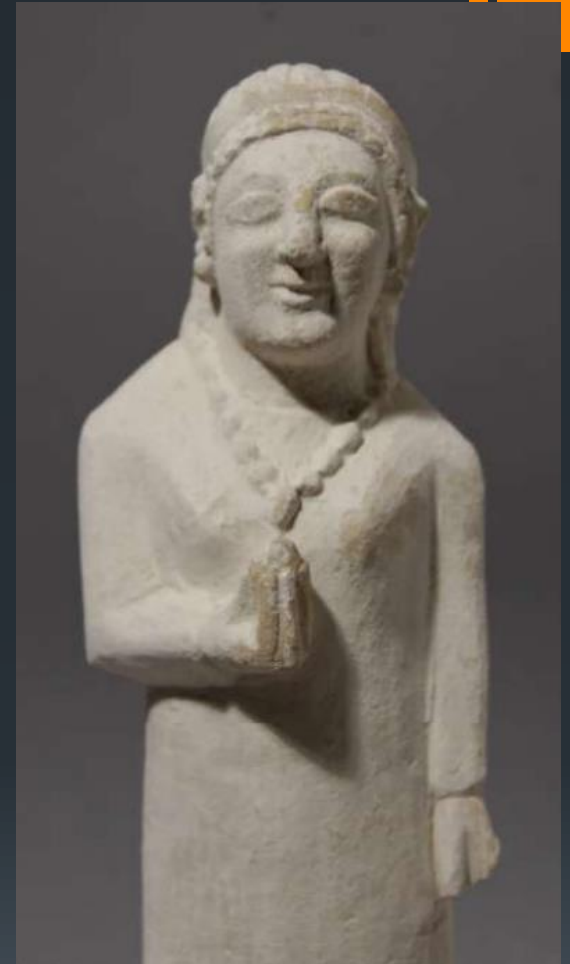
Female Sculptures



Kourotrophos, Golgoi



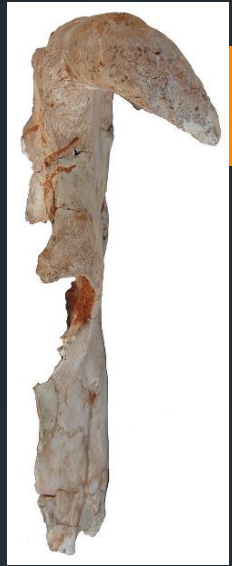
Detail from male
banqueter & woman,
Golgoi



Woman holding fruit
Golgoi

Masks

- Wearing masks: ancient tradition stretching back to transition between LBA & EIA
- Worked bucrania from Enkomi & Kition
- Terracotta masks (slightly less than life size):
 - Anthropomorphic
 - Zoomorphic
 - Grotesque
- Simulacra for life-size masks of perishable materials used in ritual performances
- Masked figurines



Worked bucranium, Kition



Male & grotesque masks, Athienou

Materialising Ritual Praxis

- CA sanctuaries: sensorial performative places
- Votive offerings: deliberately displayed
- Votives in clay & stone materialise some of the activities performed in the sanctuaries:
 - Musicians: tambourines, double flutes, lyres
 - Groups of individuals dancing in a ring
 - Masking activities (figurines & miniature masks; also sealstones)
- Quantities of fragmentary pottery & animal bones :
 - Libations
 - Feasting
 - Animal sacrifice



Musicians: lyre player & fragment of limestone double pipe player



CA sealstone, Erimi

Performativity



Banqueting group, Golgoi



Tambourine player



Masked figure, Athienou



Animal sacrifice (CG III)



Blurred Boundaries

- New Materialisms highlights sensorial experiences, relationality & agency of Cypriot cult places
- Animal masks “powerfully & directly invoked the physical presence of the animal & physically connected human bodies & animal bodies” (Averett 2021: 733)
 - Becoming-with the animal
 - Adopting the animals ways of being, power & special qualities
 - Extending physical boundaries of the body



Masked figures, Kourion
(Apollo Hylates)

Assembling Cult

- New Materialisms:
 - Highlights how matter is vibrant, fluid, & dynamic
 - Properties of things emerge through relationships
- Assemblages:
 - The coming together & interactions of a heterogenous, non-hierarchical group of entities
 - “ad hoc groupings of diverse elements, of vibrant materials of all sorts...living, throbbing confederations” (Bennett 2010: 23)
 - Constantly in flux & “in a state of becoming” (Harris 2014: 90)
 - Multi-scalar, material & immaterial entities flow into & out of relationship
- An assemblage ‘actively links these parts together **by establishing relations between them**’ (DeLanda 2016: 2)

Assembling Cult

- Figurines as assemblages:
 - Clay, inclusions, water & pigments
 - In relationship with potter & fire
 - Flows into relationships as dedicated, placed in sanctuary, perhaps broken & buried
 - New relationships as excavated, studied, published, placed in museum, viewed...



Making a figurine



Handling a figurine
in the Ashmolean

CA Sanctuaries as Assemblages

- Relationships between landscape, architecture, votives, animals & people
 - “dynamic & vibrant processes wherein the relationships between people, gods, animals, & landscapes were explored & co-created” (Averett 2023: 175)
- Rural landscape & worshippers/practitioners actively co-created religious spaces
- Votive objects & animal sacrifices emerge as vibrant components of the assemblage
- Practices of feasting, sacrifice: becoming-with animals:
 - Sensorial experiences
- Continually flowing into & out of relationship



Reconstruction of sanctuary of Apollo, Idalion (Richard Senff)

Presencing the Divine

- “sanctuaries were places where things seeped from their boundaries to interact with worshipers” (Averett 2023: 189)
- Primary function: to facilitate communication with the gods
 - Permeable boundary separating humans from the divine
- Assemblage of votives, sacred landscape, worshipers, cult personnel & ritual collaborated to “presence” the divine:
 - Divine agency of sanctuary objects
 - Images of deities & worshipers co-created & presenced the divine
 - Accumulation of hundreds of offerings displayed over generations



Terracottas in situ around altar,
Ayia Irini

Summary

- Rich material: primary source of evidence for Iron Age Cyprus
 - Sustained focus of recent research on the island
- Focus of interest primarily on rural sanctuaries:
 - Some discussion of geopolitical aspect & foundation of city kingdoms
- Primary focus has been on the physicality of the cult:
 - Terracotta & stone votives placed in temple
 - Stylistic studies
 - Increasing emphasis on the performativity of cult
- Impact of New Materialisms on recent studies