



Households in PreBA Cyprus

Households in the Ancient World

Early-Middle Cypriot Period

- Prehistoric Bronze Age (PreBA)
- C₁₄ dates
 - Philia = c.2500-2300 BC
 - EC = c.2300 – 2100BC
 - MC = c.2000/1950 – 1700/1650



EC Red Polished pottery

Cultural Transformation

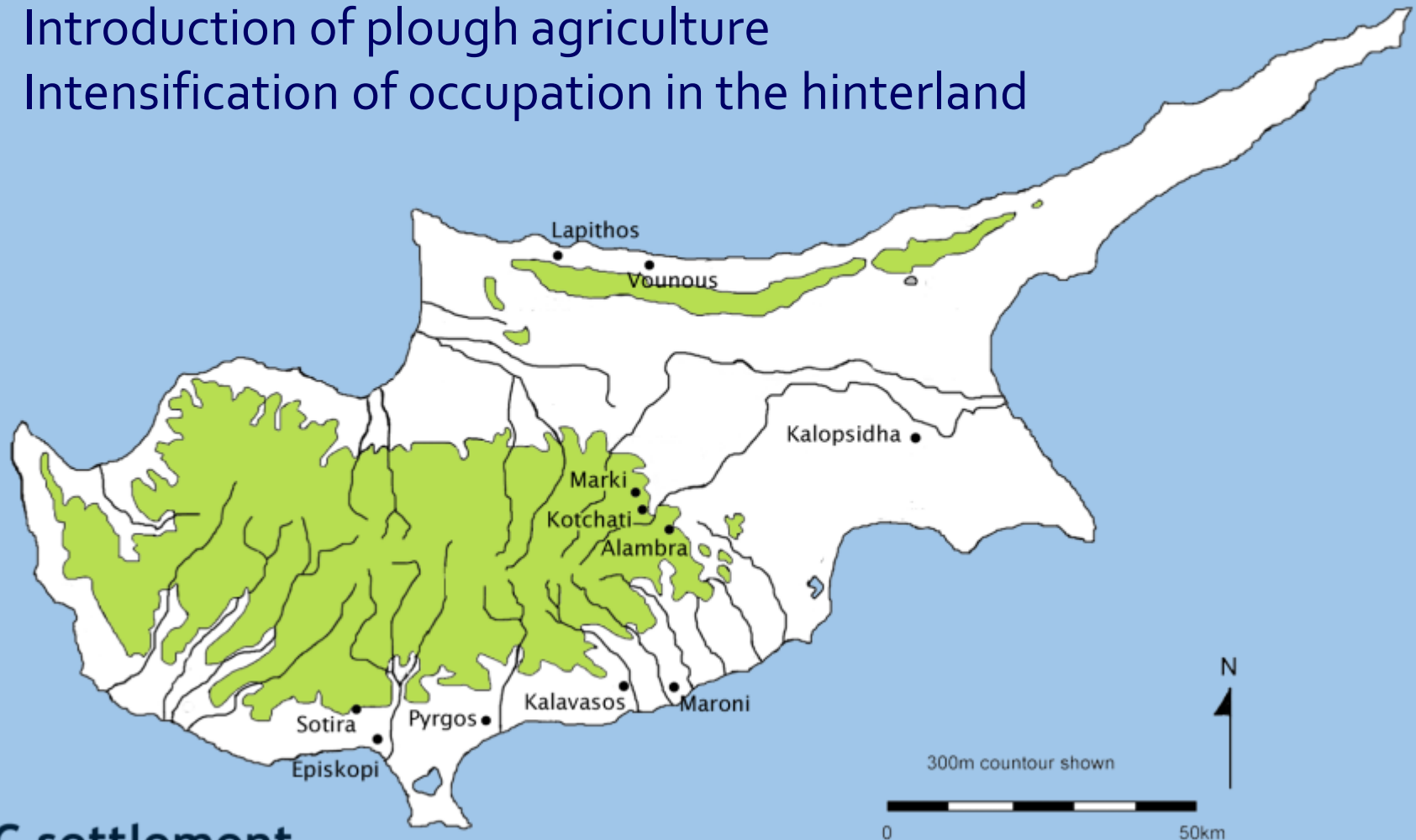
- Radical social changes between Chalcolithic & EC period:
 - Use of landscape
 - Organisation of the household
 - Domestic technologies
 - Economy
 - Burial practices
 - Ideological expression
 - Cyprus increasingly integrated in trading activity beyond the island



Red Polished spindle whorl

Settlement

- Substantial increase in the number of settlements
- Introduction of plough agriculture
- Intensification of occupation in the hinterland



MC settlement

Settlement

- Settlements between 15 & 20 hectares
- Open villages, no clear boundaries nor evidence for fortifications
- Located close to a water supply & good arable land
- Preference for raised ground with a commanding view:
 - But not commanding defensive positions or with enclosure walls / fortifications



Marki Alonia

Economy: Fauna

- Introduction of cattle
- Herded sheep, goats, & very small proportions of pig
- Caprines: slight increase in herding for milk
- Deer continues to be hunted on small scale



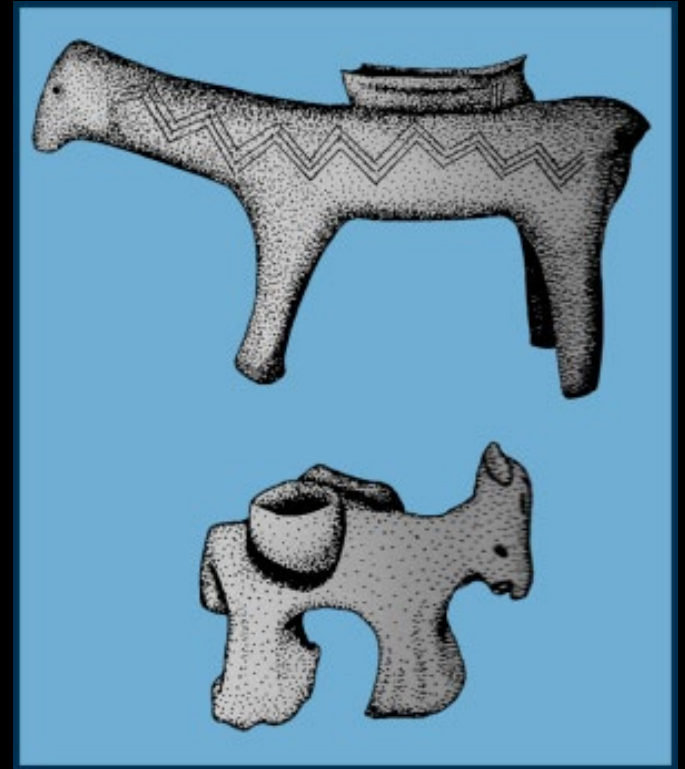
Dama mesopotamica

Secondary Products

- Primary evidence for textile production
- Milk production: new spouted bowls
- Secondary evidence for animal traction



Plough model, Vounous



Red Polished model pack animals

Agricultural Economy

- Very little primary evidence
- Large number of grinding stones indicate importance of cereals & pulses
- Bronze & stone axes: forest clearance associated with intensified agriculture
- Increased storage capacity



Quern, Sotira

Economy

- Wheat, barley, lentils & the olive
- Major dietary change: introduction of bread wheat
- Representations:
 - Communal production



Red Polished figured representation

Pottery Production

- Household production or craft specialisation?
- Frankel & Webb: general lack of standardisation more typical of household production
 - Variability in the different fabrics
- Barlow: skills inherent in the production pottery precludes household production
 - High firing temperatures
 - Even surface finish



Red Polished



White Painted

Metallurgy

- Small scale regional industry
- Ambelikou *Aletri* & Alambra *Mouttes*:
 - Copper slag, crucible fragments, moulds
- Pyrgos:
 - MC III furnaces & anvils suggest larger-scale production
- Alambra:
 - Some tin bronze



Metal objects, Alambra

Specialisation

- Pyrgos *Mavroraki*: substantial industrial & storage facility:
 - Centralised production?
- Centralised storage:
 - Courtyard with *pithoi* (olive oil)
- Metal workshops
- Textiles production
- Wine production
- Perfumed oil production



Pyrgos *Mavroraki*

Marki *Alonia*: Philia

- Proximity of copper mines
- Small clusters of freestanding “compounds” / households?
- Largely self-sufficient farming & metal producing community
- Dependent on relations with other Philia settlements
 - Craft production

Philia jug



Marki Alonia: Philia

- Courtyard area: light fences demarcate animal pens
- Yard: several activities:
 - E.g. cooking
- Possibly shared communal space between pairs/groups of households?
- Mutually dependent & cooperative relationship between related households?



EC Houses

- New houseplans:
 - Rectilinear, agglutinative architecture
- Mould-made fired mudbrick walls on low stone foundation:
 - Implications for construction?
- Internal arrangement is variable:
 - Implications?



EC Houses

- Fixed furnishings:
 - Rectangular clay hearths, low benches, pot emplacements & lime plaster bins
- Central floor area free for a variety of activities
- Agricultural storage in large pithoi & plastered bins



EC House

- Portable furniture:
 - Red Polished pottery
 - Ground stone tools: grinders, pounders, pestles & mortars



EC Household Activities

- Floors kept clean & refuse removed from the immediate habitation area
- Economic production within household:
 - Storage, preparation & cooking of foodstuffs
 - Textile production
 - Craft production: lithics, pottery...



Sotira Kaminoudhia

MC Household

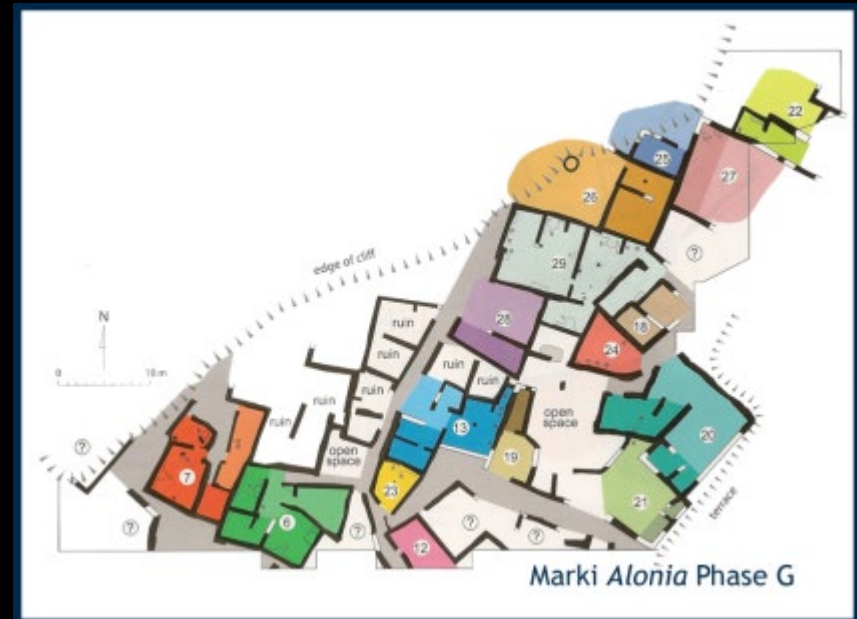
- Gradual move away from agglutinative architecture
- Alambra: development of freestanding houses:
 - Front porch/courtyard
 - Three-five smaller storage & work rooms at back
 - Floor cut into the bedrock
 - Fixtures: benches, platforms, plastered bins & pot emplacements
- Marki: new single room compounds with no courtyards (very different use of space)



Alambra Mouttes

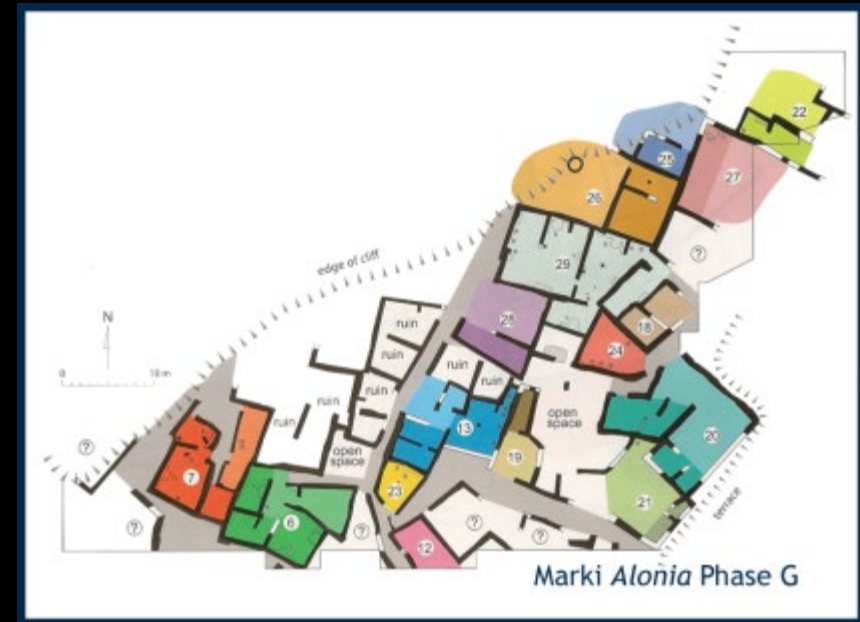
MC Households

- Small independent households identified within settlement
- What is their relationship?
- Might think of these as house societies: Levi Strauss (1982)



House Societies (Lévi-Strauss)

- Defines a house(hold) as:
 - “a corporate body holding an estate made up of material & immaterial wealth which perpetuates itself through the transmission of its name, its goods & its titles down a ... [kinship] line” (Lévi-Strauss 1982: 174)



House Societies (Lévi-Strauss)

- Relationships between household members are constructed through **shared activities**:
 - Places emphasis on **economic production**
 - Economic capital – comprising?



Pyrgos Jug

House Societies & Social Reproduction

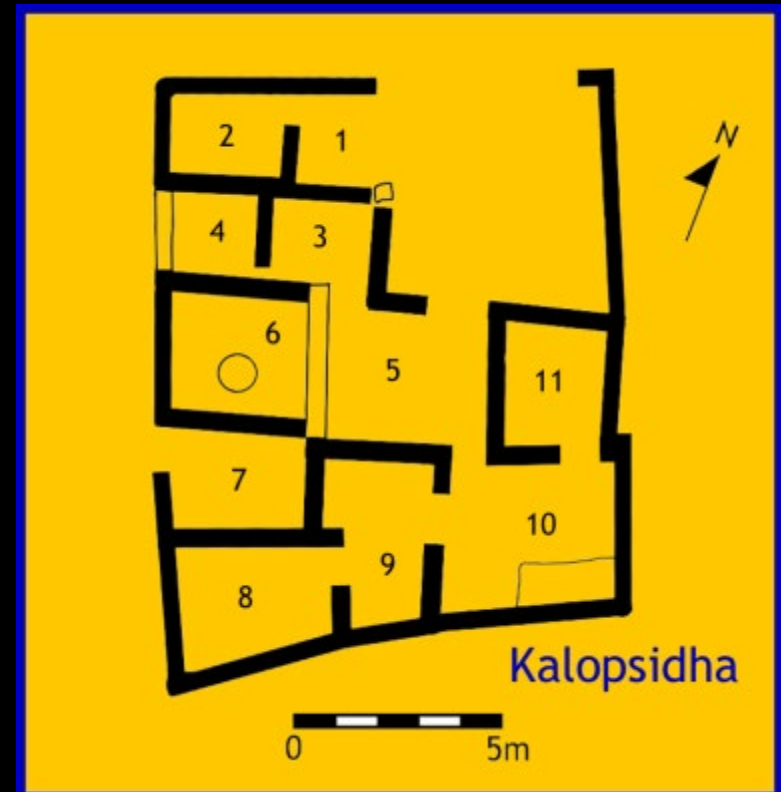
- Also about sharing resource:
 - Bound together by preparation & consumption of food
- Social reproduction:
 - A place where people create, establish & affirm their individual social roles & their identities
 - Kinship ties etc



Vounous Bowl

MC III Household

- Kalopsidha: first extant freestanding courtyard house
 - Courtyard: used for food preparation & cooking?
 - Other rooms housed a variety of activities
- Development of ceramic storage pithoi:
 - Increased household storage & control over resource:
- Bolger: development of freestanding structures foreshadows significant social changes



Summary

- Very rich archaeological record which has been minutely analysed & published to a high standard
- Focus in the literature on household activities within PreBA villages
- Large settled communities with many small economically self-sufficient households
- Relationship between households/compounds?
- Seems to be a picture of increasing concentration of wealth within single households (culminating in large free-standing structures in MC III)