

Cultures of physical modifications: Child bodies in ancient Cyprus

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Abstract

The cultural and natural processes that shape, reshape and formalise the body start prior to birth and continue in infancy and childhood. Focussing on the young individuals within particular societies has a great potential to throw light on cultural transfers, continuity, change and discontinuity. While researching ideas and practices related to children and childhoods in prehistoric contexts the body may be lifted out as a useful node of investigation. In this paper, the focus is on three phenomena through which modifications of human bodies were achieved in prehistoric Cyprus: headshaping, anthropomorphic depiction, and burial.

It seems that in prehistoric Cyprus the human body was not seen as beyond the bounds of manipulation and modification, be it a depiction, a living human individual, or a dead one. In this context one may feel the need to rethink some analytical categories and dualisms recurrent in the literature, such as: agent - artefact, mind - body, nature - culture, subject - object. It is suggested here that such manipulations that occurred in Cyprus during the Aceramic Neolithic to Late Bronze Age were unlikely to have been employed towards individualistic goals, such as personal aesthetics, but occurred rather in the context of socio-culturally negotiated ideas of the ideal or proper form of the human body, both in life and death, as figured and as lived physicality.

Introduction¹

Even the very way we walk is a product of cultural processes. These processes lead to the internalization of particular desired or required characteristics as to the movement of our bodies. Our posture, and the way we move our bodies is a combination of physiological and cultural factors. The cultural and natural processes that shape, reshape and formalize the body start prior to birth and continue in infancy and childhood. Focusing on the young individuals within particular societies has a great potential to throw light on cultural transfers, continuity, change and discontinuity. While researching ideas and practices related to children and childhoods in prehistoric contexts the body can be lifted out as a useful node of investigation.

'Examining childhood bodies in this view becomes a matter of tracing through the means, the varied array of materials and practices involved in their

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construction and maintenance - and in some circumstances their unraveling and disintegration' (Prout 2000: 15).

So writes Prout in his recent seminal work towards the sociology of childhood bodies. Although Prout makes his commentary in specific relation to children in intensive care wards in hospitals, I argue that analyzing the prehistoric evidence for child bodies, and the means, materials and practices involved in their construction, maintenance and unraveling is also fruitful. It not only provides understandings of children and childhood, but also of the prevailing body cultures and other social phenomena in the long duree. The realization of the very physicality of the child body by Prout and others is new, offered to replace its previous ephemeral immateriality. The child body has been absent as a node of investigation in the recent prolific writing on children and childhoods within the social sciences. Further, literature concerned with the body tends to focus on the adult. Archaeological recognition of the young in prehistoric contexts relies precisely on the body, the differences observed between and within the child bodies and those of the adults. The sociological theories of child bodies constructed so far are however inadequate for understanding archaeological child bodies.

I argue for a complex concept of the body, encompassing the living, fleshed body; the fleshed but dead body; and the skeletonised body as articulated and complete, but also as represented by various skeletal elements and their parts. Further, I take the body to encompass not only the physical body, but also the socio-culturally constructed body in its material expressions, and as ideas of the body. Different categories² of material culture archaeologists and physical anthropologists study evidence different aspects of child bodies. The tensions between the understandings of the child body through different categories of material culture can be fruitfully employed to construct more holistic understandings of the past child bodies and activities and attitudes relating to children. Within this paper I approach the child body, and the human body in general, through physical anthropological analysis, contextual burial analysis, and scrutiny of anthropomorphic depictions (see also Lorentz 1998; 2003). The very materiality of archaeological evidence forces one to consider and acknowledge the corporeality of children.

Table 1 Dates for early prehistoric periods (Peltenburg 1989; **Peltenburg et al. 2001**)

Period	Phase	Dates BP	Dates cal BC
Akrotiri		10665*	9703*
Cypro-Pre-Pottery Neolithic B	Early	?-9000	?-8000
Cypro-Pre-Pottery Neolithic B	Middle	9000-8500	8000-7500
Cypro-Pre-Pottery Neolithic B	Late	8500-8000	7600-7000
Khirokitian (Aceramic) Neolithic		8000-6500	7000/6500-5800/5500
Late (Ceramic) Neolithic		4500-3500 BC	
Chalcolithic		3800-2300 BC	
Early Cypriot Bronze Age		2300-1900 BC	
Middle Cypriot Bronze Age		1900-1600 BC	
Late Cypriot Bronze Age		1600-1050 BC	
Cypro-Geometric		1050-750 BC	
Cypro-Archaic		750-475 BC	
Classical		475-325 BC	

* average of large series of dates

In particular, this paper focuses on the bodies of the young in ancient Cyprus, from the Aceramic Neolithic to the Late Bronze Age (8000 – 1050 BC, see Table 1). The long time span enables me to trace through changes within the body cultures within which human bodies were constructed, maintained, and unraveled. The young body, as depicted in anthropomorphic depictions, as modified and manipulated physically by various cultural practices both in life and after death, as produced through various body techniques, often with accompanying material culture, is at the center of this discussion. These issues draw together entities which, traditionally, within Western academic discourse are rarely discussed together as integrated and intertwined, but as opposed and polarized: mind - body, subject - object, nature - culture, agent - artifact. Birthing, breastfeeding, cradleboarding, skeletal modifications, secondary burial and manipulation of the bodies depicted in anthropomorphic figurines are lifted out here as examples of the manipulation and modification of the child and infant bodies in their different forms.

Research history and data trends in brief

Cypriot anthropomorphic depictions have been researched since the initiation of archaeological projects on the island. Studies pertaining to anthropomorphic figurines have mostly been conducted within the confines of the art historical and descriptive approaches (cf. e.g. Morris 1985; Karageorghis, V. 1991a, 1993a, 1993b, 1995, 1996, 1998, Karageorghis, J. 1999), and some have seen the abundant depictions of the female bodies as evidence for the Mother Goddess, the presumed predecessor of Aphrodite (Karageorghis, J. 1977, 1992, 1999). Contextual studies taking into account socio-political developments are rare (but see Bolger 1992; Bolger & Peltenburg 1991), and studies with more critical theoretical orientation have concentrated on anthropomorphic figurines only without regard to other types of archaeological evidence having a bearing on the human body, and for example gender configurations (see e.g. Bolger 1993, 1994, 1996; Knapp & Meskell 1997; a Campo 1994). Finally, work discussing the depiction of young individuals (infants and children) has tended to be descriptive, while guided by implicit assumptions of the similarity of gender roles, child care and conceptualizations of children and childhoods in contemporary Western contexts, and in the Cypriot past (cf. Orphanides 1983, 1986, 1988, 1989, 1990, 1991, 1999, 2001; Merrillees 1980, 1988). Anthropomorphic forms occur throughout the prehistoric and later periods in Cyprus, in both settlement and burial contexts. Materials used for the making of these anthropomorphic images include clay, various kinds of stone (lime stone, picrolite), paint on the walls of buildings, and on the sides of pots. Detailed typological and chronological review of the prehistoric anthropomorphic depictions of Cyprus can be found in the literature (A Campo 1994; Bolger 1993, 1994, 1996; Goring 1991a; Karageorghis, J. 1977; Karageorghis, V. 1991a, 1991b, 1993; Merrillees 1980, 1988; Mogelonsky 1988; Orphanides 1986, 1988; Vagnetti 1974, 1980, 1991; Vandenabeele 1988; Vandenabeele & Laffineur 1991). During the time span in question, anthropomorphic depictions occur as two-dimensional forms, or as three dimensional, either freestanding, or as integrated to composite vessels and activity scenes. The division between two and three-dimensional is not exclusive, for example the free standing Chalcolithic clay figurines from Kissonerga Mosphilia and Souskiou Vathyrkakas integrate painted human figures into the surface of the three dimensional clay figure. Similarly, Chalcolithic picrolite figurines may include depictions within the depiction

(Figure³ 1): a small human form is carved out on the neck of the picrolite figurine from Yialia (Inventory No. CM 1934/ III - 2/ 2). Neolithic figures are often sexless, but some phallic depictions are known. Chalcolithic figurines are either female or sexless - only three males are known⁴. Some figurines however incorporate both male and female characteristics during the Chalcolithic⁵ (phallic heads in female figures with breasts). Female and sexless figures continue to occur in large numbers in the Early Bronze Age, both as independent units and in activity scenes on pots. Male figures appear at this time, but occur almost exclusively in activity scenes, generally in mixed sex groups. During the Late Cypriot female, male and sexless figures continue to be made. Phallic depictions (e.g. simple limestone pieces of phallic shape) occur both in the Neolithic and in the Chalcolithic (Le Brun 1994: 291 – 298). In the EC/MC these are replaced by the occasional depiction of the full male body. In the LC the depiction of figures with indication of male sex proliferates (Karageorghis 1991a; 1993a). The Chalcolithic terracotta figurines show explicit depictions of female genitals, for example in Kalavassos-Aiyous (South 1985; Todd & Croft forthcoming), Erimi (Bolger 1988), Kissonerga-Mosphilia (Peltenburg *et al.* forthcoming). The manner of the depictions of vulvas is varied. No strict conventions seem to be at work. Figures appear to be generally nude, or only partially clothed. Childbirth imagery is also very prominent (see below). No such depictions are known from the Neolithic. In the EC/MC this overt depiction of vulvas seems to be absent. It is clear that the depiction of genitalia on the terracotta is not deemed necessary. The figures appear to be clothed or at least provided with accessories (A Campo 1994). The human (female) body is covered. In the LC the depictions of pubenda and vulvas appear again, but in a standardized manner. The LC Birdfaced figurines exhibit an underlying convention in the depiction of nudity and female genitalia. This is opposed to the variety exhibited by the Chalcolithic material (Lorentz 2003). Depictions of animals are also found, but interestingly it is only in the context of the anthropomorphic figurines that the young occur.

The occurrence of headshaping in Cyprus has been known since the 1930's, when articles and treatises by Buxton (1931), Fürst (1933), and Rix & Buxton (1938) were published. However, the prevalence in Cyprus of this type of permanent modification of the skeletal frame of the body, the artificial molding of the cranium was not known until recently. A systematic survey and analysis of the prevalence of the custom as a whole, through time, in addition to a survey and analysis of the occurrence and prevalence of the different types of headshaping can be found in Lorentz (2003). The practice of headshaping is particularly interesting in that it results in a permanent modification of the shape of the physical body. The fields of social anthropology and physical anthropology have had very different foci in researching headshaping. Many physical anthropologists continue to see headshaping either as a hindrance to comparative metrics, or as a convenient 'natural experiment' from which information on the development and growth of the cranium can be extracted (Anton 1989; Cheverud *et al.* 1992; Moss 1958; O'Loughlin 1996; McNeill & Newton 1965; Kohn *et al.* 1993). Such physical anthropological treatises include attempts to devise a corrective formula by which measurements from artificially modified crania can be made comparable with measurements from unmodified crania, work on the prevalence and etiology of Wormian bones (Königsberg *et al.* 1993; Ossenberg 1970), and on the timing and succession of growth and development of the different parts of the cranium (Anton 1989). The ethnographic approaches, when mention of this 'curiosity' is made, focus mainly on the techniques and devices employed, and the motivations cited by practitioners for the

³ All photographs by the author.

⁴ Hamilton (1994).

need of headshaping (Fitzsimmons *et al.* 1998; Eroz 1971). It is clear that this division of labor relates to what conventionally constitutes the subject matter in each discipline, and what is seen as appropriate evidence. Thus early accounts see headshaping as a hindrance, while some later accounts use it as a natural experiment in cranial development. It is only very recently that headshaping has begun to emerge as a focus of interest in its own right as a cultural practice within the field of physical anthropology. This trend is most clear within research conducted on populations of the Americas (Blom *et al.* 1998; Hoshower *et al.* 1995). Many of the concerns and emphases of the early work on Cypriot headshaping may be understood against the general background of headshaping research. Headshaping in the Cypriot context has mainly been seen as a hindrance to craniometrics, and only occasionally as a 'racial' or ethnic marker, gender marker, and/or a cause of sutural complications. An attempt to explain away the clearly headshaped crania from Khirokitia in order to conduct 'racial' studies through craniometrics is also represented (Charles 1962). The socio-cultural significance of headshaping, and its relation to changing socio-economic situations in Cyprus has received no attention. The following types of headshaping occur in Cyprus: anterior-posterior (occipital flattening), post-bregmatic, and two-band circular type (Lorentz 2003). The prevalence of anterior-posterior headshaping in the Khirokitian Neolithic is nearly universal, while during the Ceramic Neolithic and Chalcolithic there is no evidence of headshaping. Philia phase sees the reintroduction of anterior-posterior headshaping in Cyprus, and this type continues in use through the Bronze Age. The post-bregmatic type emerges during the Late Cypriot II, and continues during the Iron Age. The two-band circular type headshaping is only evidenced in Late Cypriot tombs so far (Lorentz 2003).

The early work on burial contexts in Cyprus, like elsewhere, concentrated mainly on the recovery of beautiful artifacts for museums display or private collections. The actual buried bodies were sometimes completely ignored, sometimes incompletely recovered, and at times 'reburied' with various versions of rituals governed by modern sensibilities (Vermeule 1974). More recent excavation reports have included sufficient contextual detail for syntheses to emerge, of which Tomazou (1989), Niklasson (1991) and Keswani (1989) should be mentioned. These works focus on the burial customs of prehistoric Cyprus. Steel (1993) analyses the *Burial Customs in Cyprus at the Transition from the Bronze Age to the Iron Age*. As for later periods, Parks has investigated the *Burial customs of Roman Cyprus* (1999). A doctoral thesis is in preparation on the Iron Age burial customs. The periods without syntheses are the Archaic, Hellenistic, Byzantine, Medieval, and modern periods. Cypriot burials have not been systematically analyzed with a focus on the young. Only occasional mentions are made of the burials of the young in the context of ascribed vs. achieved status. The picture emerging from these studies, and the recent excavations at the very earliest Neolithic sites attested in Cyprus, is the following. During the Cypro-PPNB at least some dead were buried in shallow pits, with grave goods, within the settlement (Guilaine & Briois 2001). In the Khirokitian period single flexed skeletons buried in shallow pit graves located inside the circular buildings, within the floors, or just outside, are the norm. Large stones and querns were often placed on the skull or on the upper torso of the skeleton. During the Chalcolithic burials still occur within the settlement site, but more often outside the buildings. Specific cemetery sites also appear. Chalcolithic burials may contain more than one individual. Towards the end of the Chalcolithic, and during the Philia phase a new type of burial facility is introduced: the chamber tomb. During the Bronze Age burial customs diversify and become more complex. Large subterranean tombs within settlements, and cemeteries with large numbers of shaft tombs located outside settlements contain multiple interments of individuals, with numerous

grave goods⁶ towards the end of the Bronze Age. Benches within the tombs for the placement of the deceased, and stone slabs for sealing the tomb chamber are commonplace. Undisturbed skeletons dating to the Late Bronze Age are normally found supine and extended, while earlier Bronze Age bodies were at times laid flexed on their sides, or even seated (Vermeule 1974; Keswani 1989). Social status, age, and gender are factors possibly contributing to the variation in burial customs. There is evidence for secondary treatment of the deceased during the Bronze Age. Decomposed individuals were pushed aside to make room for new corpses introduced to the same tomb. Cypriot burials of the young have been mostly investigated as potential markers for achieved *versus* ascribed status, in works investigating social hierarchy and status through burial (Keswani 1989). Materially rich or adult like child burials have been seen as evidence for ascribed rather than achieved status in general (Binford 1972; Renfrew & Bahn 1996: 188; Brown 1981: 29). This position simply equates rich child burials with ascribed status societies, based on the argument that the richly equipped children could have not amassed this material on their own during life, and thus they must signal ascribed status rather than achieved status. The arguments refuting this and other simple kinds of equations between burial patterns and society are well known (Hodder 1982; Simpson 1995: 249). There are other types of social difference that profoundly affect the variation of burial programs for specific, aged individuals. Age has rarely been investigated as a form of cultural difference of interest in itself in the Cypriot context. Now that the scene is set, it is time to move the focus on the young bodies.

The young in the Cypriot figurines

The young body can be recognized in anthropomorphic depictions through body associations⁷, rather than size or relative proportions, which are highly dependent on conventions of depiction. There are no identifiable depictions of the young among the Neolithic anthropomorphic figures. Concern with sexuality, reproduction, and/ or gender may however be deduced from the aspects of the human body that were seen appropriate for depiction (see also Hamilton 1998). Kissonerga Mosphilia birthing figure (Inv. No KM 1451) includes a panel between the legs of a female seated on a stool (Figure 2) (Bolger 1992; Bolger & Peltenburg 1991; Goring 1991b). On this panel an infant is painted in red, its head emerging, with the arms extended to the front (Figure 3). However, the young body is mostly present by suggestion only, as imagined within bulging, enlarged stomachs, and as about to emerge from the womb in other seated female figurines posed in the same attitude than KM 1451 (Figure 4). The connection between birthing and the Chalcolithic cruciform picrolite figures was suggested even before the discovery of the KM 1451 (see e.g. Morris 1985). This connection is further strengthened by the fact that KM 1451 is depicted wearing a human form around the neck. Another, still unpublished figure from Souskiou Vathykakas (Figure 5), is shown with two small painted human figures on the neck, one in the back, and one in the front. This anthropomorph is depicted holding her enlarged abdomen with both arms, seated with legs extending to the front. A largish cruciform picrolite also shows an anthropomorphic necklace (Figure 1). The picrolite figurines are often of the size suitable for wearing around the neck, pierced or grooved for suspension, and sometimes found in connection to dentalia shells. The connection of the

⁶ These grave goods may include imported objects of precious metals.

⁷ Individuals shown as being born, breastfed or cradleboarded are all initially recognised by associations between the adult and infant bodies and their positioning in relation to each other, and in some cases

cruciform picrolite figurines to the young is also played out in funerary contexts where such figurines are often found with children and infants, buried under or near the cranium. Thus there is evidence of the human depictions being worn on or near the body in life, and death. These customs thus connect the living body, the depicted body and the dead body. During the Early Bronze Age the young appear tightly swaddled on cradleboards (Figure 6), as freestanding figurines, or as part of composite vessels, such as the Vounous bowl (Figure 7) (Karageorghis 1991a; Theodossiadou 1991). This type of depiction continues into the Middle Bronze Age, when some plank figurines integrate a larger female holding a cradleboarded or swaddled infant (Figure 8) (A Campo 1994). The young are also included on the protomes of composite vessels, and some birthing scenes have tentatively been suggested (Karageorghis 1991a). The Late Bronze Age depictions consist of infants being breastfed (Figure 9) (Merrillees 1988), or held in the left arm, free, non-swaddled, and apparently nude. In addition to these depictions within the 'Birdfaced' female type, there are also a few activity scenes which include young individuals (e.g. the 'bread-making' scene). The parallels to the 'Birdfaced' figurines of Late Bronze Age Cyprus, the so-called Astarte figurines do not (normally) include depictions of the young. Mycenaean Phi-type figurines from Cyprus sometimes include an infant, though mainland examples rarely do so. The young are excluded or included in varying ways within the anthropomorphic depictions of Cyprus. The bodily relations between the younger and the older human beings allow for inferences on the kind of young depicted during the time periods in question - they are infants, the very young (Lorentz 1998, 2003). Further, the variation in the depiction of the young in varying socio-political contexts, through time, is of interest. Within the specific communities of prehistoric Cyprus the represented activities related to reproduction and child care seem to have been carefully chosen, forming the cognized world, from a diversity of activities available as potential themes for depiction – that is the cognizable world. The Chalcolithic depictions of birthing and pregnancy give way to the depictions of tightly swaddled infants of the EC and MC. The nude, free and more active infants of the LC, who hold the breasts they suckle, in turn substitute these immobile infants. Having briefly looked at the range of depictions of the young, I will now turn to the material evidence of the various techniques of and on the body, relating to the young. This will be followed by a discussion of body modification.

Manipulation of the body and body techniques related to the young: Material culture and the body as a 'project'

Body techniques

It is unlikely that the 'body techniques' (Mauss 1979) internalized by the ancient Cypriots were like those in the age of information technology - the very way we walk, sit and sleep differ in profound ways. Differences in the comportment of the body are probable also between the Cypriot societies through time and space, and between their various members with differing social positions. Evidence of the ways agents manipulate their bodies, and their bodies are manipulated, can be gleaned from various groups of data. Skeletal markers of activity, and certain kinds of material culture can give clues as to the way in which bodies of the past moved, and were shaped. Squatting facets are an example of this kind of activity markers (Aufderheide & Rodriguez-Martin 1998). This

anterior extension of the inferior tibial joint facet, associated with talar modifications is interpreted as resulting from habitual squatting, as opposed to sitting for example in the way most of us habitually sit. The media of anthropomorphic figurines involves a depiction of a range of bodies in various positions, or engaged in certain tasks or actions. Further, in some periods a certain standardization of body positions depicted in figurines can be detected. The standardized body positions in the figurine media likely had a central significance as to the meaning and function of these figurines. Further, we can compare and contrast the figurine groups of successive periods in order to arrive at inferences on the variation of significant body positions through time and space. I will now focus on birthing, breastfeeding and cradling - all activities depicted in the figurine media during various periods in Cyprus.

Birthing

Body techniques employed in birthing and infant care are culturally bound. The very position in which a woman gives birth is often culturally regulated. In the Cypriot Chalcolithic anthropomorphic figurines found in Kissonerga Mosphilia and elsewhere the birthing woman is depicted seated on a low stool, legs spread wide and hanging over the edge of the stool, with the baby emerging between the legs, head first (Figure 2) (Goring 1991b). The KM cache included also a separate stool model, on the top surface of which signs of wear were detected. When used, the role of birthing stools in the formulation of the body techniques of birthing is central. Another figurine of the period comes from Souskiou Vathykakas and seems to be seated also, with legs spread under the body (Figure 2). Later examples of birthing scenes from Cyprus include the Archaic figurine groups of three women: the birthing individual, seated, legs spread to the front, with a supporting individual behind her, holding the body of the birth giver under the arms, and a second assistant in the front, feet on the feet of the birth giver, arms reaching to assist the baby out (Figure 10). These scenes contrast greatly in more than one aspect from the present day Western normative birthing. The major difference is of course the overall position of the body of the birth giver. In both the Archaic period and the Chalcolithic period the birth giver was seated, while in modern medical practice the standard (still) is a birth giver lying down on her back, legs bent and spread. This birthing position became the most common in the Western cultural sphere only quite recently. In terms of comfort and ease for the birth giver, the seated or squatting position is far superior to lying down. According to historians of obstetrics, the latter position was established for the benefit of the medical profession. Birthing techniques may have involved the seated or squatting position throughout Cypriot prehistory, with slight variations.

Breastfeeding

Breastfeeding, although a biological possibility, is not a natural necessity for the survival of infants. Alternative modes of feeding were employed also in the past. Artefactual evidence of bottle-feeding is present in Iron Age Cyprus. Breastfeeding was however significant enough an activity to the function and meaning of the Late Cypriot anthropomorphic Birdfaced figurines to be included in the repertoire of activities depicted (Figure 9). The Late Cypriot Birdfaced figurine groups that are interpreted as breastfeeding depict infants free of any swaddling or clothing, sucking the left breast of the adult female, often holding the breast with both hands (Figure 11). In contrast, the infant in the MC figurine group interpreted breastfeeding is swaddled tightly, including the arms, and the only direct contact with the bodies of the adult and the baby is that between the nipple and the mouth.

There is a difference between the level of bodily contact depicted in the two time periods. Regardless of what relationship the depictions have with the reality of breastfeeding, the ideal way of breastfeeding, in the context of the figurine media, changed between the Middle and Late Cypriot periods. All the infants, including the breastfed in the MC figurines are swaddled⁸, unlike the free LC infants grasping the breast with both hands⁹.

Swaddling and cradleboarding - body techniques and body modification intertwined

We have figurative evidence of swaddling/ cradleboarding from both the Early Cypriot and the Middle Cypriot periods (Figures 6, 7 and 8). Swaddling has the effect of restricting the bodily movements of the baby. Depending from the tightness of swaddling the infant may be rendered immobile apart from the muscles of the face and neck (Valsiner 2000). This powerful body technique imposed on the baby was previously seen as having a range of practical implications for the development of movement of the individual. According to older theories, learning to walk is often delayed in cultural groups which employed swaddling or cradleboarding as opposed to groups which carry infants free, or in carrying devices which leave the infants' extremities free to move (see e.g. Hudson 1966). Early walking is culturally valued in contemporary Western societies (Valsiner 2000: 205). This attitude underlies most, if not all, of the scientific discussion of cross cultural child development. However, the idea of the desirability of early walking is culturally specific - and not necessarily based on benefits to parents or caretakers, nor to the child (Lorentz 1999). Empirical evidence does not support theories of delayed walking due to restriction on body movement. The age of onset of independent walking by cradleboard users and by non-users in North American Indian societies was the same (Valsiner 2000: 207). The development of muscle strength in biological organisms can take place in two ways: *isotonic* and *isometric* physical exercise. The isotonic physical exercise involves the development of muscles through the active movement of limbs at full extent. The isometric exercise develops muscle strength by pressing against a static object, by increasing effort. Thus the swaddled or cradleboarded baby can develop muscle strength precisely because the movements are restricted (*isometric physical exercise*) (Hudson 1966). When the cradleboarded infants are free, they have more intensive bouts of activity than their non-cradleboarded counterparts would normally. The depictions of infants in the Early and Middle Cypriot period consist always of individuals swaddled or cradleboarded, held by adults or occurring singly. If the occurrence of cradleboarded infants in the media of anthropomorphic figurines may be taken as an indication of the use of cradleboards in the Cypriot societies of the time (a fact supported by occurrence of occipital flattening), we may say that at least some infants were restricted - at times - in their movements by cradleboarding. However, the timing of the onset of walking during EC/ MC is unlikely to differ from other contexts due to the use of cradleboards. The role of swaddling and cradleboarding could be seen as two fold in regards to body techniques. It not only distances the infant body from the adult's, but also affects the very movement of the infant body, both while it is swaddled, and when free from swaddling. Further, in association with cradleboarding, a specific type of body modification may occur: headshaping. This modification of the cranial form can be an unintentional side effect of cradleboarding, or a result of intentional employment of the features of the cradleboard to arrive at an altered head shape, like in the case of certain Native American groups (Anton 1989; Dingwall 1931). We will now move to discussing this and other types of body modifications.

⁸ As well as swaddling, the feeding bottle can also be seen as a distancing device (Fildes 1986).

Headshaping

Artificially shaped crania (Figure 12) occur throughout the prehistoric periods in Cyprus (Angel 1953; Domurad 1986; Fischer 1986; Fox-Leonard forthcoming; Fürst 1933; Schulte-Campbell 1979, 1983, 1986; Schwartz 1974). The human cranium is malleable during infancy. Various purposive and/or non-purposive cultural actions lead to the modification of the genetically and environmentally preconditioned shape of the human cranium during infancy (Masie-Taylor & Bogin 1995). Bandages, special hats, structural parts of cradleboards, and even masks for facial modification are some of the material artifacts used cross-culturally to shape the braincase and face (Adenbojo 1991; Allison *et al.* 1981; Anton 1989; Arensburg & Herskovitz 1988; Dingwall 1931; von Winning 1968). Viewing the child body as material culture (Hamilakis *et al.* 2002; Sofaer Derevenski 1998) in itself opens up a theoretical space in which the scrutiny of this phenomenon has a bearing on the body as a project, engaging with, and being of, both the material and social worlds. To intentionally shape a head, a continuous set of actions needs to be in place (Argenta *et al.* 1996; Duncan 1996; Pollack *et al.* 1997; Pople 1996; Pritchard 1995). The child body is manipulated in order to arrive at a culturally imagined, desirable adult body. This requires long term planning, and imaginative innovation and observation to begin with. Headshaping in its different forms is attested in the Cypro-PPNB, Khirokitian Neolithic, Philia, Early Cypriot, Middle Cypriot, Late Cypriot, and Archaic periods in Cyprus. Occipital flattening (Figure 12) occurs in the Cypro-PPNB and Khirokitian Neolithic, Philia, Early Cypriot and Late Cypriot Cyprus. Plagiocephaly¹⁰ is attested in Khirokitian and Late Cypriot material, while post-bregmatic type (Figure 13) of headshaping does not occur before the Late Cypriot period. Fronto-occipital and 'Classical' (*i.e.* circular type) headshaping occur in the Late Cypriot also, but only a few crania belong to these categories (Lorentz 2003). Since occipital flattening may come about as a result of swaddling and cradleboarding practices, as may plagiocephaly, it is only the post-bregmatic type of flattening that I consider unambiguously intentional, with the aim of arriving at a shaped head (Lorentz 1998: 68 – 79, 2003). Thus by the LC, at the latest, head shaping started to be induced intentionally, as a cultural practice in itself. However, scrutiny of the extent or intensity of headshaping during the Khirokitian period, and gender differentiation within it, shows that headshaping was used intentionally already during this time period to modify the human body (Lorentz 2003). It is unlikely that the purpose of headshaping was to *dis-figure*, thus the term 'artificial cranial deformation' misses its mark. Evidence of intentional head shaping assumes perception of the body as malleable, as unfinished and as modifiable. The infant body becomes malleable raw material, from which the culturally significant, altered child and adult bodies are created. However, these ideas differ fundamentally from contemporary views of the human body as open to modification through plastic surgery in that during the Cypriot past the modifications were rather 'done to one', not initiated by one, thus excluding the aspect of 'self fashioning' possible in terms of plastic surgery (Haiken 1997). Further, this form of bodily manipulation in the past seems standardized and regulated by some socio-cultural rules in that only certain types of head shapes occur in certain areas, at certain times. It is these socio-culturally negotiated ideals that lie behind the modification of the past bodies in Cyprus, rather than

¹⁰ Asymmetry of the cranium with posterior-lateral flattening on one side with concomitant bulging on the

individualistic aesthetics. Analysis of Cypriot headshaping practices through time show that while almost all individuals during the Khirokitian Neolithic were headshaped, the *extent* of anterior-posterior headshaping was employed for gender differentiation (Lorentz 2003). During the Philia phase and the earlier periods of the Bronze Age (EC and MC) anterior-posterior headshaping occurs in moderate forms only, and is never universal within populations. From the Late Cypriot II onward different headshaping types coexist on same sites and even within same chamber tombs (*ibid.*). It seems that headshaping *types*, as well as the *presence or absence* of headshaping were used to mark gender, ethnicity and/or social status at this time (*ibid.*). To sum up, headshaping has been used as a marker of social difference at least from the Khirokitian period onwards.

Burial treatment

As well as manipulation of the form of the body in life, there is evidence for the secondary manipulation of the human body after death. First evidence of secondary treatment both for adults and sub-adults comes from the Cypro-PPNB Kissonerga Mylouthkia wells where human remains were deposited together with animal carcasses and a few artifacts (Peltenburg *et al.* 2001). The mode of deposition of human remains in these contexts may however not be representative of any prevailing normative cultural practices. During the Chalcolithic, both primary and secondary burial is attested for adults, children and infants. The primary burial pathways are particularly prominent on settlement sites, while secondary arrangement of adult and infant skeletal remains is evidenced in extra-settlement cemeteries such as Souskiou Laona. Secondary burial treatment within settlements may be slightly more prominent for the young. The ongoing excavations at the Chalcolithic cemetery of Souskiou Laona show evidence of secondary treatment of both adult and sub-adult bodies. Articulated burials in rock-cut shaft graves are accompanied by arrangements of crania and longbone stacks at their feet (Lorentz forthcoming). In the Late Cypriot there seems to be important differences between the kinds of secondary treatment afforded to different age groups. Adults seem to have received both primary burial and secondary treatment by subsequent removal or rearrangement to make room for new burials within the same burial chamber, while infants may have been first disposed of elsewhere, and introduced only secondarily into chambers. Children seem to have been admitted at least in some cases into the main burial chambers as primary burials, for example at Enkomi, Bamboula, and Kalavassos-Ayios Dhimitrios. The children in Enkomi admitted to chamber tombs are all at least six years old, unless they are infants in pottery vessels (2 instances). In adult secondary treatment of the corpse there seems to be a desire to preserve the integrity of the anatomical positioning of the bones, while with some young children there is no such concern. Vermeule's (1974) observation regarding the small size of the burial niches at Toumba tou Skourou and secondary burial are interesting when pitched against Keswani's (1989) theory of secondary burial for infants and children in the Bronze Age. Keswani holds that infants and young children were likely buried first in the dromos niches and subsequently introduced to the tomb chambers proper when the death of an adult individual warranted the opening of a tomb chamber. It is not inconceivable that there was a three-part burial sequence where infants were first buried elsewhere, then introduced to the niches, and subsequently to the tomb chamber. Tomb 11 at Kalavassos-Ayios Dhimitrios contained infant remains in a circular concentration, mixed with animal bones, suggesting their introduction to the tomb as secondary burial, within an organic container. Thus there is age differentiation in the secondary treatment of the body in burial at least during the Chalcolithic, and the LC period. During the former, secondary burial is similar in kind but not in prevalence for both sub-adults and adults.

while during the Bronze Age the differentiation is more fundamental: only infants are mixed with animal bones and buried in niches. An increase of age differentiation in other aspects of burial is also seen towards the LC (Lorentz 2003).

Manipulation of the body in the figurine media

Manipulation of the body, and modification of its form cannot only be seen as restricted to the actual physical body, whether *in vivo* or after death. Manipulation of the anthropomorphic human figures is evident in Chalcolithic Cyprus. Goring writes on the deliberate breaking of the figurines in the Kissonerga-Mosphilia cache, and their simultaneous deposition:

'[I]t seems that either the power and efficacy of the figurines must have been revoked in some way or the destruction was an end in itself', for instance, releasing whatever power was required. Further, '[t]he ritual nature of the deposit itself perhaps provides an indication that the figurines could have belonged to the community rather than to an individual. It is possible that they comprised part of the tool kit of the community midwife/ shaman, composed of teaching aids for initiation purposes and handling; charms for childbirth, and that all were buried together as part of a specific ritual event with no intention to retrieve them.' 'The figurines point to the start of the life cycle. It is clear that they played a significant role in Chalcolithic society, a role not confined to the usual suggested uses as dolls, idols or votives, but one fundamental to the *continuity and transmission of life itself*' (Goring 1991b: 55 [italics mine]).

What Goring does not mention is the apparently intentional scarring on the painted figure of infant emerging from the womb of the birthing figure (KM 1451). The cache of figurines has been interpreted as initiation or a teaching set related to childbirth (Peltenburg *et al.* 1991, 1998). The intentional damaging of the infant body becomes significant in this context. It suggests that the infant body was at least one of the targets of modification or destruction. Ideas of rendering material culture related to infant and child bodies *unusable* in its original context are evoked also in the treatment of the cruciform birthing pendants. Some of the picrolite figurines have been subject to heavy use, reworking, and secondary treatments. Goring has studied one case in particular detail, and suggests that the intentional breakage, burning and smearing with red matter of this figurine (Figure 14) might be explained by evoking the idea of its intentional 'killing', 'perhaps because its power failed in some respect (for example the owner dieing in childbirth), or the physical destruction of its form to destroy its special power, perhaps the end of its active use' (Goring 1992: 39). This small cruciform figure was buried with a child. It had already been worn during life. The original head had broken away, and the neck stump was smoothed and provided with a new suspension groove, which also shows signs of wear. Before its deposition with the child, the body of the figure had been mutilated by striking off the right arm, and by chipping on this arm stump and on the lower right limb. After the breaking of the integrity of the body, the figure was exposed to fire and finally dipped in red matter before being deposited within the grave of the child (*ibid.*). In some instances the depicted bodies relating to childbirth clearly required specific treatment and modification.

Conclusion

This paper strives to open up avenues for theoretically critical approaches to young bodies within archaeology and anthropology, providing time depth for philosophical and

sociological discussions of the nature and construction of child bodies. The exploration of how social difference becomes expressed by and through the aged bodies, with reference to particular cultural contexts, in the long duree, is a long overdue undertaking. The focus on the child body draws attention to the body as aged, as opposed to the generic adult bodies previously dominating the stage. The focus on the child body as a material entity in the past opens up a theoretical space for the exploration of the processes that go into the making of mature and aged bodies, and their cultural evolution in the personal time scale, as well as in the time scale of generations, and finally, at the scale of cultural history. The focus on the aged body highlights the processes that have gone into the making and unraveling of the individual, experiencing body, the social body, and the body politic (the regulated body). I have traced through the changes in the depicted body techniques relating to birthing, infant care and nurture, as well as changes in body modifications conducted on the living, dead and the depicted child bodies. In prehistoric Cyprus the human body was not beyond the bounds of manipulation and modification, but these activities were indeed central to its construction and maintenance. Headshaping is not only an effect of increasing social complexity, but may be seen as an active component in the construction of social difference in terms of gender, status and/or ethnicity. The depiction of the young body in the anthropomorphic media, its changing emphases on different types of young bodies, having different relationships with adult bodies, is active in social discourses relating to reproduction and gender. Whether the females depicted with infants in the figurines are supernatural beings or mortal women or something in between, the depicted body relations between the adult and the child have their reference in everyday practices and phenomena such as pregnancy, birth, breastfeeding, and infant transport and protection. Increasing age differentiation in burial towards the Late Bronze Age establishes children and especially infants as separate from the adults. The aspects of child bodies investigated were active components in the construction of social realities in the Cypriot past. Such manipulations and body techniques that occurred in Cyprus from the Aceramic Neolithic to the Late Bronze Age are unlikely to have been employed towards individualistic goals, such as personal aesthetics, but occurred rather in the context of socio-culturally negotiated ideas of the ideal or proper form and use of the human body, both in life and death, as figured and as lived physicality.

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