

Communities & Supra-Household Consumption

Households



Commensality

- Feasting as symbolic praxis:
 - Used in construction of shared social identities & creating or reaffirming social bonds
- Surrounded by specific social codes & the construction of social taboos:
 - What foods can/cannot be consumed
 - Certain substances reserved for special consumption
 - Specialised paraphernalia & dress
 - Perhaps feasting in a special place



Detail of Megiddo ivory

Feasting

- Binds communities together
- Major visual, sensual public pageant
 - Arena for music, dancing, recitation
 - Shared consumption of special (rare foods)
 - Occasions for social competition
- Mark special events in community's lifecycle
- Lavish hospitality:
 - Patron accrues social & symbolic capital
 - Negotiation of alliances
 - Reciprocity



Detail: Megiddo ivory

Hospitality

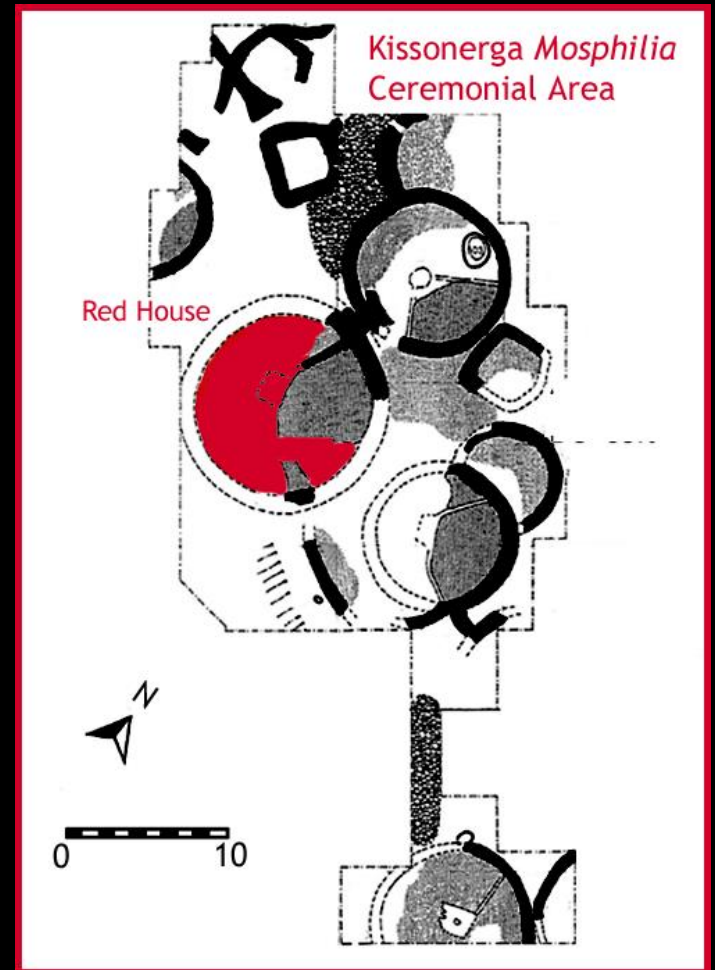
- A powerful means of social control to regulate & manage the “other”:
- An uneasy, ambivalent & potentially dangerous social interaction:
 - Admitting strangers into private, even familial, spaces
- Hospitality stabilises relationships:
 - Mediated through food & drink
 - Temporarily incorporates the stranger/guest within the community's social world
 - Reiterates power & position of the host



Bronze statuette, Enkomi

Supra-Household in Chalcolithic?

- Kissonerga *Mosphilia* 3b:
Appearance of specialised activity area:
 - Ceremonial area: cluster of imposing large buildings associated with open space
 - Prominent location
 - Physical separation from rest of settlement: wall to south, a ditch to north & an open space to east
- Performance & gathering in open spaces
- Large houses: symbolic significance

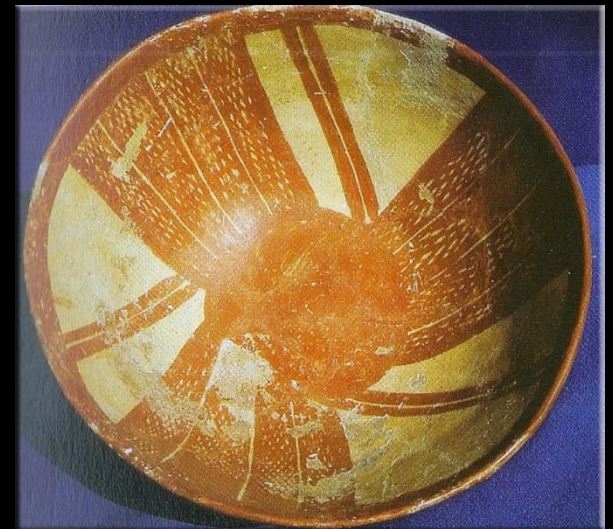


Ceremonial Area

- Communal gatherings:
 - Food preparation: concentration of earth ovens
- Marked increase in the use & manipulation of symbols:
 - Highly decorated open bowls for serving food
 - Competitive feasting:
- Apparently controlled & hosted by occupant of Red House
- Interesting relationship with “ceremonial deposit”

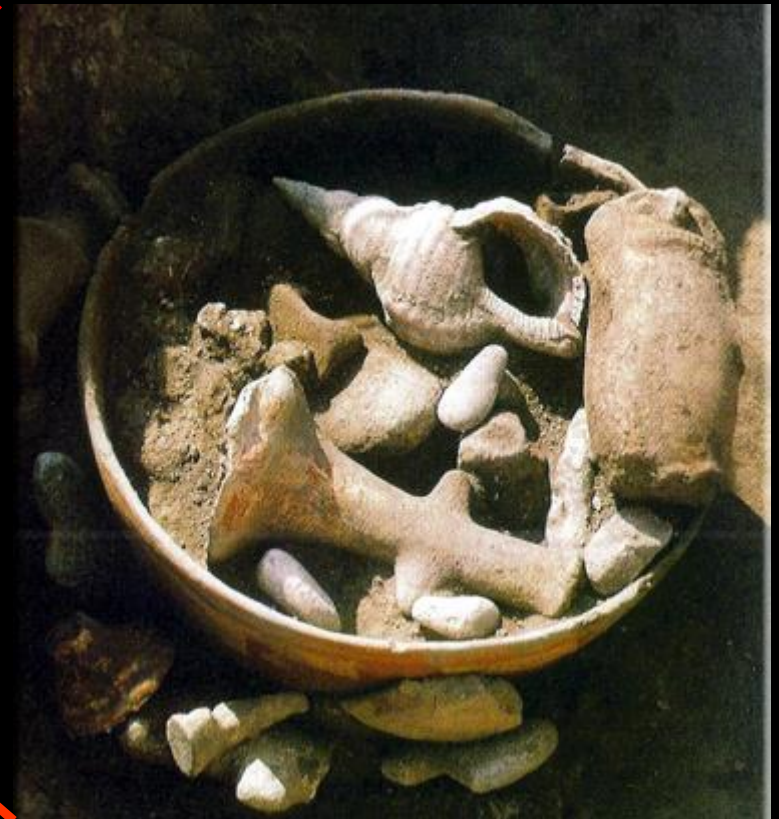
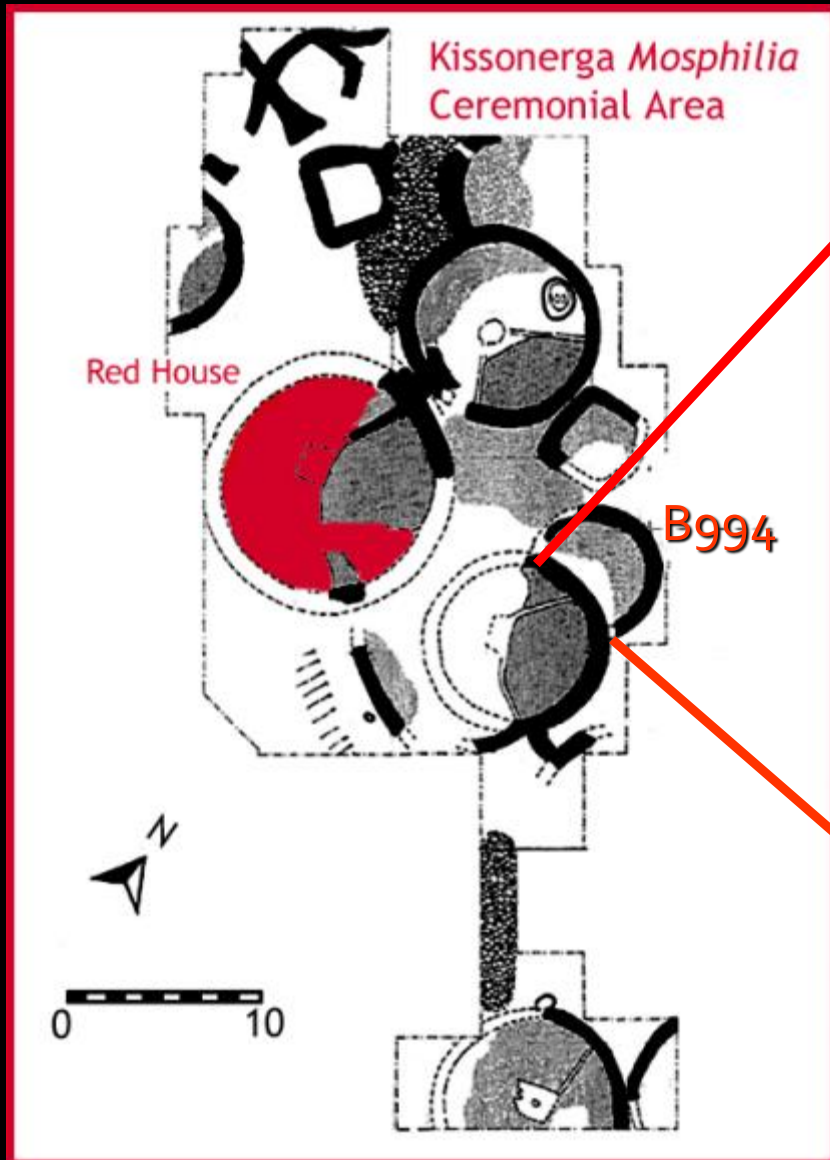


Room with earth oven



Red on White bowl

Ritual Deposit



Supra-Household Feasting PreBA

- Emphasis on community production in RP ware:
- *Marki Alonia*:
 - Large cooking pots with capacity of 16+ litres
 - Some spaces marked internally: attachment of antler to central posts
- Alambra, Building IV, Room 8:
 - Large hearth with quantities of animal bone
 - Unusually large number of juglets
 - Small bowls from paired drinking set



Red Polished trough scene



Marki cooking pots

Sotira *Kaminoudhia*

- Unit 12:
 - courtyard installation for communal grinding
 - Decorative stone basin & restricted group of pottery (juglets, bowls, dippers)
- Unit 10:
 - Open space with a large number of small bowls & ox skull
- Communal/kin-based feasting



Sotira Unit 12

Playing Games

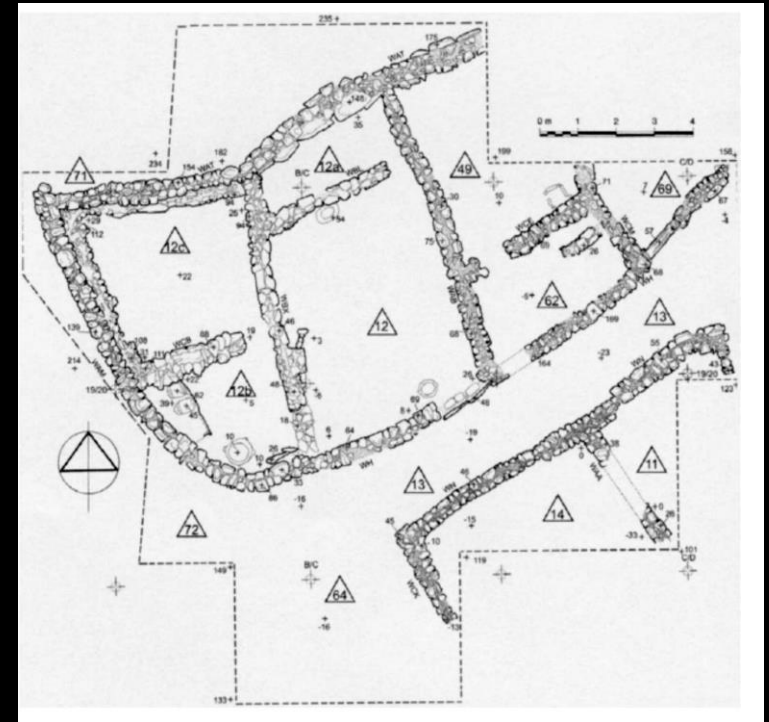
- Playing games:
 - Social lubricant & intimate interaction between individuals
 - Allows competition in socially defined safe way & also social bonding
 - Liminoid action which can challenge & subvert social norms
- Played in public or private spaces?
- Frequently associated with consumption of special beverage



Double-sided gamine stone

Playing Games IN PreBA

- Crist identifies 9 possible gaming spaces:
 - Six open-air (communal) spaces
- Sotira Kaminoudhia Unit 12 has the greatest concentration of games
 - Immobile games
 - Associated with stone tools but not pottery
 - Specialised game play?
- Household contexts:
 - Portable games are identified
 - Household relaxation



Sotira Kaminoudhia Unit 12

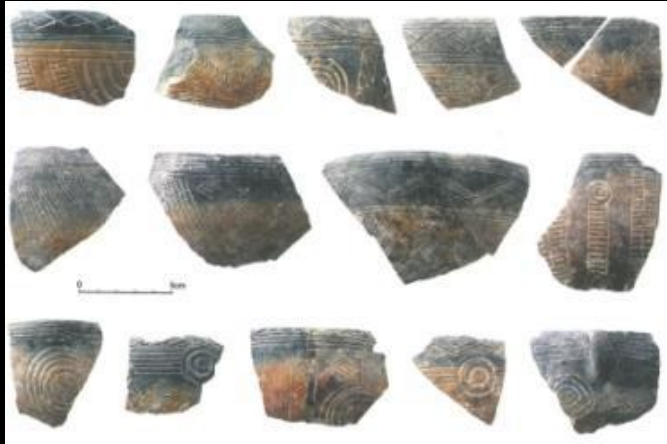
Funerary Feasts in PreBA

- Evidence for theatrically charged ceremonies at graveside
- Development of distinctive specialised drinking equipment in RP ware:
 - Attention focusing devices
 - Specialised knowledge in handling vessels
 - Specific sets identified
- Large numbers of animal bones, meat-bearing
 - Funerary consumption



EC I tulip bowl, Vounous

Red Polished Drinking Sets



Late Cypriot Feasting

- Location:
 - Funerary
 - Monumental buildings
- Paraphernalia (visual display):
 - Base Ring cups
 - Mycenaean drinking equipment – rhyta, kylikes, kraters
 - Bronze tripods



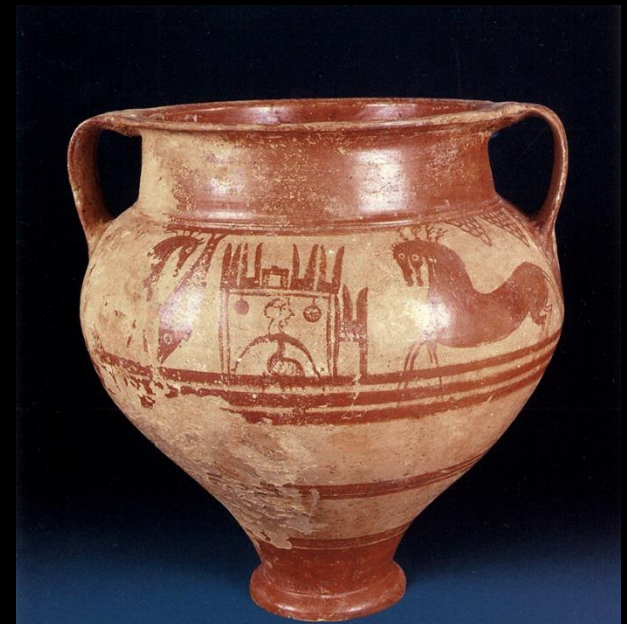
Mycenaean kylix, Maroni



Base Ring cup



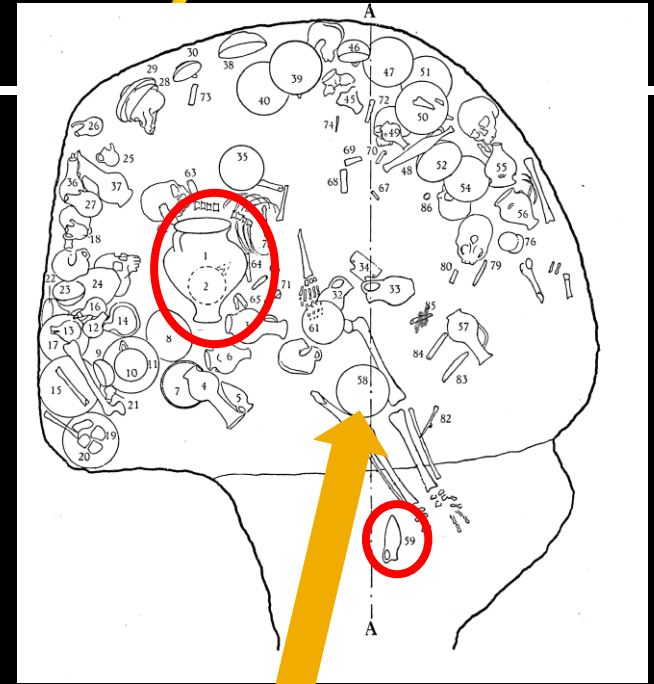
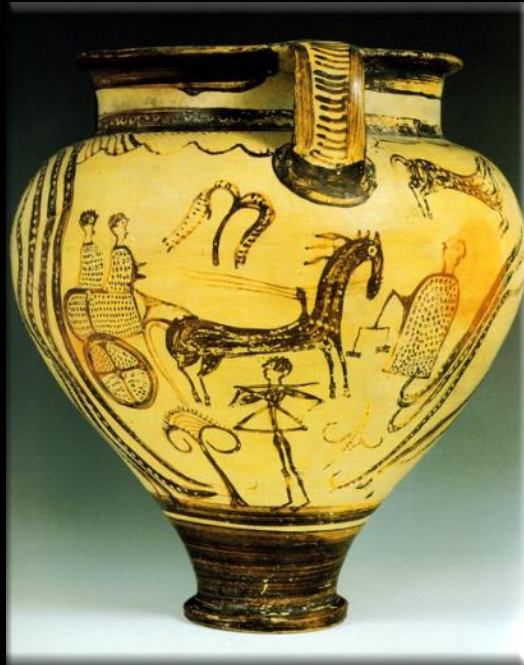
Bronze stand



Kalavassos, shrine krater

Enkomi Swedish Tomb 17

- Male burial with full array of drinking equipment:
 - Mycenaean krater & bowl
 - Gold drinking cup
 - Dipper jug



Incorporated Practice

- Connerton (1989): gestures & postures are important for communal memory in ritual performance
 - Social rules involved in using feasting paraphernalia
- Late Cypriot rules influenced by Levantine & Aegean praxis
 - Aegean: kylix or chalice held by their stems
 - Canaanites (& Cypriots) drink from bowl held in open palm



Enkomi, bronzes



Feasting scene, Ugarit

Supra-Household Consumption

- Elite households in urban centres:
 - Monumental architecture as symbolic capital
- Sets stage for specific types of social relations & human action
 - Using central courtyard as place of gathering
 - Patron feasting
- Culturally constructed places within social landscape
 - Expression of ideology & identity



Kalavassos Ayios Dhimitrios, Building X

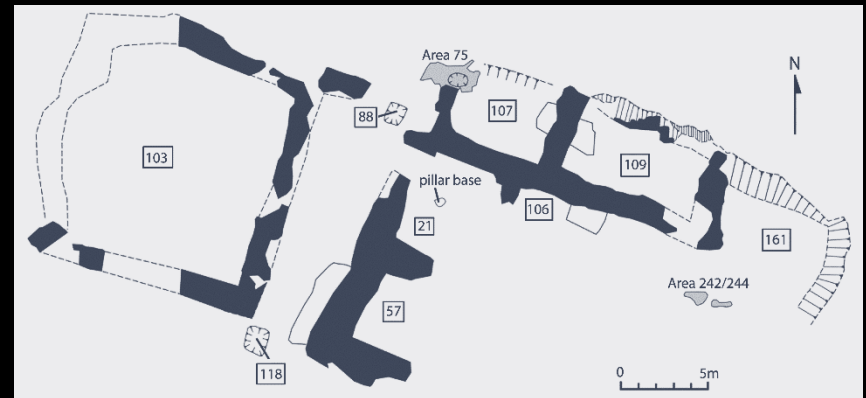
Kalavassos Ayios Dhimitrios

- Massive household with control over agricultural produce:
 - Redistribution centre
 - Large-scale storage
 - Cypro-Minoan texts
- Evidence for patron feasting in central court:
 - Open space which visitors could access
 - Place of reception
 - Area 173: debris from feasting



Hospitality in the Countryside

- Arediou *Vouppes*: LC farming settlement:
 - Supporting copper mines
- Building 1: household structure associated:
 - Storage & preparation of foodstuffs
- Room 103: unusually large space possibly used for feasting & hospitality:
 - Cooking pot & White Slip bowls outside
 - Specialised equipment inside

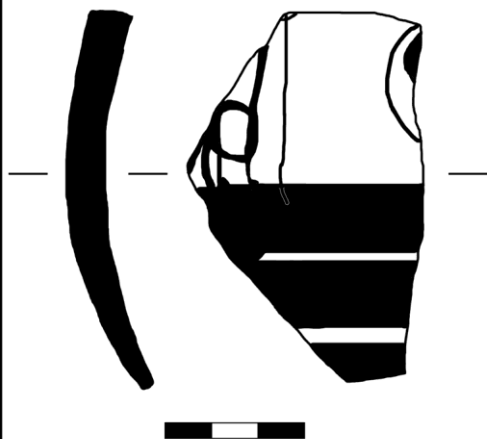


Arediou Building 1 and Room 103



Finds from Room 103

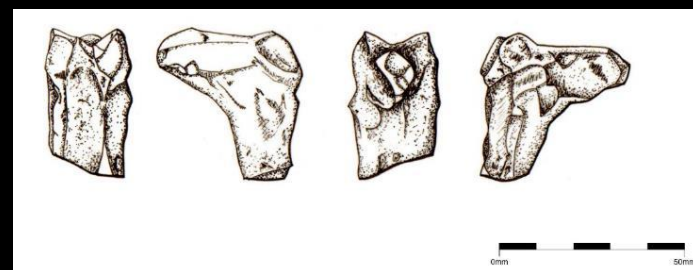
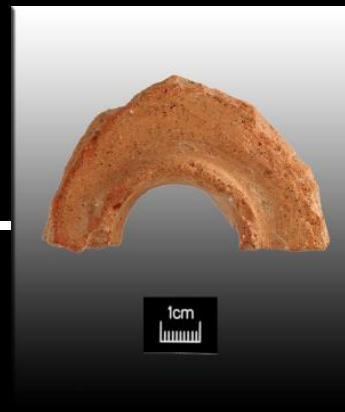
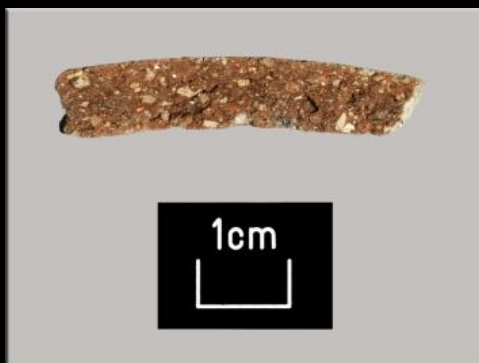
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Minoan sherd



Summary

- Commensality an important strategy used to create & affirm social bonds between households in wider community
- Might be sponsored by patrons to enable large work projects
- From EC period community interaction clearly visible in funerary arena
- Use of hospitality to admit strangers to a community becomes important in LBA (urbanised communities)
- Identification: specialised feasting paraphernalia (sometimes associated with debris of feasts)