
Of Cows, Copper, Corners, and Cult: The Emergence of the Cypriot Bronze Age

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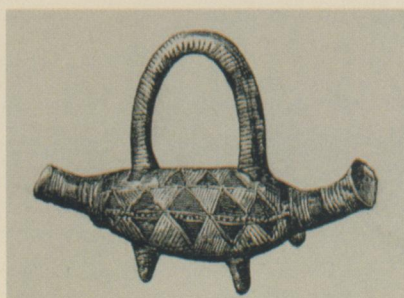
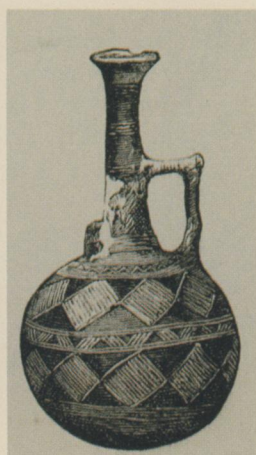
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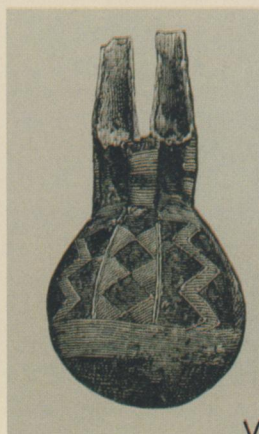
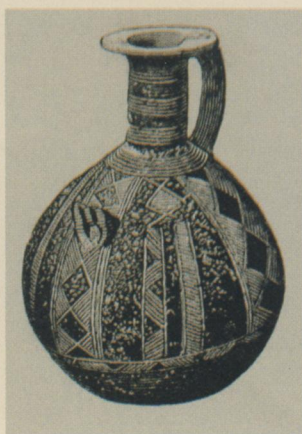
Stuart Swiny

It is no small irony that American interest in the Bronze Age of Cyprus harks back to the mid-nineteenth century antiquarian activities of Louis Palma di Cesnola, one of the most controversial and flamboyant figures to have scoured the island for vestiges of its ancient past. Today there is a tendency to denigrate di Cesnola's methods of "excavation" that lacked systematic recording and contextual information (Marangou 2000), however, it should be noted that in this respect he was only slightly worse than Heinrich Schliemann, his acknowledged nemesis, who was equally, if not more unscrupulous about aggrandizing and manipulating his own discoveries (Allen 1999)! Both di Cesnola and Schliemann should be judged by the moral and professional standards of their time and it must be remembered that they at least published the results of their investigations, which is more than can be said about many twentieth-century excavators of ancient sites in the Mediterranean world (Hadjisavvas and Karageorghis 2000). Indeed, di Cesnola's *Cyprus: Its Ancient Cities, Tombs, and Temples. A Narrative of Researches and Excavations During Ten Years' Residence as American Consul in that Island* published in London by John Murray in 1877 and a year later in New York by Harper Brothers, was the first widely distributed and apparently popular book (copies may be found in antiquarian bookstores worldwide) that presented to the general public a view of nineteenth-century Cyprus along with its little-known ancient remains. Although at the time no remotely precise chronology existed for finds predating the Cypriot Iron Age with its strong connections to the Assyrian, Phoenician, and

Aegean cultures, di Cesnola did realize that this "bright red or black varnished ware" was earlier than the bulk of his discoveries. The pottery is described as being of "great antiquity" and compared to vessels recovered by Schliemann at Troy (di Cesnola 1877:94–95).



Louis Palma di Cesnola was the first to show an interest in the Cypriot Bronze Age. In 1877, he published accurately drawn plates and text figures depicting ceramics immediately recognizable as Red or Black Polished Ware belonging to the Early and Middle Bronze Age. di Cesnola (1877:pl. VII; "Pottery from Alambra").



After this initial burst of antiquarian activity on the island, American interest in excavation in general and the Bronze Age in particular, lay apparently dormant until Bert Hodge Hill led the University of Pennsylvania's exploration of an Early and Middle Bronze Age cemetery at Lapithos on the north coast in 1931.¹ The results from the carefully recorded excavation of particularly rich and important tombs were all but forgotten for many decades, but are at last being comprehensively published by Ellen Herscher.² The situation, however, could have been very different, as Cyprus nearly became the focus of a major project sponsored by one of the most prestigious and well-funded American institutions dedicated to ancient Near Eastern studies.

The National Archives in Nicosia preserve a series of letters and telegrams exchanged in 1930 between James H. Breasted, the Director of The Oriental Institute in Chicago and the Colonial Government of Cyprus, including the Governor Sir Ronald Storrs. Breasted investigated the possibility of purchasing twenty acres on the Iron Age acropolis at Amathus in order to undertake an intensive field project consisting of seven-month excavation seasons spread over a period of up to five years! The planned "Cyprus Expedition" was to be directed by Emil Forrer, no other than the father-in-law of Claude F. Schaeffer whose library CAARI now proudly owns. The project was based on Breasted's belief that the ancient city-sites of Cyprus could provide material contributing to the decipherment of the Minoan writing systems. Arrangements included "erection of a field house" with plenty of laboratory and living space including running water and a generator to operate a "small electric refrigerating box," luxuries unheard of outside of the main Cypriot towns at that time. The spot chosen was on top of the acropolis, where the French expedition would later uncover the temple of Aphrodite. Equally important, the results were slated to be published in the renowned Oriental Institute Publications Series.

Unfortunately the expedition, planned along the lines of those The Oriental Institute had fielded in the Near East, seems to have been rushed and insensitive to Cypriot administrative requirements. Finally, unable to purchase the necessary land at reasonable cost, the project was abandoned. (See the article by Pilides in this issue for more on this topic.) There is little doubt that had The Oriental Institute mounted a major excavation in Cyprus from 1930 onwards, the direction and scale of American research in Cyprus would have followed a radically different course.³

Another lengthy hiatus separated the work at Lapithos from the next American project to investigate the Cypriot Early and Middle Bronze Age, two periods now often referred to collectively as the "prehistoric Bronze Age" since the change from the first to the second is based more on convention than any significant cultural-historical break. In 1955 Saul S. Weinberg from the University of Missouri directed one season of excavations at *Phaneromeni*, a site of this period near Episkopi village on the south coast. Political upheaval leading to the independence of Cyprus from Britain caused cancellation of further work, which would only be resumed by James R. Carpenter for Kent State University in 1975. The previous summer Carpenter had been forced to abandon his excavation of a Middle Bronze Age

settlement at Kalokhorio *Khalandrikas* a short distance inland from Morphou Bay due to the Turkish invasion.

Prior to the investigation of major prehistoric Bronze Age settlements, our view of the period relied almost entirely on information obtained from artifact-rich rock-cut tombs found throughout the island. The picture has changed dramatically since the 1970s, starting with Episkopi *Phaneromeni*, followed by John Coleman's Cornell University excavations at *Alambra Mouttes* in 1976 then my own work, sponsored by the American Schools of Oriental Research, at *Sotira Kaminoudhia* in 1981 and finally with David Frankel and Jennifer Webb's excavations at *Marki Alonia* from 1990 onwards. In the past thirty years our understanding of this formative stage of the Cypriot Bronze Age has increased exponentially, as the results of these American and Australian projects have made their way to publication (Carpenter 1981; Swiny 1986; Coleman *et al.* 1996; Frankel and Webb 1996, 2006; Swiny, Rapp and Herscher 2003).

Alambra village and its hinterland have long been known for their ancient remains, as the previously mentioned vessels published by the American Consul Luigi di Cesnola are said to come from here. Therefore it was fitting that a team from Cornell University should uncover the first extensive remains of a Middle Bronze Age settlement at *Mouttes* where the potters who produced such fine examples of their art could well have lived. The row of rectangular, multi-roomed structures contained living, storage, and manufacturing quarters, thereby providing a comprehensive view of life in this egalitarian community lacking evidence for social stratification (Coleman *et al.* 1996).

The small agricultural settlement of Episkopi *Phaneromeni* overlooking the Kouris River was first inhabited in the Early Bronze Age but it is the finds from the succeeding periods that helped complete the picture painted by *Mouttes*. Here at the transition to the Late Bronze Age we see people living in much the same way as before, although new pottery types had been created as well as the ability to forge more efficient tools. In addition to providing a view of little-known seventeenth-century BCE architecture and material culture, the excavations highlighted the unsettled political conditions of a time that corresponds to the expulsion of the Hyksos from Egypt. All the structures appear to have been intentionally torched and ransacked and it is perhaps no coincidence that other contemporary Cypriot sites show evidence for what may be foreign instigated disturbances on the island (Steel 2004:154).

The availability of all this material and the new, more theoretically based approach to our interpretation of the past has resulted in a substantial corpus of articles and several books focusing on different aspects of Cyprus in the prehistoric Bronze Age. The lion's share belongs to David Frankel and Jennifer Webb who, in addition to their site reports, have authored a series of studies dealing with the origins of the Cypriot prehistoric Bronze Age. Also of note are important and sometimes provocative monographs by Diane Bolger on the role of gender in ancient Cypriot society, Priscilla Keszani with a novel approach to interpreting funerary evidence as well as Louise Steel and A. Bernard Knapp with fresh insights and interpretations of prehistoric Cyprus.⁴



View of Sotira Village from the south. The prominent knoll on the left is the Ceramic Neolithic settlement of *Teppes* excavated between 1947 and 1956 for the University Museum, University of Pennsylvania, by Porphyrios Dikaïos, Cyprus Department of Antiquities. The Early Bronze Age site of *Kaminoudhia* is above the village to the right.

The present contribution will focus primarily on evidence, the most recent of which is unpublished, provided by the excavations at *Kaminoudhia*, a sprawling Early Bronze Age settlement on the outskirts of Sotira village, five kilometers from the south coast. The project is currently sponsored by the University at Albany with funding since 2004 provided by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. Here we will assess what the site has contributed to our knowledge of the period by comparison with broadly contemporary settlements at Marki and Alambra.

Cows

The reintroduction of cattle to the island after a hiatus of some four thousand years is arguably the most significant development of the prehistoric Bronze Age. Although the emergence of an indigenous copper-based metal industry was of great economic importance, it lacked the impact that cattle would have on the island's culture quite simply because their presence enabled the so-called "secondary products revolution" to transform the existing Chalcolithic subsistence economy. Cattle provided the means for the islanders to increase the quantity of grown crops substantially from the same input of time and labor as plow agriculture replaced hoe cultivation. Cows also produced more milk and meat than other existing domesticates, such as sheep, goats, and pigs (Knapp 1990; Steel 2004:125).

The greater frequency of figurines and relief decoration representing cattle relative to those depicting other species highlights the importance of cattle to the islanders at this time (Frankel and Webb 2006:157, fig. 5.4). This is especially the case for art whose subject matter seems to relate to cult and ritual, such as the famous Bellapais *Vounous* model (Dikaïos 1940) or other contemporary scenes (Karageorghis 1970), but

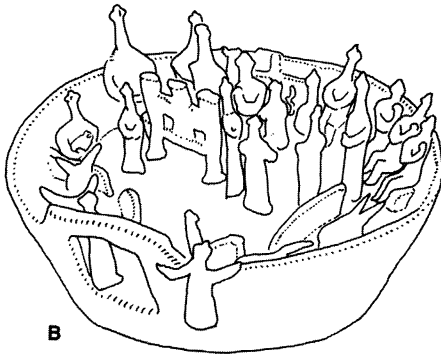
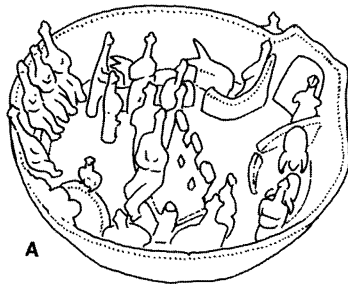
also on the plastic decoration of various non-utilitarian vessels (Morris 1985:190). At Sotira *Kaminoudhia* the skull of an ox had been carefully shaped so that it could be worn as a headdress or mask (Swiny 2003:46). Steel has recently emphasized the status imparted by the ownership of cattle, their bones having been found in some of the richer burials of the period (2004).

These changes immediately resulted in an increase in the number of contemporary sites from under one hundred in the preceding Chalcolithic to well over three hundred, an indication of a dramatic rise in population (Swiny 1989).

With the large assemblages of faunal remains provided by various excavations, the ratios of each species at different sites may be compared, and the resulting economic implications provide new information on regional subsistence strategies in relation to the local environment (Steel 2004:61; Croft 2006).

Copper

The metal industry of the prehistoric Bronze Age is now quite well understood. Although the range of artifacts is large by comparison with the Chalcolithic, it remains limited to about a dozen object types. Most common are spearheads and daggers (which served as knives) followed by axes, razors, tweezers, and awls. Personal ornaments, such as rings and earrings, bracelets, and other small items, are rarer. Most objects were of pure copper and cast in open moulds prior to being hammered into their final shape. The use of tin and arsenic alloyed with copper to produce bronze increased as the period progressed and resulted in the production of more complex shapes and harder cutting edges. Our knowledge of how the copper ore was mined and processed remains slim, but the available technology was obviously sophisticated, since modern mining operations have encountered Middle Bronze Age pottery at a considerable



Three views of the Bellapais Vounous model (ca. 2000 BCE). Note in the oblique view (B) and plan view (C) the tripartite arrangement of pilasters, perhaps supporting bucrania, against the wall opposite the entrance. The greater frequency of figurines and relief decoration representing cattle indicates the importance of cattle to the islanders at this time
 From Wright (1992:fig. 87).

distance from the surface (Merrillees 1984:6). A recent study of metal objects found in Cyprus and belonging to the very beginning of the period has emphasized the international scope and complexity of the networks already exchanging strategic or prestige goods at the outset of the Bronze Age (Webb *et al.* 2006). With the ever-increasing availability of analytical techniques, our understanding of the island's role in the Mediterranean metals trade should continue to grow.

Corners

The inclusion of “corners” in the title of this article refers to the appearance of rectilinear architecture at the beginning of the prehistoric Bronze Age, in stark contrast with the essentially circular tradition of the preceding Chalcolithic. When uncovered in 1981, the accretive, rectilinear structures at *Kaminoudhia* were the earliest recorded Bronze Age buildings.

The settlement, which had been abandoned around 2230 BCE, is now known from three major clusters of buildings—Areas A, B, and C—that exhibit a broad range of architectural layouts.

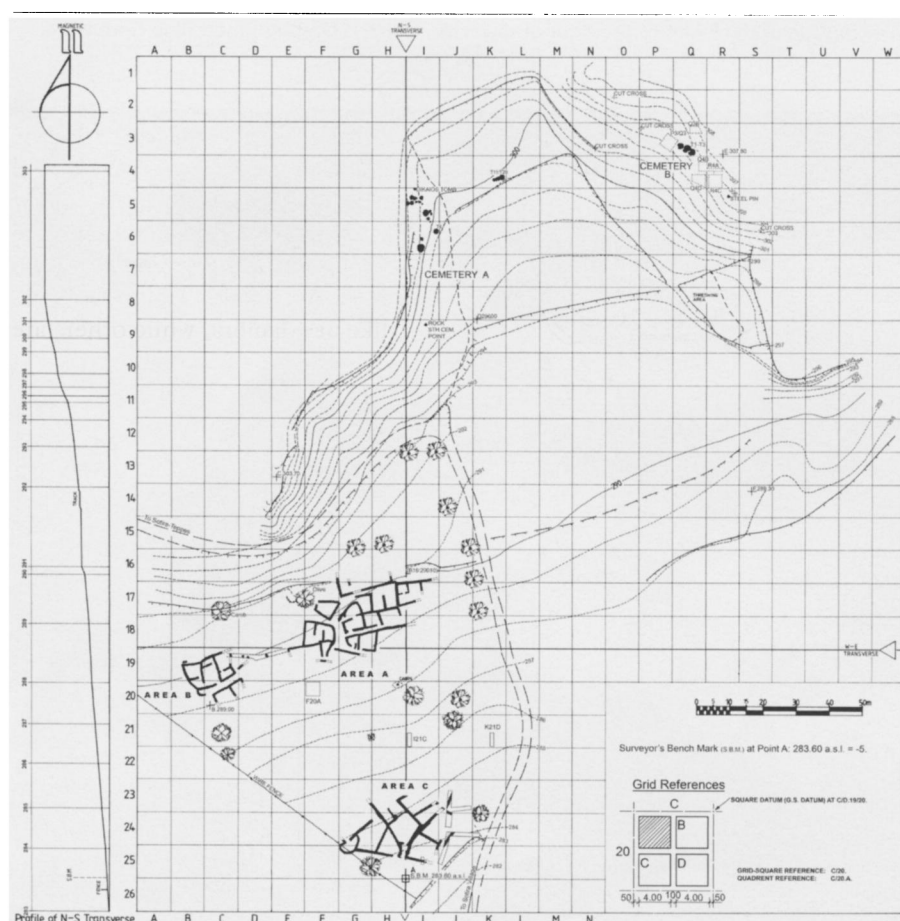
Indeed, the most striking aspect of the settlement's architecture is the lack of a standard building plan. Rectangular units are found next to square and triangular ones and others even incorporate curvilinear walls. Some are two to three roomed habitation units like at *Alambra*, while others are approached via a courtyard as at





◀ A clay basin or tray being held in position above a hearth in Unit 28, Area A, into which it had collapsed when the site was destroyed. Although this is the best-preserved example from the site, much of it is still missing due to the friable nature of the coarse clay fabric. These D-shaped trays, open on the straight side, had walls up to fifteen centimeters high and usually seem to have been placed over hearths, as in the picture above, or were found in close proximity to them. Although they are recorded from Bronze Age sites throughout the island and their exact function(s) remain conjectural, it seems most likely that they were used for drying foodstuffs.

▼ Sotira Kaminoudhia site plan. The two cemeteries, A and B are located between 100 and 150 meters north of the settlement.



as low benches built next to walls, a well-preserved rectangular hearth holding the smashed remains of a large clay basin or tray, several mortars and querns, and a fine lime-plaster mortar-like depression in the floor, perhaps intended for holding a large jug. Of the twenty-seven discrete rooms and courtyards excavated at Kaminoudhia, this is the sole example without a recognizable entrance and is best interpreted as a true basement.

With the exception of ground stone tools, *in situ* finds are typically rare here and at other settlements of the period, but Unit 44, in the southwestern corner of Area A and almost square in shape, was different as it yielded a rich array of intact or restorable pottery. Over a dozen bowls and jugs were found resting against the walls, set on a low bench, or in one instance sitting on a narrow shelf well above the floor. This was clearly a domestic space outfitted with a range of installations, including a large ovoid ceramic tray propped up on stones. Just off center was the skeleton of a young woman sprawled on the floor. The position in which she lay, the total lack of any feature separating her remains from rest of the room and absence of putative grave

goods nearby, and still more consist of single room, multi-purpose structures. A few were subdivided by low parapet walls such as the D-shaped complex, (Units 27–29) the floor of which had been cut down into the bedrock on one side in order to obtain a horizontal surface. This building is notable for its unusually well-preserved walls standing up to 1.37 meters, and the lack of a doorway. It boasted a number of characteristic features, such

goods nearby, strongly suggest that she was the victim of some catastrophic event, specifically an earthquake. Another female skeleton from a building fifty meters away was interpreted in the same way (Swiny 2003:51, 53). This discovery along with the presence of human remains in three other structures, as well as the coursed-wall tumble in Area B discussed below, reinforces this interpretation.



Unit 44, in the southwestern corner of Area A and almost square in shape yielded a rich array of intact or restorable pottery. Over a dozen bowls and jugs were found resting against the walls, set on a low bench, or in one instance sitting on a narrow shelf well above the floor. All the vessels shown here are of Red Polished ware with the exception of the juglet to the right of the scale, which is Drab Polished Blue Core ware.



A member of the excavation team approximates the position of a skeleton of a young woman that lay on the floor just off center of Unit 44. She appears to have been the victim of a catastrophic event like an earthquake. Note the mended pottery replaced in its original position, including the intact Drab Polished Blue Core juglet on a shelf against the middle of the back wall. The entrance with a step down from the street is on the left.



A major activity at Kaminoudhia was the manufacture, and presumably distribution, of small objects and personal ornaments of picrolite. This photo offers a sampling of the picrolite artifacts, blanks, and debitage from the site. Photo courtesy of Philip Swiny.

Several burials, typically within abandoned units, were recorded at Marki Alonia (Frankel and Webb 2006:28–30), and along with human bones from a number of contexts, prove that it is not unusual for such material to occur in settlements; but the disposition of the human remains found within structures at Kaminoudhia is different and is not suggestive of intentional burial. The fact that both skeletons were female may also indicate that the destruction occurred at a time when most people were involved in activities outside their dwellings. It is a known fact that when earthquakes hit mud-built villages in poor (winter) weather during the day, the majority of victims tend to be women and children.

The Kaminoudhia excavations have helped define the manner in which people circulated within their settlements of tightly packed buildings. The narrow, winding alleyways (nos. 30–33, 37, 42) provided access to the discrete units in much the same way as did the streets did at Marki Alonia (Frankel and Webb 2006:82). In contrast to the latter site, however, Kaminoudhia's alleys lacked hard-packed surfaces and saw the more rapid accumulation of material containing ashy debris rich in pot sherds,



Units 27–29 form a D-shaped complex in Area A, and as it is the only room without an entrance, it probably should be interpreted as a basement. Photo courtesy of Philip Swiny.



The tumble of earthquake wall debris once covered the entire Area B. The "gaps" represent excavated sections where the stones have been removed. Note the well-coursed stones sitting on edge behind the person squatting in the street (Unit 13). Photo courtesy of Philip Swiny.

broken or worn-out lithic artifacts, chipped-stone debitage as well as pebbles and flakes of picrolite, an easily worked and polished mineral of distinctive greenish color.

Refuse from domestic and craft activities was obviously discarded in these communal areas, to such an extent that street levels rose more rapidly than the enclosed spaces to which they provided access. In order to keep unwanted debris from spilling back into rooms, thresholds, sometimes made from large stone blocks, were provided for most street entrances. Study of the material from the alleyways supported our conclusion that a major activity at *Kaminoudhia* was the manufacture, and presumably distribution, of small objects and personal ornaments of picrolite. The island's major source of this highly prized raw material was, and still is, the Kouris River bed, three miles to the east, and it would seem that the village took full advantage of this proximity.

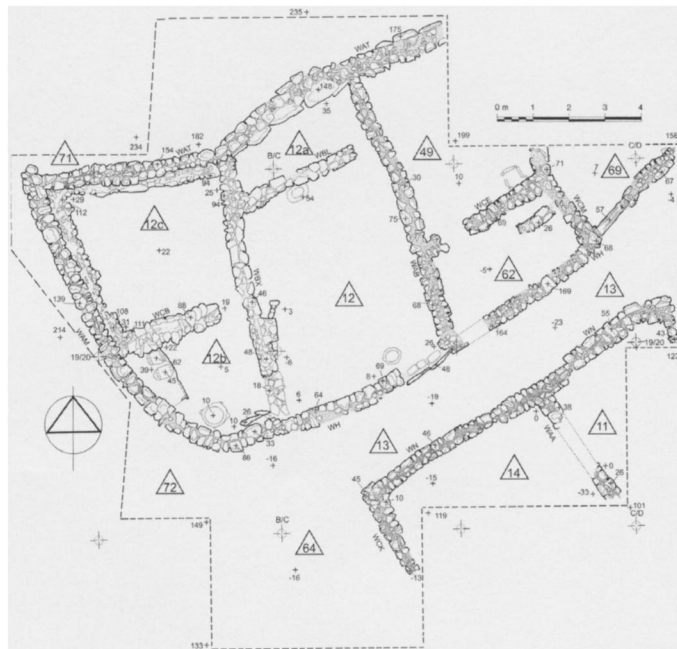
Cult

The western section of the settlement, Area B, is dominated by a large building subdivided by low partitions and approached by a wide street. The whole area was exceptionally well preserved having been blanketed by a thick layer of earthquake tumble. Known as the Unit 12 Complex, it consisted of an enclosed unroofed space, ten by eight meters, with a rectangular courtyard (No. 12 on the plan below) separated from three smaller rooms by parapet walls up to eighty centimeters high.

From the wide doorway leading in from the street, the courtyard sloped gently up towards a heavy, shallow stone trough set against the middle of a low wall, defining a narrow space in front of three huge boulders. These provide an eye-catching and stable footing for a five-to-six-meter-high backdrop consisting of a white-plastered wall towering over the courtyard. The wall had toppled over in a single cohesive block, providing evidence for its height and lime rendering. Only on the north side of the Complex was there such an attention-focusing construction, and the rest of the perimeter wall seems to have been of the more typical two to two-and-a-half meters in height.

The tripartite arrangement of boulders framed on either side by smaller blocks corresponds exactly to the width of the courtyard and was carefully planned. The only large objects recovered from this space were a quern and a strangely weathered perforated stone lying close to a buttress-like feature protruding from the west wall. Immediately to the left of the street entrance sat a large stone basin with opposing trunnions, surrounded by a scatter of percussion tools, river pebbles, an axe, and a copper chisel. Although the shallow accumulation of occupation debris on the ground contained unusually few sherds, it did yield a pair of gaming stones, fragments of two querns, and six rubbing stones.

The southwest corner of the building (Unit 12b) was notable for its grinding platform still supporting a pair of saddle querns, the only preserved installation of its kind from the prehistoric Bronze Age. It is tempting to view the scatter of broken milling equipment in the open space at the southwestern end of the street, Unit 64, as having originated from protracted grinding activity undertaken within the complex.



The western section of the settlement, Area B, seen in this plan, is dominated by a large building (the Unit 12 Complex), which may have been a center of ritual activity.



In this view of the Unit 12 Complex from the south, the courtyard is visible in the right foreground. A heavy, shallow stone trough sits in front of three huge boulders. On the lower left a large stone basin is just visible in front of a grinding platform. Orthostats supporting a shelf in Unit 12c are clearly visible in the back center of the photo. *Photo courtesy of Philip Swiny.*

Near the platform stood what was surely the most imposing stone artifact from *Kaminoudhia* in the form of a large, deep limestone basin with four trunnions or protuberances required to move such a heavy and cumbersome object. Inside was found an intact Red Polished juglet lying on its side.

In the northwest corner of the complex (Unit 12c) a narrow shelf ran along the outer walls, eighty centimeters above the ground. Both from the shelf and in two pits sunk into the floor came an eclectic array of objects, including small lumps of copper slag and copper ore, four gaming stones of typical Senet and Mehen types, ninety-three river pebbles and stone tools, one of which was partially drilled. Also recorded was a cattle scapula, the largest and best-preserved animal bone from the building.

By comparison with other streets at *Kaminoudhia*, the approach to the Unit 12 Complex was unusually wide, straight, and lacking in discarded debris. Of note from its earliest use was a copper-based spiral earring of diagnostic Philia-phase type.⁵

A probe outside the northwestern corner of the Complex uncovered a stone bench apparently built to cover a young woman buried against the north face of the wall. Of note was the lack of grave goods associated with the carefully arranged skeleton. From nearby, but not within the burial pit, came ample evidence for the manufacture of annular shell pendants, which, like the spiral earring from the street, are characteristic of the Philia phase. Since the deceased at *Kaminoudhia* were laid to rest in discrete cemeteries at some distance from the settlement, and since this is clearly not an earthquake victim crushed by falling debris, another explanation for this unexpected find must be sought.

There is nothing extraordinary about the architecture and finds from the Unit 12 Complex and its approaches, nothing that can be irrefutably connected with cult and ritual. The



Shell ornaments like these, which are typical of the Philia phase, may have been manufactured just outside the Unit 12 Complex. *Photo courtesy of Philip Swiny.*

picture displays a tantalizing mixture of “typical” features interspersed with unique occurrences. But when the architecture, installations, finds, and discard patterns are viewed holistically, it appears to differ in essential ways from other prehistoric Bronze Age buildings on Cyprus.

The built space can hardly have belonged to a domestic structure or one devoted to craft activities of typical *Kaminoudhia* type since it lacks such essential features as a hearth, low benches or circular lime-plaster emplacements sunk into the floor.

If we are to search for external parallels for the finds from *Kaminoudhia*, we must look to the north because the material

record suggests considerable and protracted contacts with Early Bronze II Anatolia. Since there is no question that the source of inspiration for Cypriot Early Bronze Age architecture, ceramics, and metal is Anatolia, one might ask whether this influence extended to the realm of cult and ritual as well? Unfortunately, Anatolian evidence is sparse and limited to one site, Beycesultan, excavated over forty years ago (Lloyd and Mellaart 1962). It did have installations unequivocally described as “shrines” or “temples,” but no similarities with *Kaminoudhia* can be detected.

So, what evidence do we need in order to determine that ritual activities occurred in the Unit 12 Complex at *Kaminoudhia*?

First, the atypical architectural layout may be compared with the Late Bronze Age Temple II plan at Kition (Karageorghis 1976), with its bent-axis approach, the presence of benches, the “holy-of-holies” stretching across the width of the building, with an altar in front similar to the position occupied by the stone trough at *Kaminoudhia*. In view of the thousand-year-gap between the two structures it could be argued that the parallels are fortuitous, but it must be remembered that Cypriot religion tended to be very conservative, and survival of certain traits can last for centuries (Karageorghis 1982:100–101).

Second, the presence of unique features, such as the unexplainably tall white-plastered wall supported by three impressive boulders, or the installations and fittings unknown in other contemporary structures, such as the grinding platform, the stone basins, and the trough opposite the entrance, some of which suggest ritual use.

Third, is the atypical range of objects assembled in one place. Here I refer to the finds from the shelf in Unit 12c, including a cattle scapula, which was an item frequently associated with cult in Late Bronze Age Cyprus and elsewhere in the Near East (Webb 1985). Also of note are the equally unusual ratios of objects such as the presence of thirteen gaming stones from within and around the Complex. Similar games were associated with the Kition temples (Karageorghis 1985:235).

Fourth, the atypical distribution patterns of finds. Herscher (2003) who published the pottery from the 1980s excavations and is doing the same for the past three seasons, has noted both the limited number (seven in all) of intact vessels in use at the time of destruction and the paucity of vessel types, consisting of juglets, dippers, and bowls. Indeed, sherds found within the thickness of the floors of the Unit 12 complex point to atypically high ratios of large to small bowls.

The fifth anomaly concerns the presence of what appears to be a carefully planned burial of a young woman marking the northwest corner of the Complex. This is the only inhumation recorded in the settlement and the lack of funerary offerings is an aberration for *Kaminoudhia* and extremely rare for the period in general. These facts suggest that this is no typical burial, and its presence must be explained in other ways. Could it have been intended to enhance the significance of the Unit 12 Complex and the activities performed within its confines, and are we dealing with a “victim” rather than a person who died of natural causes? The evidence seems insufficient to warrant further speculation.

Finally, parallels may be drawn with prehistoric Bronze Age clay models (Morris 1985) several of which emphasize a tripartite arrangement of architectural features serving as a backdrop to ritual activities clearly visible in the drawing of the Vounous model.

In conclusion, both the architecture and the finds suggest that the Unit 12 Complex was indeed the focus of ritual activity. The exact nature of these activities remains circumstantial, but clearly they required unique architectural arrangements, the grinding of grain in quantity, the presence of large ostentatious stone basins, the display of specific items, and the need for numerous gaming boards. The jugs, dippers, and large and small bowls all suggest the storage, distribution, and ultimately the consumption of dry goods perhaps, but surely of liquids too!

We have indeed come a long way since research and excavation refocused on the Cypriot prehistoric Bronze Age just a generation ago. We now understand far better how these Cypriots lived, how they prospered mostly from agriculture, what material possessions they prized, how the different communities related to one another and traded with the outside world.

We are also acquiring just a glimpse at their belief systems. I hope the next generation will bring equal advances, especially through the broad application of scientific techniques, such as residue analysis, increasingly applied to a whole range of artifacts, and provenience studies possible on an ever-growing array of materials, not to mention DNA and stable isotope analysis that can tell us with whom our ancestors were related, what they ate, and where they originated. Heady stuff indeed!

Acknowledgments

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Notes

1. See Davis (1989) for an overview of American fieldwork in Cyprus up to that time.
2. The finds from the Lapithos excavations, stored in the University Museum, University of Pennsylvania, were the focus of Herscher's Ph.D. dissertation.
3. I thank Antoine Hermay for bringing the existence of these documents to my notice. See Hermay (2006) for a detailed description of this interesting and little known episode.
4. For the relevant references to these publications see Bolger (2003), Keswani (2004), Steel (2004), Frankel and Webb (2006) and Knapp (2008).
5. See Swiny (2003:376) for a study of such earrings.

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