

Household Production: Pots & Pans

Households



Transforming Clay

- Very ancient technology:
 - Most ancient transformation of physical properties of material
- Indicates development of several skills:
 - Procurement & treatment of clays
 - Manipulation of clays
 - Pyrotechnology



Venus figurine
Dolni Vestonice

Pottery Production

- Clay pots first develop in Near East in 8th millennium BP
 - Yarmukian culture
 - Bowls & globular jars with tall necks
 - Some decorated
- Used for serving & consuming food
 - Socialised communal activity
 - Not for storage or cooking



Yarmukian pottery



Pottery and Daily Life

- How we use & handle pottery shapes daily experiences:
 - *Habitus*



Skills in Crafting

- Shaping pots...
- Essentially conservative industry: potters are resistant to change
- Forming vessels: involves mastering several motor-neuron skills usually learnt from childhood



Who Makes Pottery & Where

- Depends upon level of production
 - Earliest production is in the household
 - Larger village groups: small workshops (still family based)
 - Urban contexts: specialist workshops
- Gendered activity?



Modern Cypriot Potter

Chalcolithic Pottery

- Considerable time energy & skill:
 - Sourcing & preparing clays
 - Shaping, decorating & firing pots
- Relatively simple handmade pottery
- Limited range of shapes
- Not necessarily product of full-time specialists
- Domestic production:
 - Fire pits near houses, pigments & polishing stones



Chalcolithic jar

Household Production

- “Simple manufacture”:
 - Hand-formed vessels
 - Simple range of forms
 - Fired at low temperature
- Considerable attention to finish of the pot
- Intricate variation in designs:
 - Is this personal choice or does it convey information about identities?



Chalcolithic bottle

Ceremonial Pottery

- Intensive specialization on a regional basis
- Rio Grande Valley, New Mexico:
 - Bowls with symbolic decoration acquire social value & are considered highly desirable
 - These may be exchanged over long distances, up to 100km
- Desirability of the pottery:
 - Symbolic content of its decoration
 - Place of manufacture becomes one of ritual & ideological importance



Ceremonial bowls

Ceremonial Pottery

- Production of pottery for ceremonial use indicates specialised ritual knowledge:
 - Competent execution of esoteric designs
- Only some individuals will have the cultural competence to produce these designs
- There may be other social taboos
- Gendered production?



Ceremonial bowl

Pottery Production: BA Cyprus

- Red Polished pottery:
 - Long-lived pottery tradition (over generations: c.2300-1900 BC)
- Shapes & function?
- Context of production
- How & where is this pottery used?



Red Polished ware

Bellapais *Vounous*

- EC I: development of elaborate ceremonial style
- Impractical form, large size
- Skilled production
- Iconography
 - Modelled animals: bulls, deer, birds & snakes
 - Modelled miniature jugs & bowls
 - Incised geometric designs
- Some reference to the symbolic, ideological world of the Early-Middle Cypriot communities?



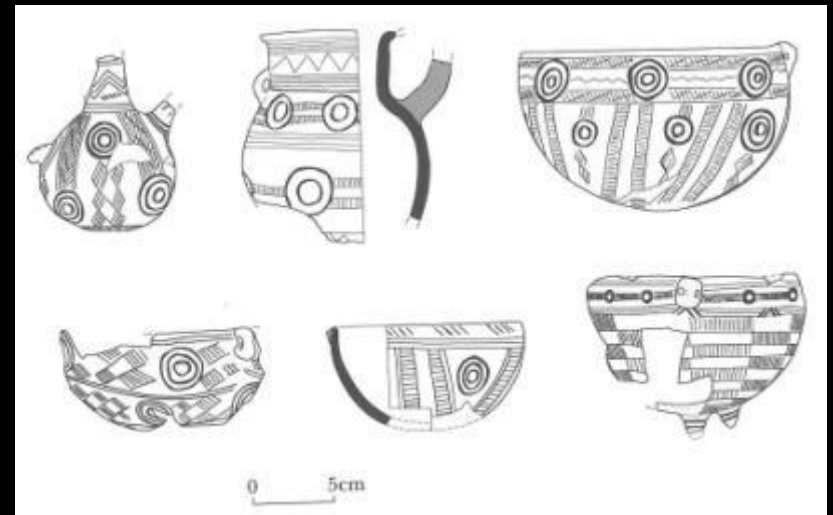
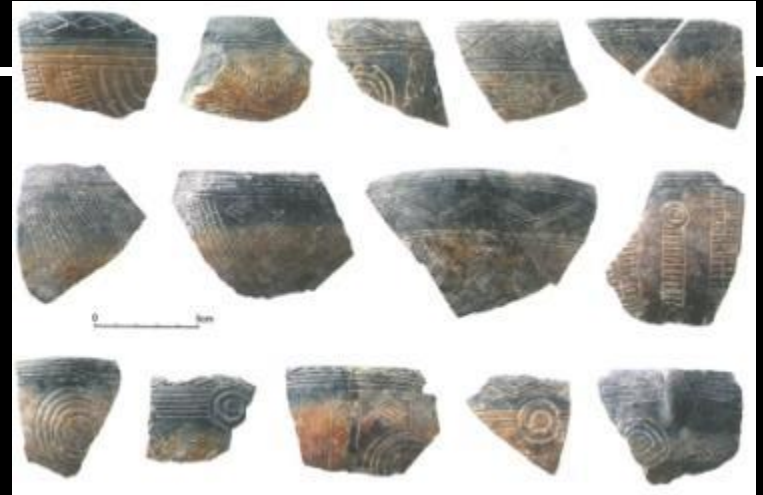
Pedestalled bowl



Deep bowl

Deneia: Ceremonial Production Centre

- Regional style characterized by exceptionally large bowls, basins & jugs:
 - Communal feasting?
- Decorated with closely executed incised designs
- Valued for its esoteric designs



Deneia: a Ceremonial Production Centre

- Widely distributed around NW of island
- Deneia itself was a site of ceremonial importance, reflected by unusual characteristics of the cemetery
- Specialist potters at Deneia produced highly valued product



View over cemetery at Deneia

Modelled Red Polished Pottery

- Transition from EC-MC:
 - Increased population resulted in increase in symbolic communication
- Red Polished Pottery:
 - Highly complex modelled figured scenes on jugs & basins
- Work of specialist potters?
- Creating scenes which reflect developing ideology

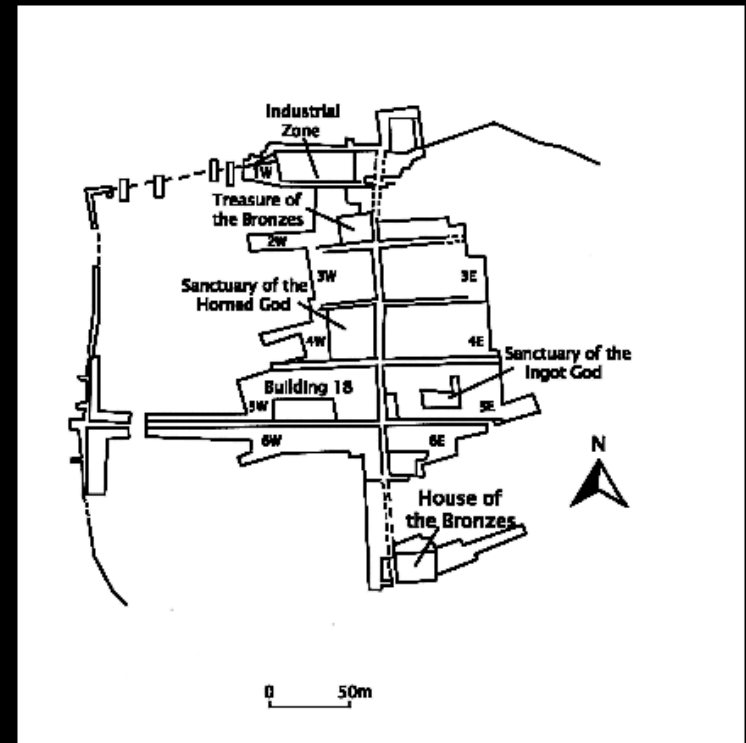


Oxford bowl



Late Cypriot Period

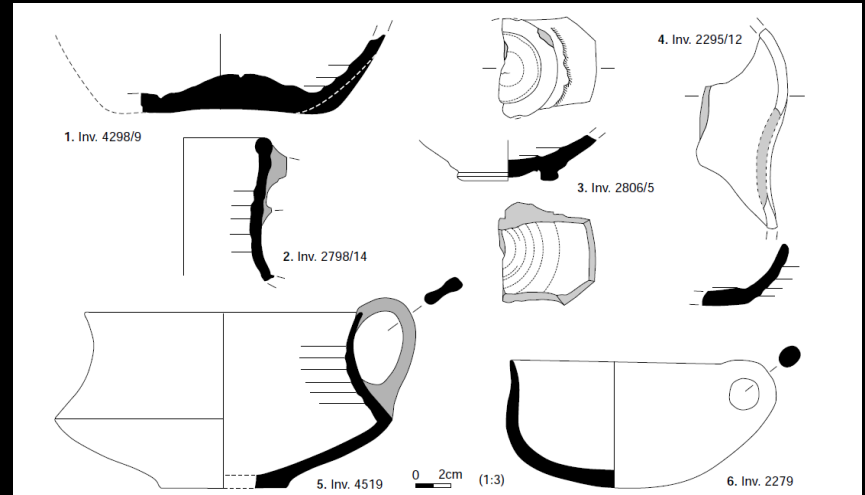
- Urbanised communities:
 - Movement of pottery production away from household
- Development of a very complex range of wares used throughout the island:
 - Wheelmade pottery
 - Handmade pottery
 - Distinction between tableware, cooking vessels & utilitarian vessels
- Each the product of distinct workshops
 - Some producing highly prized pottery



Enkomi site plan

Wheelmade Pottery

- New in LC:
 - Different motor skills to those used by handmade potters
- Mass production & standardisation
 - Centralised control of production within workshops
- Specialist potters
- Lack of decoration: rapidly produced – utilitarian?



Plain Wheelmade pottery, Enkomi

Household Pottery

- Daily household experience in LBA mediated through Plain ware:
 - Jugs
 - Basins
 - Storage jars
- Standardised forms, sizes, fabrics:
 - Products of specialists
 - Brought into the household
 - Development of supra-household economic network
- Associated with everyday storage & preparation of foodstuffs



Plain ware water jug

Tableware

- Handmade but still highly skilled products:
 - Use of distinct clays
 - Fired at high temperature
 - Range of shapes...
- Embedded in Cypriot ways of life & death:
 - White Slip bowls & personal identity
 - Base Ring cups & ceremonial performance
- Highly valued in Egypt & Levant: distinctiveness of wares



White Slip hemispherical bowl



Base Ring cup

Esoteric ? Pottery



Base Ring krater,
Alalakh



Base Ring juglet



Base Ring bull vase



Base Ring figurines

Summary

- Pottery key to exploring both household production & consumption
- Key household industry on Cyprus until LC period:
 - Specialised workshops
 - Exchanges beyond the household
- Household storage, food processing, cooking & consumption all centred on pottery
- Cyprus: development of distinctive ceremonial wares throughout the Bronze Age