



Social Reproduction and the Family in Bronze Age Cyprus

Households

Social Reproduction

- Learning daily household praxis:
 - How we become a socialised member of the community
- Gradual dissemination of cultural knowledge, values & belief systems
 - The right way of doing things



Detail of Red Polished trough scene

Middle Chalcolithic

- Ideology associated with fertility & female form
 - Clear evidence for significance of childbirth & ensuring next generation
 - Birthing ideology materialised in picrolite
- Treatment of infant burials
- Abrupt disappearance of birthing iconography in Late Chalcolithic



Chalcolithic figurines and pendants

Early-Middle Cypriot Periods

- Development of very different ideology in Red Polished ware
- Representations of life cycle events:
 - Communities, marriage & children
- Economic & cultural capital:
 - Focus is on animal wealth: cattle & deer predominant
 - Male social roles associated with weaponry?
 - Women with personal adornment & spinning equipment?



Vounous Bowl detail,
cattle in pens



Vounous: model dagger & sheaf

Cradle-boarding

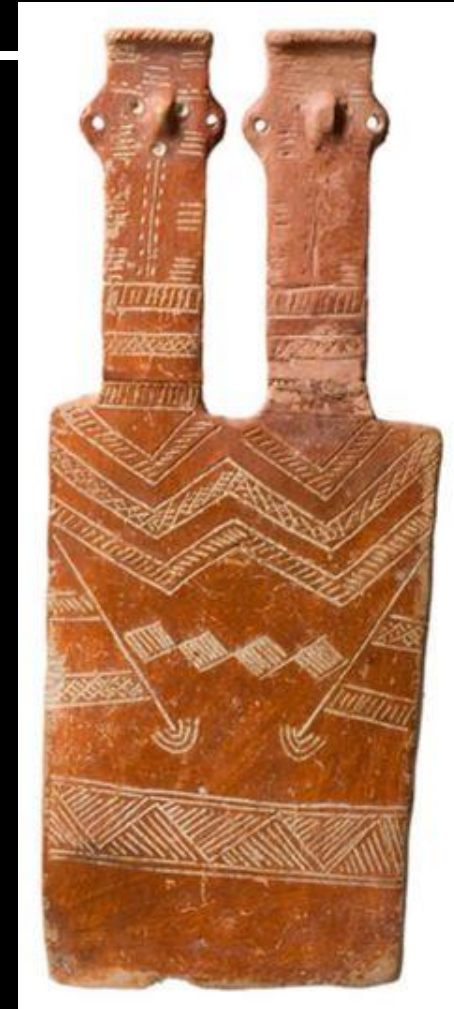
- Frequent theme in EC-MC figurines:
 - Cradled infants
 - Plank figure holding infant in cradleboard against left shoulder
- Reflects cultural practice & is identified in skulls with cranial modification,
 - Pressure applied to back of skull resulted in a shorter, wider cranium
 - Accidental not cosmetic



Figurines of child in cradle

Plank Figures

- New form of iconography:
 - Emphasis is on adornment of body
 - Significance of expressing personhood & group membership
- Double-headed figures:
 - Pairing of personhood in a marriage alliance?
- Holding infant in cradle
- Imagery emphasises importance marriage alliances & nurturing infants for EC-MC social reproduction



Plank figures

Scenic Compositions

- Funerary objects:
 - Steel: mnemonic devices used in embodied rituals performed at the graveside
 - Riberio (2002): valued objects which marked status
 - Specifically commissioned for burial of an important individual
- Can we use these to explore social reproduction in the EC-MC household?
 - Praxis, social roles, cultural capital



Pyrgos jug

Scenic Compositions

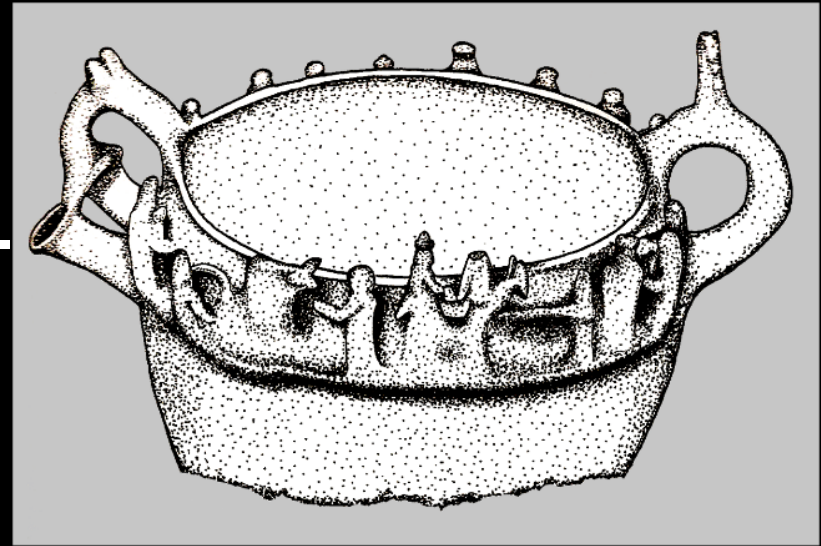
- Morris: representations of familiar activities drawn from daily life
- Bolger relates imagery to people's changing social roles
 - Marking their personal biography & changing social identities as they move through various stages of the human life-cycle
 - Biographical / history objects



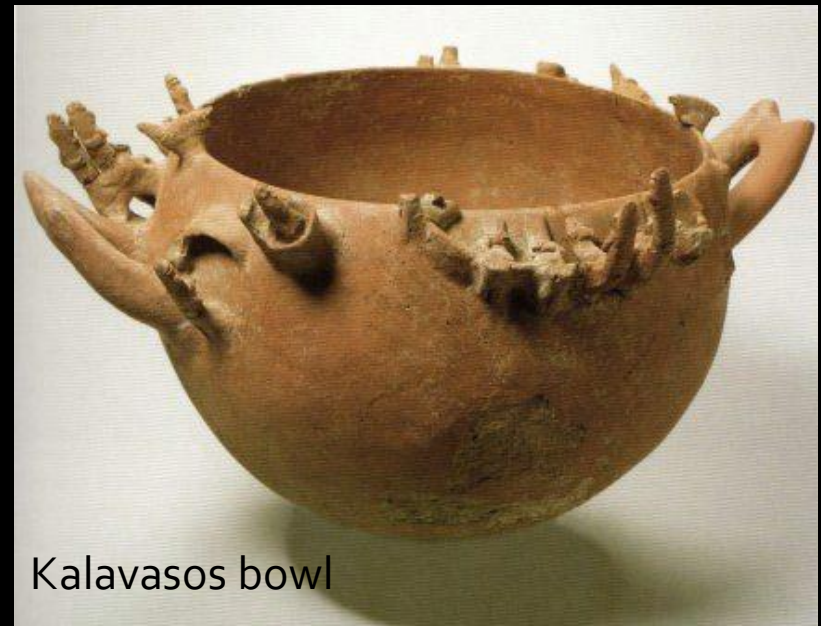
Deer vase

Rites of Passage

- Marki bowl: embracing couple, pregnant female, a female giving birth, a second couple & a cradled infant
 - Representations of landmarks in a person's life
 - Specifically associated with "marriage", reproduction & childbirth
 - Liminal events: marked by rites of passage
- Similar scenes on Pierides bowl, Kalavassos bowl & Pyrgos jug



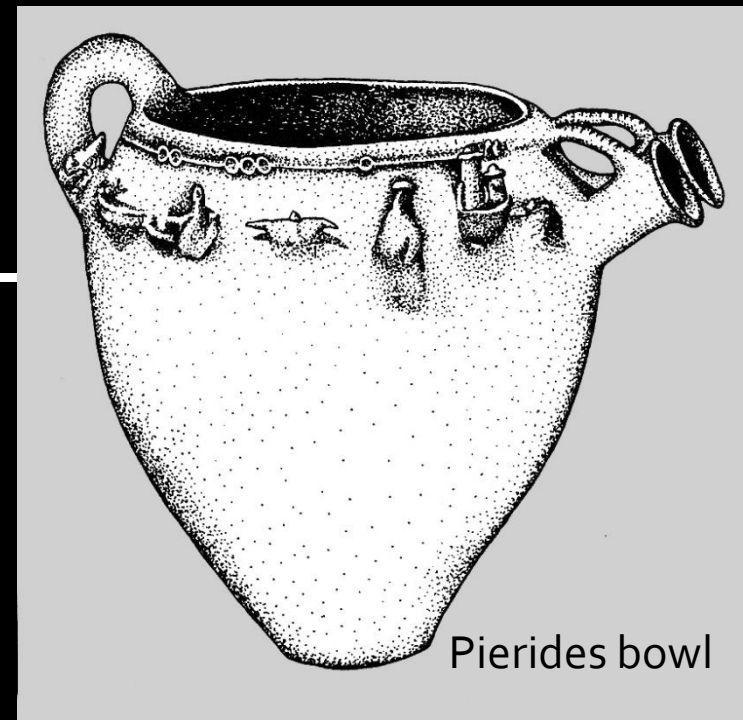
Marki bowl



Kalavassos bowl

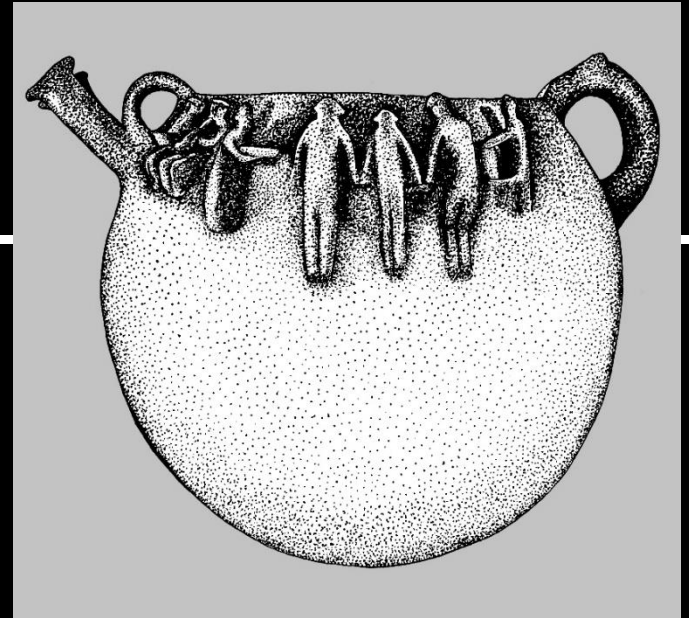
Rites of Passage

- Visually impactful & symbolically charged objects
 - Attention focusing devices in communal gatherings associated with rites of passage
 - Used to mix & serve wine in embodied rituals of consumption
- Incorporated within rituals of social reproduction in the EC-MC communities



Community

- People working in groups
 - Apparently processing foodstuffs at a trough
 - Possible representations of wine production
 - Importance of animals
- Membership of social group beyond household significant for EC-MC communities:
 - Levi-Strauss' house societies?
 - Emphasises relationships constructed through shared activities



Hadjiprodromou bowl



Louvre trough

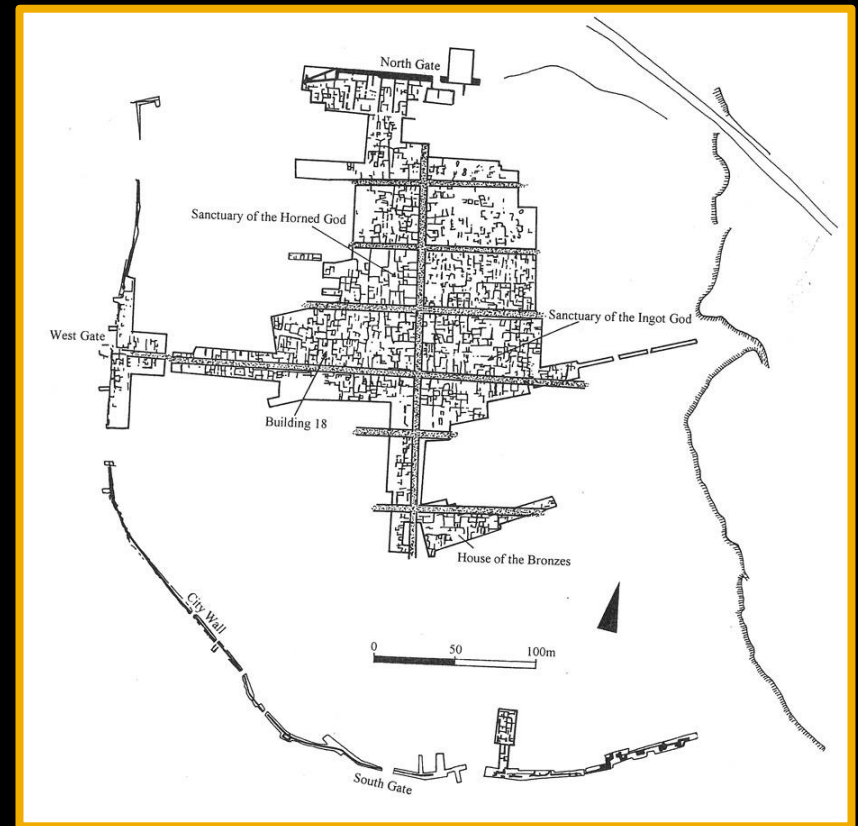
Vounous Bowl & Social Capital

- Depiction of community:
 - Social, economic, cultural & symbolic capital all apparent
- Hierarchical, patriarchal community:
 - Chief?, elders & ancestors
- Zones of inclusion & exclusion
- Wealth of the community
- Social reproduction



Social Reproduction in the LBA

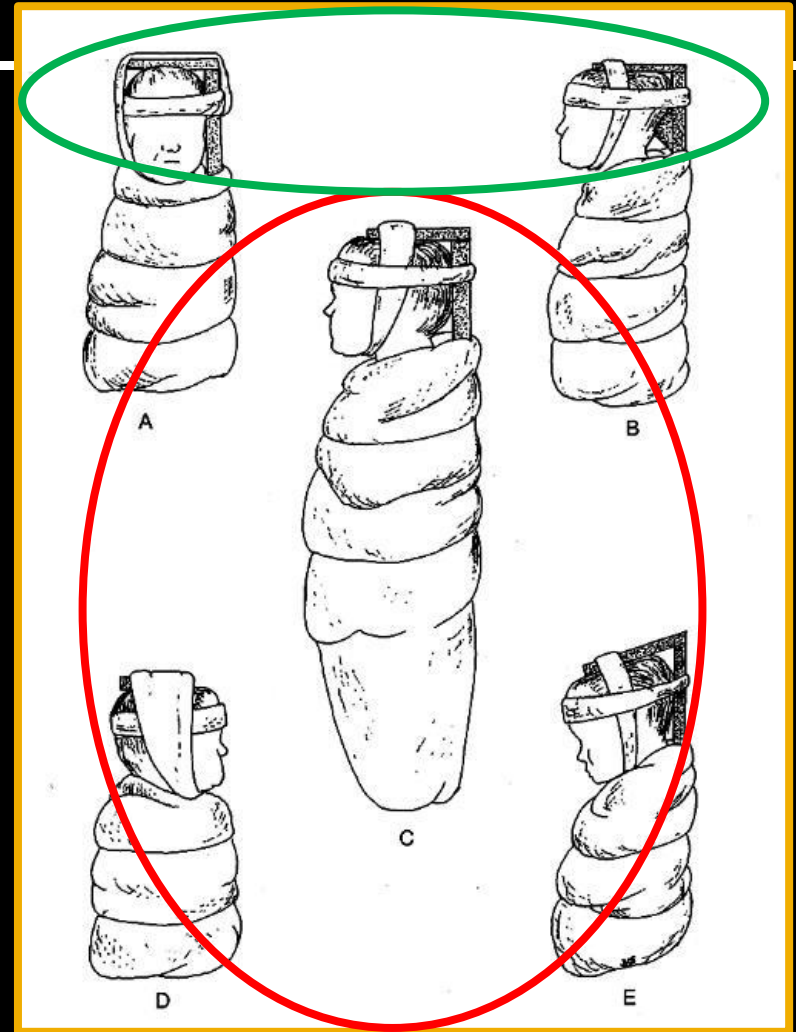
- Significant changes to organisation of Cypriot communities:
 - Urbanisation
 - Increasing contact with other peoples & ways of doing things
 - Technological changes & location of production
- Dramatic impact on:
 - Location & make up of households
 - LC material culture
 - Funerary rituals & potentially belief systems



Plan of Enkomi

Head-Shaping

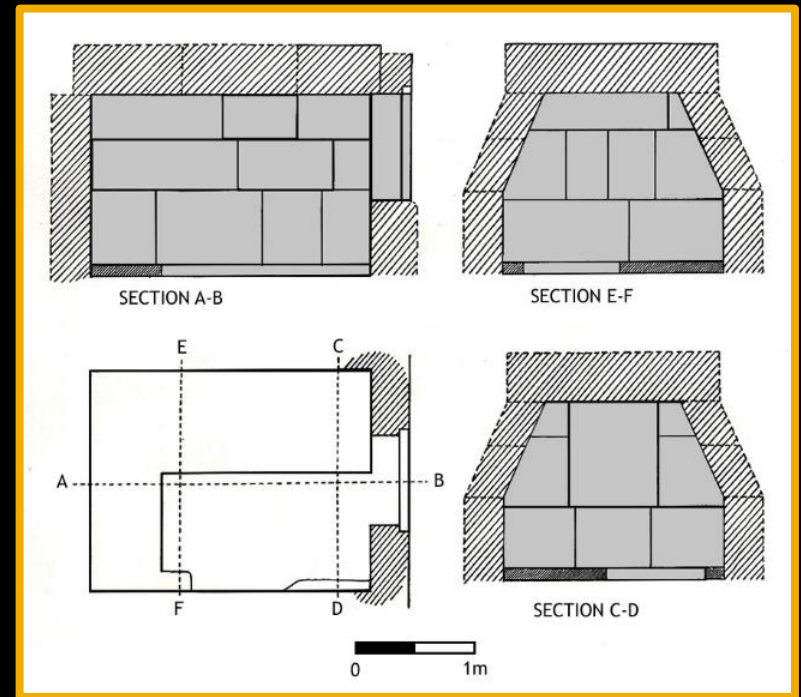
- LC skulls: post-bregmatic head-shaping:
 - Intentional shaping of the skull, “purely cosmetic” (Bolger 2003: 143)
 - Cultural tradition: an aesthetic or advertising group membership from infancy
 - Practice frequently linked to status
- Creating “culturally significant, altered child & adult bodies” (Lorentz 2003: 10):



Cradle-boarding vs. post-bregmatic flattening of skull

Introduction of *Kispum*?

- Enkomi: particularly close links with Ugarit
 - Possibility of certain Ugaritic customs & household organisation?
- Crewe identifies practice of *kispum* in Enkomi British Tomb 66:
 - Ritual feasting with the dead & ensuring provision of food for the deceased
 - Ancestor cult associated with patriarchal society
 - Head of the house responsible for mediating relations with ancestors



Enkomi Tomb 66

Bridal Wealth?

- Kalavassos Tomb 11, burials:
 - 3 young adult women
 - 3 infants & one young child
- Potential familial association possible evidence for female social roles, child bearing, nurturing & social reproduction
- West bench burial: 3 pairs of gold earrings:
 - 10.8g weight
 - Currency – dowry value?



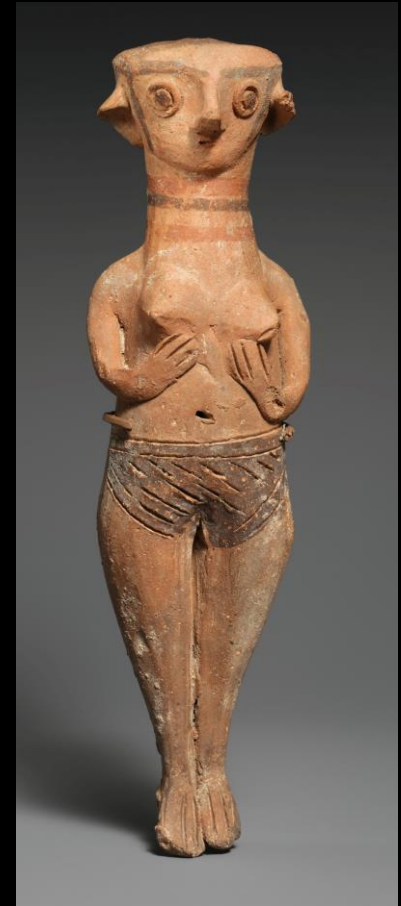
Reconstruction of Kalavassos Tomb 11



Jewellery from
West bench

Figurines & Female Identities?

- New forms of human representation in clay:
 - 2 types of Base Ring female figurines
- Knox specifically relates these to 2 different types of LC identities:
 - Multiple earrings & child nurturing
 - Flattened skulls – cranial modification



Base Ring Figurines

Summary

- Very different forms of community & social reproduction evidence throughout Bronze Age
- Chalcolithic: the focus is ensuring next generation – childbirth & protection of infants & mothers
- EC-MC: the emphasis moves to wider social relations:
 - Familial relations, marriage & childhood
 - Membership of wider community & working together
 - Social capital materialised in clay
- LC: marking & performing the body –emphasis is on individual personhood