

University at Albany, State University of New York

Scholars Archive

Anthropology

Honors College

5-2013

Cypriot Religion of the Early Bronze Age: Insular and Transmitted Ideologies, ca. 2500-2000 B.C.E.

Donovan Adams

University at Albany, State University of New York

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarsarchive.library.albany.edu/honorscollege_anthro



Part of the [Anthropology Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Adams, Donovan, "Cypriot Religion of the Early Bronze Age: Insular and Transmitted Ideologies, ca. 2500-2000 B.C.E." (2013). *Anthropology*. 9.

https://scholarsarchive.library.albany.edu/honorscollege_anthro/9

This Honors Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Honors College at Scholars Archive. It has been accepted for inclusion in Anthropology by an authorized administrator of Scholars Archive. For more information, please contact scholarsarchive@albany.edu.

Cypriot Religion of the Early Bronze Age: Insular and Transmitted Ideologies,
ca. 2500-2000 B.C.E.

An honors thesis presented to the
Department of Anthropology,
University at Albany, State University of New York
in partial fulfillment of requirements
for graduation with Honors in Anthropology
and
graduation from the Honors College.

Donovan Adams

Research Advisor: Stuart Swiny, Ph.D.

March 2013

Abstract

The Early Bronze Age of Cyprus is not a very well understood chronological period of the island for a variety of reasons. These include: the inaccessibility of the northern part of the island after the Turkish invasion, the lack of a written language, and the fragility of Cypriot artifacts. Many aspects of protohistoric Cypriot life have become more understood, such as: the economic structure, social organization, and interactions between Cyprus and Anatolia. Despite this improvement in some areas, religion is still largely not understood. With the arrival of new animals and symbols, there is clearly a shift in reverence. However, how this shift came about and what these new practices represented is not clear.

This paper analyzes these new practices and symbols in light of the surrounding mainland, specifically the Levant, Anatolia, Egypt, and Mesopotamia. By analyzing the similarities between these various cultures and Cyprus through pottery and iconographic representations, and understanding the temporal contexts of these changes, the determination of whether or not ideologies were transmitted to Cyprus or originated on the island will be concluded.

Three aspects of Early Bronze Age Cypriot religion will be examined: fertility, bulls, and snakes. Then, a comprehensive analysis of the possible transmission of a fusion goddess with Levantine, Mesopotamian, and Egyptian qualities will be undertaken. It is my conclusion that the bull cult originated in Anatolia and made its way through the mass migration of its population to Cyprus in the mid-third millennium. The snake cult has more shadowy origins but most likely began on the island itself, but took qualities from the populations the islanders interacted with. Last, Inanna-Ištar was brought to Cyprus during the latter half of the third millennium, most likely through the Temple of Byblos where Ba'alat Gebal was worshipped.

Acknowledgements

I have had many people assist me in the course of writing this thesis. Professor Rafferty had the confidence in me to allow me the opportunity to work at this topic despite the extreme delay in starting it. I never would have been able to do this paper and complete the courses I need to obtain my Honors Anthropology major without his assurance of my abilities. Also, thank you to Professor Swiny, who, even though he had plenty of work to do, was willing to take me as an advisee and assist me with this project. Although I didn't know a single thing about Cyprus, let alone ancient Cyprus, he gave me the opportunity to prove myself and assisted me throughout the entire process with any questions I had and talking me through the ideas that went through my head.

Table of Contents

Abstract	
Acknowledgments	
Introduction	4
Methods of Analysis	6
Modes of Cultural Diffusion	6
<i>Diffusion of Religion</i>	8
Status of the Cypriot Population	9
<i>Insularity</i>	9
<i>Migration</i>	11
<i>Evidence of Influence on Cypriot Environment</i>	14
<i>Inter-settlement Interaction</i>	17
<u>Regionalism</u>	18
Cypriot Religion	20
<i>Fertility</i>	22
<i>Bulls</i>	24
<u>Anatolia</u>	27
<u>Levant</u>	29
<i>Snakes</i>	29
<u>In Conjunction with Bull Iconography</u>	32
Transmission of Ištar-Hathor to Cyprus	33
<i>Inanna-Ištar</i>	33
<u>Symbols</u>	34
<u>Comb figures</u>	38
<u>Plank figures</u>	39
<i>Hathor</i>	42
<i>Astarte/Ba'alat Gebal</i>	43
Vounous	44
Conclusion	46
Figures	50
Bibliography	54

Introduction

The third millennium B.C.E. for Cyprus (Figure I) was a time of dramatic change for the island that had previously been characterized by its markedly intense isolation. Over the span of a thousand years, the island underwent three distinct phase changes: the Late Chalcolithic (3000-2500 B.C.E.), Philia (2500-2350 B.C.E.), and the Early Cypriot Bronze Age (2500-2000 B.C.E) (Steel, 2004). The reason for this overlap of the latter two phases is because of the continuance of multiple Chalcolithic settlements into the Early Bronze Age (EBA) and the overlap of pottery styles for which much of the chronological system is based (Morris, 1985).

Before this millennium, the Cypriots had been living in relative isolation, taking practices from the Levantine mainland from where they are most likely to have originated (Price, 1977). At this point, practices began to diverge, bringing a character to Cyprus that was all its own. There are a number of possible explanations proposed by scholars for the changes that occurred during the Late Chalcolithic phase. One possibility is a changing social organization on the island that resulted in a stratification of social classes. This developing social pattern resulted in an emerging elite that saw Anatolian practices as something to adopt to stand out or better themselves. Also, a system of communication between Cyprus and Anatolia may have developed that was not focused on social hierarchy or on movement of people, but an exchange of materials and ideas (Kouka, 2011). The final explanation, and the most likely, is the immigration of Anatolian migrants onto Cyprus (Kouka, 2011; Dikaios, 1962; Swiny, 1986). Many scholars argue on the side of insularity, that the people of the island experienced their development among themselves with little to no impact from outside influences (Stewart, 1962; Merrillees, 1973; Held, 1993).

There are a variety of ways in which the culture of the island changed at the transition

point of the Philia phase: social complexity, trade connections, pottery styles, agricultural technology, etc. The strategic location of this island and the valuable resources that are plentiful made it an area of interest to the surrounding mainland, positioned 40 miles south of Turkey and 60 miles to the west of Syria (Taeuber, 1955). Also changing on the island were the religious practices of the people, an aspect of Cypriot life that experienced a dramatic change over the course of a thousand years as it became more open to contact with many groups around the Mediterranean. The religion of the Cypriots can be examined through a variety of social practices and material culture, as religion was often both a result and cause of the lifestyle of the Cypriots. For example, the increasing practice of metallurgy seems to have caused a shift from a less egalitarian society and gradually towards a more stratified social organization in the north of Cyprus (Webb and Frankel, 2013; Bolger, 1996).

The following will discuss the impact of the surrounding civilizations, primarily the Levant and Anatolia, on the shifts in religious belief systems on Cyprus. This will be done through a comparative analysis of Levantine, Anatolian, and Cypriot religious beliefs, and a close examination of the archaeological evidence examining possible relationships. First will be a brief discussion on the study of religion and the modes of cultural diffusion, followed by a discussion of Cypriot beliefs and then a discussion on the possible connections that find their origin in external countries. Also to be discussed is the transmission of an Ištar-Hathor fusion goddess to Cyprus as a possible descendant to the cruciform figures of the Chalcolithic and a precursor to the eventual Aphrodite cult that found its home on Cyprus. The insularity of Cyprus will also be taken into consideration, as divergence and evolution of beliefs is critical to the examination of the characteristic Cypriot religion.

Methods of Analysis

There are a variety of ways in which someone can explore the aspects of religion in a prehistoric civilization. The primary obstacle to get past is the lack of written records, not only in the region of focus but in surrounding localities that likely had contact with it. While written records provide a more direct interpretation of the ideologies of the people in question, iconographic representations, such as stars and zig-zags, must be analyzed depending upon context. Context itself depends on a variety of factors: 1) other symbols that it interacts with or is surrounded by, 2) the item on which it is found, and 3) the location in which it is found. Even with these three factors in mind, accurate interpretation is difficult and can only be held up with any definite validity if other instances in which it is found occur in a proportionately high amount and/or if cultural similarities provide enough evidence to suggest a definite correlation.

The Early Bronze Age of Cyprus lacked written records and so the primary objects of focus were: pottery, figurines, and specific iconography. By analyzing these various aspects of visual culture we may be able to understand the development of the new religious system in Cyprus. By comparative analysis with the surrounding populations of Egypt, Mesopotamia, the Levant, and Anatolia, and the approximate date that certain symbols and practices were adopted in Cyprus in comparison to other areas, we may be able to begin seeing a connection of traditions.

Modes of Cultural Diffusion

The process of cultural diffusion is not one of simplicity. Very often one will not find a direct transmission of ideas and behavior from one culture to the next, but instead must look at certain avenues of transportation to find where both the origin and the final location are. The paths of cultural diffusion that will be examined throughout the course of this investigation of

comparative religions will be the following: trade, migration, and political contact. The separation of these three methods will not be an easy task, as they are all very interconnected, especially with the onset of the Early Bronze Age and the sudden increase in trade throughout the Mediterranean.

According to Oosterbeek (2001), there are four types of change that are important to take into consideration in this study:

1. Deviation: "change caused by a non-predictable separation from the rule;"
2. Evolution: "progressive change dominated by assimilation procedures;"
3. Revolution: "dramatic change, dominated by accommodation procedures, be them derived from external or internal factors;"
4. Mutation: "change that leads to a final result with limited relations with its origins."

These four methods of change can be seen in the development of the religious traditions of Cyprus from the beginning of the third millennium B.C.E. to the transition into the second millennium. The characteristic insularity of Cyprus that occurred in two important phases (the Neolithic separation from the mainland after the first successful permanent settlements on the island and the Early Bronze Age collapse of maritime trade in the Eastern Mediterranean that resulted in the second separation of the islanders from the surrounding land) caused the distinct variations of religious practices that were transmitted to the island (Webb and Frankel, 2013). The further division on the island itself between the northern conglomeration of settlements and those of the south created further divisions as social and economic organizations differed

between the two areas. Both of these important components of diversity and its effect on the adoption of religious principles will be gone into further detail later on.

Diffusion of Religion

The study of religious diffusion across cultures, or more specifically the process of syncretism (religious traditions merging), has changed significantly over the past few decades. There has been a shift from seeing this process as resistance to an oppressive culture or for instituting a new political administration to one where it occurs in order to maintain cultural traditions while accommodating to the new ideologies introduced to the population (Shaw and Stewart, 1994). Much of the focus of the scholarship of religion has been to establish a system of continuity both between cultures and within a culture (Marcus and Flannery, 1994). This is evident in the examination of the cultural transmission of Inanna-Ištar from Mesopotamia to Syria to Cyprus, and to as far as the Greek mainland. It can also be seen in much of the research surrounding the interpretation of Bronze Age figurines in relation to those produced in the Chalcolithic, the need to find a continuation for the meaning of one period's figurines to those of the next. While there may indeed be a connection, it is also just as possible that an abrupt shift occurred and they do not carry the same meaning, only the same general purpose of acting as a symbol.

The meaning of symbol is an important concept to discuss before going into discussion about the religion of Cyprus and its similarities to those on the mainland areas around it. According to Briault (2007), a "cult symbol" is a "whole complex of material representations" that are common throughout a region. They can occur as concrete objects, painted forms, or in glyptic forms. Such a view of symbols will be helpful in understanding the possible influences of the mainland on the shift in religious practices in Cyprus during the Early Bronze Age and the

continuation of traditional practices by the ancient Cypriots as they learned to adapt to the influx of new ideas brought from traders and settlers.

Sperber (1985) provides a useful analysis of the diffusion of religion, comparing it to the biological mechanism of infectious disease. The success of the representation passed from one culture to the next depends upon how relevant they are to the new population, how this culture can connect features of its society to the incoming one. If the existing population has a society so markedly different from the one where these new ideas are passing, then the religion will find no firm holding as a prevalent institution in the new region. Also important is what occurs with the symbols or ideas themselves if they have experienced successful transmission. If the symbols are easy to remember, they will continue in intact form. However, if they are too difficult, they will be changed into a more familiar context, an idea which may provide useful explanation further in this paper. The transmission of Inanna-Ištar to Cyprus may have undergone significant change due to the need to accommodate to already present systems of belief on the island; therefore, it was translated into established methods of art or modified by the movement of Anatolian ideas onto the island as well. Cyprus became a melting-pot at the opening of the Early Bronze Age, allowing it to be examined as a useful example for this theory of the diffusion of religion and the interaction of multiple religious traditions in a relatively isolated community.

Status of the Cypriot Population

Insularity

For much of Cyprus's prehistory, the island was left in isolation from the surrounding mainland. The reason for this is not understood, and if there was any minimal contact, there is little to no evidence of it occurring. However, this insularity was important for the development

of Cyprus up until the Early Bronze Age and influenced the way outside influences impacted its culture. This isolation from the mainland helped to ensure an economic and cultural stability of the island's population for much of its Neolithic and Bronze Age history (Held, 1993).

Prior to the large Anatolian migration of the Early Bronze Age, Cyprus possibly experienced two important migrations of people during the Neolithic. The first was during the tenth millennium B.C.E., when hunter-gatherers made their way to the island, and the second occurred during the seventh millennium B.C.E., and may have been a transition of population from the Syro-Cilician region to Cyprus (Held, 1993).

Prior to the beginning of the ECI period, the island seems to have been linked by a common cultural identity. By about 2300 B.C.E., increasing cultural variation began to form between the north and the south of the island, probably caused by the increasing influence of the Anatolians that settled on the island around 2450 B.C.E. Webb and Frankel (2013) provide two possible reasons for this division between regions: 1) an increase in population within a settlement decreased the demand for communication and trading with other settlements, and 2) the eastern Mediterranean trading system had collapsed in the latter half of the third millennium B.C.E. probably causing a decrease in demand for copper on the island. This second possibility would result in a decreased need for certain settlements to deal with other settlements when the primary motivation was obtaining copper for production and trade. Mesopotamia, the Levant, and Egypt were experiencing a tumultuous period in their civilizations and Anatolia and the Aegean were also experiencing a period of decline and collapse near the end of the EB II. This forced Cyprus back into a period of insularity, most likely allowing them to culturally adapt the ideologies they had picked up from this sudden period of foreign interactions and shape it into a religion that was characteristically Cypriot in nature.

Migration

The question of migration and the extent to which it influenced the Cypriot islanders has been a major question for Cypriot archaeologists focusing on the Early Bronze Age. Several ideas occurring along a spectrum have been presented in an effort to solve this question. Theories range from: large migrations that forced major change on Cyprus (Dikaios, 1962); migratory influence but not to such an extreme (Swiny, 1986); and insularity (Stewart, 1962; Merrillees, 1973). Manning (1993) suggested that the rising of a social hierarchy in northwestern Cyprus led to changes in Cypriot culture, economy, and political organization as they searched for foreign goods to increase their wealth and prestige. This idea combines both insularity and foreign influence, but does not focus on an influx of immigrants into Cyprus. Knapp (1993) proposed a possibility that works with Manning's idea, that the rising social complexity spurred increased trade both within and outside the island. Kouka (2011) sums up nicely the various possibilities as to how the Philia phase arose: the incorporation of Anatolian works by a Cypriot elite as Cyprus shifted from an egalitarian society to one of social hierarchy, a movement from south/southwest Anatolia to Cyprus, or contact between the regions prior to the EBA. Many arguments work along these lines, feeling more comfortable along the middle of the spectrum.

The argument presented here is that the Anatolian migration of the Early Bronze Age created an important shift in the religious beliefs of Cypriot ideology. The belief presented here is that the effect of migration on different aspects of Cypriot life cannot be examined as a whole, but must be looked at in its parts. For example, the examination of the effect of Anatolian migrants on social complexity will be different than the extent to which the same migration affected the economic production of Cypriot settlements. Each aspect of Cyprus must be

examined separately rather than as a whole, and, in this specific case, the religion of Cyprus was affected to a large degree by the influx of Anatolian migration, contributing greatly to the bull cult that arose on the island and making changes to the fertility ideology of the religion.

The change in Cypriot social and environmental conditions changed drastically at the opening of the Early Bronze Age due to the onset of the copper trade in the Eastern Mediterranean. There are many possible reasons for the movement of people from Anatolia to Cyprus in the early third millennium B.C.E., but two of the favored suggestions are: 1) simply a movement of people to a new location in attempt for new opportunities, or 2) a movement of refugees fleeing incoming marauders (Pilides, 2008). Swiny (1989) and Webb and Frankel (2013) also point out the importance of copper in the newly developing economic sphere of the Eastern Mediterranean as the establishment of the Bronze Age was occurring in much of the surrounding mainland. As Cyprus contained a plentiful supply of copper ore, those who knew of it came to the island to exploit the resources, especially in the western and central parts where the concentration was highest due to the mountain range. Southeastern Anatolia was involved in trading routes between the northeast Aegean, the Cyclades, and Greece (Webb and Frankel, 2013), and the finding of large copper sources in Cyprus allowed a surge in production of trade material.

It is believed that the people from Anatolia entered the island near Vasilia in the north of the island (Webb and Frankel, 2013). This conclusion makes sense in light of the intense impact of Anatolian influence on the nearby sites of Lapithos, Karmi *Palealona*, and Bellapais *Vounous*. These sites represent the most dramatic shift of religious beliefs and social change in Cyprus during this time period, most probably due to the occurrence of Anatolian migrants landing on the island in these locations and then settling down within the nearby settlements. Despite the

intensity of change and the likelihood of these locations as the ports of entry, there is a difficulty in understanding aspects of the region due to the closing off of the area to archaeological investigation when the island was politically divided in 1974 (Webb and Frankel, 2013). The settlement of Pyrgos-*Mavrorachi* supports Swiny's argument of the push for copper resources in the expansion of people and the onset of the Bronze Age in Cyprus, although there is little doubt in the scholarly community that copper was an important motivating factor for the development of this period. Pyrgos has been revealed to be a major center of copper production in Cyprus, a workshop uncovered that had separate places for metallurgy and washing. This settlement shows evident traces of the production of copper products that were most likely traded with other settlements (Belgiorno, 2000). This settlement may reveal significant evidence for the transition of culture and religion in Cyprus as it shows signs of Chalcolithic habitation (two idols were found, one made of steatite, the other stone) and plank-shaped Red Polished idol fragments from the Middle Bronze Age, showing continuation through a significant cultural period of change.

The excavation of three major Philia phase settlements allowed for the construction of a chronology that exhibited the characteristics of the shifting ideologies and techniques of the Cypriots in accordance with the influx of Anatolian migrants from the mainland: Philia-*Vasilikos*, Kyra-*Kaminia*, and Kyra-*Alonia* (Pilides, 2008). Marki-*Alonia* also revealed very close connections to Anatolia, suggesting that it was another major settlement experiencing newfound relations with this group of people.

Before entering discussion on the effect of Anatolia on Cypriot religion, evidence of Anatolian contact and migration must be examined. What is more important is not the proof of migration itself, but that there is evidence linking the two locations together to such an extent

that there is clear influence shown, whether produced by the settling of Anatolian migrants or by trade that occurred between the two areas.

Evidence of Influence in Cypriot Environment

In Pyrgos, there is evidence of Anatolian influence on several amphorae that were found in tombs of the settlement. In Tomb XVI, a Red Polished amphora shows an Anatolian idol in relief that is similar to a vase from Kosk Hoyuk in the Early Bronze Age. In Tomb XXI, another amphora with horned horizontal handles and a biconical body shows a relationship to a Beycesultan pattern in Level XIV of the Early Bronze Age II. Also, several bronze tools show similarities to those found in Kusura in Anatolia (Belgiorno, 1995). There are also several vases that have human faces on them (Belgiorno, 1995; Kouka, 2011). These humans are similar to metal figurines in Troy II, Alaca Hoyuk, Horoztepe, and Hasnoglan and disc-faced figurines in western and central Anatolia (Kouka, 2011).

One of the most probable transmissions of Anatolian culture to Cyprus is the production of Red Polished Ware. The red bowls, vessels, and pottery of Anatolian-inspired design became present in Cyprus during the third millennium B.C.E. This is due either to contact occurring between the two regions over an extended period of time or because of comingling of populations on the island over an extended period of time (Kouka, 2011). The favored opinion is habitation of Anatolians on Cyprus. Various earrings have been found in Tomb VI at Sotira (electrum), Kissonerga (bronze), and Tomb VI of Marki-Davari (bronze) that are similar in design to those at Troy II (Kouka, 2011; Swiny, 2003).

The influence of the immigrants did not only exist in the formation of artifacts such as grave goods and domestic figurines, but also in the economic and architectural developments of the time period. The importation of cattle from the mainland with the migrants resulted in the

use of the plow in agriculture (singlehandedly revolutionizing the economy and food supply of the island), new funerary practices, a transition from circular formations to buildings in rectilinear structures, and the search for copper resources (especially in the Troodos mountains) (Swiny, 1989).

Also present in Marki are horseshoe-shaped hearths that have a similar occurrence in northeast Anatolia and in Syria-Palestine and that most likely served a cultic purpose. These hearths, though common prior to the third millennium in northeast Anatolia, became a widespread occurrence throughout Syro-Palestine at this time (Takaoğlu, 2000). The possibility of this transmission of the hearths, if it is in fact transmission rather than independent invention, most likely occurred through the Syro-Palestinian route, especially when taking into consideration the amount of other material that was probably transmitted from this region. Also, the simple problem of distance presents the idea that the bringing of this idea from a large expanse of land and then over sea is unlikely. The appearance of these hearths in the Levant during the third millennium B.C.E. also occurs at a chronologically contemporary time frame as the Philia phase and Early Bronze Age, creating a stronger link as to why the transmission would have occurred in conjunction with other ideas and objects. These hearths have been located in Beth Shan and Beth Yerah in Palestine, Tabara el-Akrad, Tell el-Judeideh, Tell Tainat, and Tell Dahab in the Amuq plain. The most significant difference of these hearths in comparison to the one in Cyprus is the depiction of incised decoration, while those in Syro-Palestine depict anthropomorphic figures (Takaoğlu, 2000). This could be as simple as an artistic preference that differed between these two regions or a different emphasis on certain decorative material between the two populations.

Gjerstad (1980) suggested that the Cilicia region in southeast Anatolia may have had an important impact on the Philia Culture of Cyprus. Connections have been made between the toggle pins with the chiseled clefts of EBII Tarsus, tanged knives with those from Karatas-Semayuk, and earrings with EBII Tarsus earrings. Also, three objects from Sotira-*Kaminoudhia* may have originated in bronze objects transported from Anatolia around the EBII due to the tin found in said objects; the objects themselves were manufactured in Cyprus. This final notice suggests that some of the metal used by Cypriot smiths (whether of native Cypriot or Anatolian birth) used Anatolian metal to create its products (Swiny, 1985; Balthazar, 1990).

Anatolia is not the only location with evidence of interaction with Cyprus. At Bellapais-*Vounous* Levantine imports have been found (Swiny, 1991). Also present at Sotira *Kaminoudhia* are gaming stones which may have been transmitted to the island either from the Levant or Egypt (Swiny, 2003). These gaming stones have also been located at Kissonerga *Mosiphilia* and Lemba *Lakkous*.

Also present is evidence of contact between the city of Byblos in modern-day Lebanon and Cyprus towards the end of the third millennium B.C.E. What seem to have been cult objects in a sacred area that represented a shrine may have been of Cypriot origin and characteristic of the Red Polished Ware tradition. Included in this array were animal figures (including rams, doves, bulls, ducks, and less distinct quadrupeds and birds), horn vessels, ring-vessels, and jugs. Many of these objects seems to have come from Vounous, considering the style and make of the objects. (Negbi, 1972). Considering the major religious significance of this Cypriot city and the religious importance of Byblos for both the Levant and Egypt, this exchange of material and use of objects as symbolic units of religious practice in a new location is not surprising. If Byblos was indeed the locus point from which many Levant objects came across the small stretch of

water separating the two locations, this interaction between the two locations would make sense as their belief systems would have a great degree of similarity.

Evident, also, is the expanding trade system in the eastern Mediterranean between the Cyclades, mainland Greece, Cyprus, Egypt, and the Levant (Knapp, 2008; Merrillees, 1979). At this time, faience products, metal, and pottery were being distributed throughout all of these areas, increasing interaction between previously closed-off locations. The development of metallurgy on Cyprus has been suggested as a product of not only the introduction of techniques from Anatolia, but also of this increasing trade system with the need to keep up with demands and to continue being active in this profitable economic sphere. The north coast seems to have been more active in this trade system, Webb et. Al (2006) noting particular activity at Vasilia. This may show evidence for the increasing state of regionalism occurring in Cyprus at this time.

Inter-settlement Interaction

Another important factor to recognize when understanding the spread of ideologies throughout Cyprus is the connections between settlements on the island in conjunction with the spread of ideologies from the mainland. Trade occurred between settlements as well, including pottery, metal goods, food, and more, establishing relationships between these locations and therefore transporting ideas as well.

Vasilia seems to be an important settlement of intra-island trading. The settlement shows evidence of a surplus of products that indicate stocks held by merchants and lead isotope analysis of the metalwork found in the settlement reveals that it was probably largely involved in trading with Anatolia, the Cyclades, and other settlements on the island (like Morphou, Kyra, Philia, and Deneia and other areas in the central lowlands). It has been concluded that traders here were involved in creating trading networks with other places on the island, especially those located in

the Troodos Mountains where copper was extracted and could be worked nearby or sent directly to Vasilia for production or trading. This accumulation of goods and trading with other regions and settlements on the island indicates a shift to focusing on amassing material wealth and an increasing divide in social class (Webb and Frankel, 2013).

Pyrgos is located between the bays of Limassol and Larnaka, in a region that experienced one of the first settlements of the EBA in Cyprus. Vases that have shown up in tombs during this time period seemed to have a relation to those in Marki (Belgiorno, 1995). Also in Pyrgos, a Late Chalcolithic idol showed similarities with a figurine from Sotira-*Arkolies* and the "Ejaculator" idol, suggesting potential settlement connection between these locations (Belgiorno, 2000). These established ties most likely did not evaporate with the onset of the Early Bronze Age, especially considering the importance of Pyrgos in construction of metal goods, so cultural ties may exist.

Vounous, as a major cultural center of prehistoric Bronze Age Cyprus, was bound to have connections with surrounding settlements and influence part of the regional diversity that developed with the onset of the period, much like Byblos was a major influencing power in the Levant.

Regionalism

The most interesting aspect of the regionalism of Cyprus during the prehistoric Bronze Age is the divide that arose between the northern and southern regions of the island. These differences seem to indicate a difference in the intensity of influence of the Anatolian and Near Eastern traders and migrants and a difference in adaptability of the new ideas that came with them. These differences also exhibit a change in the societies of the two regions. The north, with its increasing complex funerary practices, changing pottery techniques, and religious

complexity indicates an increasing social elite and hierarchy while the south seemed to maintain a uniformity with their pottery production and funerary practices, suggesting a stronger importance on social egalitarianism (Peltenburg, 1996; Webb and Frankel, 2013). These distinct differences are important in understanding the religion of ancient Cyprus. Religion often reflects the social, political, and economic organization of a community (agrarian societies often emphasize the importance of fertility in their ritualistic practices), and so populations with differences in these three core areas will experience variations in what may be an overarching religion. In the north, the religion may change to the idea of a higher divinity, reflecting a developing social hierarchy as they adapt to external influences and shift from simple fertility beliefs to one of a more all-encompassing aspect of divinity. The trading between these two regions will create similarities between them, shaping a uniform thread, but the characteristic nature of these two communities will create their own strain of a similar religion.

The excavations of Sotira and Vounous present evidence for diversity between the two poles of the island. The cultural uniformity in their pottery exists in the production of Red Polished Ware, but it is there that similarities, for the most part, end. A certain pattern of distinction occurs between the settlements of the north (*Bellapais-Vounous*, *Karmi-Palealona*, *Lapithos*, etc.) and the settlements of the south (*Marki*, *Sotira*, etc.). In the north, the forms and decorations of the ware were quite varied, while in the south most ceramics were produced with little to no decoration. The shapes of the vessels are relatively similar. However, southern vessels are wider and flatter at the base and have a large variety of handles and lugs. Small, flat bowls were common in southern assemblages, while in the north round-based and tulip bowls were common. This indicates differences in use, handling, production, and types of environments that these vessels were used in. The differences in religious beliefs and practices

are a possible reason for these differences in form and design. At Vounous, a settlement exemplifying the extreme of religious practices of the EBA in Cyprus, a large variety of designs are found on the vessels and different uses for the ceramics depending on ritual versus secular purposes resulted in different forms (Webb and Frankel, 2013).

Cypriot Religion

The Cypriot religion seems to have been based mostly on fertility, as is common among agrarian societies. With the increase of contact with other Mediterranean nations, and those outside its sphere of influence through indirect routes, the previous abstract sympathetic magic observations first practiced by the Cypriots began to shift into more of a concrete worship, as evident by the use of animals as a representation of the divine. There seems to have been an interesting divergence in the archaeological evidence of spiritual practices between the Chalcolithic and Early Bronze Age, if what was left behind does in fact represent the spiritual beliefs of the Cypriots. The cruciform and plank-shaped figurines suggest a possible continuation of a past belief system, but the change in decoration and the addition of various symbols relate a possibly more complex, or deified religious system. However, due to the chronological gap between the two sets of artistic representations, this possibility is in question. During the Chalcolithic, there were two main components of Cypriot spiritual belief: ancestor reverence and fertility (Webb and Frankel, 2010, 2013; Alastos, 1976; Conrad, 1959; Rice, 1998). I state “reverence” rather than “worship” due to the fact that there is little evidence of any rituals explicitly devoted to the calling upon of the dead at any necromantic level.

The Cypriots experienced a shift in their religious system as they developed further contacts with the rest of the Mediterranean world, eventually incorporating religious practice and symbols of Anatolia, and what seems to have been an integration of a belief in a deity from the

Levant. It is this possibility that will be investigated throughout the course of this paper. Through this incorporation of a divinity, they also incorporated what was most likely a combination of Inanna/Ištar and Hathor from Mesopotamia and Egypt, respectively, throughout the latter half of the third millennium B.C.E. This incorporation most likely occurred in sequential events: the Anatolian influence most likely occurred during the middle of the millennium while Levantine influences most likely made an impact afterwards, closer to the close of the Early Bronze Age. Cyprus is well-known as having a large cult for the worship of Aphrodite from the Iron Age onwards, focused mostly in the Paphos District of the island. The emergence of this cult would be sound if there was a foundation for which it could be based off of, rather than a sudden development of deity worship. The incorporation of a Hathor-Ištar deity during the Early Bronze Age, as will be presented later, would explain the infrastructure of development into another deity, and a more complete one at that. The concept of a deity did not seem to be fully developed during the EBA, at least not to a point that has revealed any representations that seem to be a direct representation of what they envisioned the transmitted goddess to be. However, it is a possibility that the Red-Plank figurines were the abstract image of this divine, developed to represent this new divinity and the influx of settlers.

Vounous seems to have been a center of social and religious complexity, seemingly unique in character from the rest of the island. Part of the reason for this could be its proximity to the north coast of the island, allowing it easier access to Anatolia and possibly creating trade routes with other island settlements and with the Levantine mainland. Vounous has revealed some of the most significant finds in relation to the religious practices of the island. However, it is important to keep in mind that the traditions of Vounous are most likely not fully representative of the entire island for several reasons. First, during a time where there was no

relatively fast mode of transportation and effective communication/transportation lines, interaction between settlements in different geographic locations of the island was not always consistent. Second, the geography of the island most likely affected inhabitants' lifestyles, as different resources were available in different environments and geographical barriers existed. For example, those that lived in the Troodos Mountains most likely lived a slightly different lifestyle than those that lived in Episkopi. Third, the more interaction a population has with foreign populations, the more affected they will be by those outside influences. Hence, those settlements on the coastline, especially on the northern coast, most likely experienced the most dramatic change. An evaluation of Vounous will be discussed further later on.

The three aspects of religion that will be examined in this study are: 1) fertility; 2) the use of bulls; and, 3) the use of snakes. These three factors are consistently interconnected with each other and are closely intertwined with the social life of Cyprus.

Fertility

During the Chalcolithic period, the primary anthropomorphic product constructed by the prehistoric Cypriots were cruciform figurines. They are a trademark of the so-called "Erimi Culture." The primary characteristics of these statuettes were outstretched arms, elongated necks, and tucked legs to give the impression of squatting (Crewe et. al, 2002). Often, there has been an attempt to classify these as more than fertility figurines, but also as fertility goddesses, or even as a "Mother Goddess" of Cyprus (Bolger, 1996). However, as suggested by Bolger (1996), this may be too much of an attempt to find the precursor to the later popularity of the Aphrodite cult on Cyprus.

The emergence of bulls and snakes as prominent motifs in the religious symbolism of the Cypriots suggests a shift in the ideological system of the population. Previously, the dependency

was on the cruciform figurines as symbolic interpretations and fertility charms, a symbol of the spiritual nature of the world with which humans could interact. However, a shift into use of a concrete representation of a divinity occurred with the use of animals. In Anatolia and the Levant prior to this period, bulls and snakes had been associated with a variety of divinities. With the exposure of Cyprus to these civilizations after a period of isolation and the development of a new social order, the people of Cyprus incorporated these new beliefs into their own, giving their spiritual nature of belief a new life, a specific form on which to focus. It is possible that the bull and snake represented the same divinity, though two separate aspects of this divine.

Also present is the strong possibility of a transition to leaders presiding over religious activities. The representation of individuals in what has been interpreted as religious artwork suggests that the shift from an egalitarian society of the past to an agrarian/metallurgical stratified society also began to be reflected in the activity of the changing Cypriot belief system. In the Vounous Model, one individual seems to be placed on a throne with a certain hat adornment that differentiates it from the surrounding individuals, possibly symbolizing some sort of hierarchal nature, whether it is a priest or village leader (Morris, 1985). Also indicative of possible representations of priests or priestesses in a changing dynamic are the shrine models from Kotchati that show three bucrania positioned on poles along a wall. In front of these bull heads is a female figure that may be shown pouring libations (Morris, 1985; Frankel and Tamvaki, 1973). The central importance of a single individual doing this action may indicate a higher status in religious practices, or the division of roles among individuals during religious ceremonies. For example, a “high priest” may be in charge of the overall supervision and function of the ritual, but other individuals are responsible for the offerings, for the gathering of certain supplies, etc. Due to the fact that one of the figures had breasts (although the other does

not), the interpretation of this figure's sex is that it is a woman, indicating that women had valuable roles to play in this society despite possible development of patriarchy (Karageorghis, 1970).

Bulls

For a long period of Cypriot archaeological history, it was believed that cattle did not appear on the island. However, recent research has shown that cattle did, in fact, first get brought over as a domesticated animal from the Levant around the second half of the 9th millennium B.C.E. with evidence of cattle at Parakklisha *Shillourokambos* (Swiny, 2001) and Krittou Marottou *Ais Yiorkis* (Simmons, 2005). The reason for the miscalculation is due to the apparent large gap between this first introduction of cattle and the second emergence in the archaeological record. Cattle seemed to have died out sometime during the eighth millennium B.C.E., (Swiny, 2001) and become reintroduced around the mid-third millennium (Croft, 2003; Falconer, 2005; Rice, 1998; Peltenburg, 1989). This second introduction proved to be a critical turning point for the Cypriot civilization and contributed greatly to the shift in social organization and religious beliefs. The introduction of cattle occurred, not surprisingly, at the close of the Late Chalcolithic and the beginning of the Philia phase.

It is possible that the bull developed a cosmological meaning in the Cypriot religion as it did in many other locations. The representation of planetary bodies would not be out of place in a culture based on agriculture and a lifestyle and ideological belief system focused on fertility. The importance of the sun is evident and the recognition of the moon, as its opposite, would not be an impossibility. Webb and Frankel (2010) see this as a possibility at Vounous, which had a complex iconography during the Early Bronze Age. The bull may have been transmitted to Cyprus with a certain cosmological meaning and adapted over time as more aspects of different

religions began taking hold in the population. In Egypt, the goddess Hathor was depicted with a prominent pair of cow horns with a sun-disk resting in between them (Wilkinson, 2003). If this was transmitted in such a way to the city of Byblos, it is also possible that this could have made its way to Cyprus, as well.

The bull was one of the most important iconographic symbols in Cypriot culture beginning in the Early Bronze Age. The introduction of cattle to Cyprus was, arguably, the most important contribution to Cypriot lifestyle, effectively changing social complexity, Cypriot economy, and religious traditions and symbolism. The heads of these animals often appeared in the round on bowls, representing fertility (Karageorghis, 1983). In Vounous, many tombs have uncovered the skeletons of cattle within, suggesting a sacrificial characteristic of these animals (Alastos, 1976).

Interestingly, the bones of cattle were used for what must have been religious significance in prehistoric Cyprus. At Sotira-Kaminoudhia, a bovid skull was found in Unit 10 with the facial bones removed in such a way that the horns could have been easily placed on the head of an individual (Swiny et. al, 2003). Horns are representative of Levantine and Mesopotamian divinity and of Egyptian pharaoh strength. With a cross-cultural examination of these ideas to this curious practice at Sotira, we may be able to understand why it occurred. The significant show of strength and power in association with the bull may suggest that this skull may have been worn for ritual purposes and reflects a position of higher status than the general community, maybe one of a priest or settlement leader. The possibility of being exalted to a position of divine power like many rulers in ancient cultures is doubtful considering the lack of evidence suggesting the possibility. However, it was probably used as a symbol of power and virility. Also, in this unit were masks and other skulls that probably were associated with

religious activity (Swiny et. al, 2003). The use of masks and skulls in this settlement establish a more profound idea of the development of a cult surrounding devotion to the bull as a symbol and as a form of divinity that could be easily worshipped on its own rather than always in conjunction with the serpent. Also present are the depiction of bucrania propped on poles. These have been found in scenic displays from Vounous, Kotchati, and Kalopsidha, indicating that this is a widespread practice in the religious practices of Cyprus during the Early Bronze Age (Morris, 1985). Whether these depictions represent actual skulls placed upon posts or were part of the post itself cannot be deduced from the models themselves. Another area at Sotira-*Kaminoudhia* also shows possible evidence of the use of skeletal components of cattle as spiritual units. In the Unit 12 Complex a cattle scapula was found on a shelf in the northwest corner of the complex (Swiny, 2008). The connection is tentative, based upon the use of scapula in cult use in Late Bronze Age Cyprus, but the occurrence is interesting and warrants further investigation.

Some of the Red Polished I ware found in Cyprus shows bucranium depicted alongside crescent symbols (Gjerstad, 1926). Gjerstad proposes a magical/religious significance to these symbols but goes no further than making the connection to the continuity of this relationship into the use of cylinders. The crescent was used a lunar symbol, specifically for the god Sin, in Mesopotamia (Black and Green, 1992). This could have been transmitted with the dots and swastika of the Near East with the astrological meanings attached to them. If so, the conjunction of these two symbols suggests that the bull was viewed as a lunar deity in ancient Cyprus, its horns possibly being a reason for this as it resembles the shape of a crescent moon. If a lunar aspect was applied to the bull, then most likely a solar aspect is applied elsewhere. In a

community that was becoming increasingly agrarian, and therefore dependent upon the sun, there is bound to be the same occurrence of the relationship of the bull and the moon somewhere else.

On one of the bowls found in Vounous, in Tomb 153, bull heads are found in conjunction with vertical zig-zag strokes. It is suggested by Stewart (1999) that these vertical incisions represent rain. If this is so, then this may be well understood in conjunction with the symbol of the bull if looked at in respect to the Anatolian and Near East form of the bull deities.

Anatolia

The bulls were introduced by Anatolian migrants fleeing from the southern coast/southwest region of the mainland, possibly due to the expansion of a military threatening their way of life (Morris, 1985) or another political or economic reason (Karageorghis, 1981). The reason for their movement is not important to this discussion, and so we will not go into great detail about it. However, the assimilation process is what made a large impact on the Cypriots.

In Anatolia, the bull was a very prominent figure in the religious practices of the people. The first site that comes to mind relating to the distinct importance of this animal in the symbolic nature of the faith is Çatalhöyük. Çatalhöyük was a settlement used during the Neolithic (ca. 7500-6000), a little out of date for the topic at hand, but just as relevant an example. A common motif in this area is that of the long-horned bull (Garbini, 1966).

In Cyprus, however, they seem to have taken on a more gentle aspect, though just as important a function in the religious practices as they were in Anatolia. This is most likely because of the different contexts with which these two groups of people interacted with the bull. In Anatolia, the wild auroch was seen as a ferocious form of fertility, impregnating many cows,

but with a ferocity and strength that was striking. In Cyprus, on the other hand, the bulls that were transported during the Anatolian migration were domesticated, of a more gentle nature (Rice, 1998). This difference in interaction is important in understanding how the Cypriots interacted with the bulls. Although it is difficult at this point to know if the bull symbolized a distinct divinity or was more of a symbolic representation of fertility and strength, one can see a careful reverence for the bulls in Cypriot archaeological evidence.

Bulls were used in many iconographic representations, only increasing as the Bronze Age continued. Many bowls have been found that have bull and ram heads decorated around the perimeter (Karageorghis, 1983). The increase in quadruped representation possibly indicates the increasing dependency on these animals as agricultural and husbandry resources (Figure II).

Also interesting in the connection between the bull-cult of Anatolia and that of Cyprus is the involvement of vultures in iconography. In Çatalhöyük in southern Anatolia, during the Anatolian Neolithic vultures were pictured in the settlement in conjunction with bulls (Rice, 1998). Although separated chronologically, certain traditions may perhaps have been carried on by the Anatolian descendants of Çatalhöyük and carried on to Cyprus in the third millennium B.C.E. There is not enough evidence to confirm this connection between the two animals, considering very few Cypriot ceramic artifacts have been found that are bird-like in nature, especially with a vulture appearance (Morris, 1985). The vultures were used to remove the flesh and organs from dead bodies, and seem to be associated with the bull cult (Rice, 1998). There is no evidence suggesting this specific practice, but the specific conjunction between the two animals may have continued; only further evidence can confirm or deny this.

The exact interpretation of the bull into deification is difficult for one primary reason, whether it meant a masculine symbol or a feminine one. Despite the plethora of Indo-European

gods that are represented by the bull, there is another line of argument that the bull did in fact represent a feminine aspect of divinity due to the shape of the bucranium. Cameron (1981) presented the idea that the representation of bulls in artwork and in relation to sacred contexts actually represented a female divinity, a symbol of regeneration and fertility through the similar aesthetic appearance of a bull's head and the female reproductive system. Mellart (1963) concluded the process of excarnation carried out by vultures and the decapitation of the deceased resulted in the exposure of the internal anatomy of the dead, and through this Cameron believed that the Anatolian people would have a good general knowledge of the human reproductive system and would notice a similarity in looks between a woman's fallopian tubes, ovaries, and uterus and the head of a bull (Cameron, 1981). However, it has been argued that the process of vulture excarnation may not actually have occurred and instead was a process of imagery taking a dangerous animal and using it in symbolic context of protection of the dead (Relke, 2007). The absence of postmortem damage related to animal activity dismisses the possibility that vultures, which are bound to leave noticeable amounts of damage, beheaded or even interacted with the dead. It is actually more likely that the relationship was between the bull's cranium and the female cow's reproductive system rather than a human's, but this does not dismiss the importance of the symbolic meaning of fertility and life. This interpretation of what is arguably the most feminine connotation of a symbol went counterintuitive to the long-standing belief that the bull represented pure masculine energy, vitality, and power (Relke, 2007).

Levant

Bulls may also have been an incorporation of both Anatolian and Levant mainland ideologies. The Anatolian migrants brought their religion with them to their new home. However, with the exposure to Levantine religion and the accessibility to how the bull existed on

this part of the mainland, further meaning may have been applied to this symbol. In this way, while becoming more similar to these two civilizations, the Cypriots were holding onto their uniqueness in the Eastern Mediterranean Sea.

Bulls were a facet of religion in the Levant since at least the fourth millennium B.C.E. and by the year 2000 B.C.E., it was a major focus of the religion (Conrad, 1959). In the Levant, similar to that of Anatolia, the bull gods were a reflection of the tumultuous lifestyle of the people of the region, a representation of the harsh climate and land on which agriculture was developed (Conrad, 1959). Cyprus did not experience these same problems and so the bull deity would have developed in a different way. As a pictorial symbol, the bucranium was a common motif in Levant artistry, suggesting an important significance of the animal (Conrad, 1959).

The feminine interpretation mentioned previously is not too far off when examined cross-culturally. In Mesopotamia, the horned cap, decorated with seven pairs of horns, was used to symbolize the power of the divinity (Black and Green, 1992). The number of horns varied, but the significance is the presence of the horns themselves. In Egypt, Hathor was a prominent bovine goddess whose crown was shown by elongated horns encompassing a sun disk (Hart, 2005). Astarte, a goddess prominent in the Syrian region, had a warrior aspect whose horns symbolized her power, and also related to the importance of the horns in Mesopotamia, a sign of her divinity (Hart, 2005; Wilkinson, 2003).

Snakes

The representation and use of snakes in Cypriot religion has the most difficult origin to understand. Although widely used in motifs and present in many famous models of supposed religious significance (ex. the Bellapais-*Vounous* bowl), the transmission of the snake as a religious symbol is not as easily seen as the transmission of bulls by the Anatolian migrants.

Although there are various divinities throughout the Eastern Mediterranean area that use snakes as representations of certain deities, none of these deities seem to have been directly brought to Cyprus. The Temple at Byblos did contain a lot of imagery of snakes (Stone, 1976). However, it may be possible that the snakes began from a more isolated origin. Snakes appear as an animal symbol in many religions throughout the world, and the reason for this could be due to the provocation of the strong emotion of fear in humans (Stanley, 2008). With the widespread nature of snake cults throughout much of Europe, Asia, Central America, and more, it is not difficult to imagine that Cyprus may have begun the recognition of the snake on its own and then later connected it to a deity.

The earliest appearance of a snake found thus far in Cyprus is on an altar in a circular house in Khriotikia (5800-5250 B.C.E.) (Mundkur, 1983). On this altar was an idol of a male head that had several snakes decorating the back (Mundkur, 1983). This seems to suggest some sort of importance of snake iconography during the Neolithic, possibly associated with funerary practices and an association of the snake with death. There is hesitation presuming that the ancient Cypriots believed in an underworld, which would be handily reached by the noticeable quality of the snake burrowing underground. However, no evidence is available to support this conjecture. Evidence does show a potential belief in the afterlife which will be gone into further detail later on in this study.

The snakes have been seen as a representation of a chthonic deity (Steel, 2004), a being that passes between different worlds, seen moving on the ground and burrowing below the earth. This is important in the light of Cypriot religion being primarily focused on fertility and the cycle of life. The chthonic nature of the snake can be seen as working alongside the cycle of the seasons and the agricultural dependence upon it. The snake, therefore, seems like an obvious

symbol of fertility, with its ability to go underground, slither along the ground, and shed skin for regeneration, much like the reemergence of crops the following spring.

Evidence of snake worship is also very difficult to locate and analyze in archaeological materials from EBA Cyprus. One of the main reasons for this is the lack of a definite snake image in any motifs. If truly represented, they are shown as zig-zags or by wavy lines (Morris, 1985; Mundkur, 1983). While these may truly represent snakes, until an actual depiction with a head is revealed, one can only assume a connection. In Lapithos, in Tomb 303A, jugs have been found that have a relief of a snake placed as if moving up towards the base of the spout of the jug and incised with punctures. Before this point, the snake symbol was projected with a realistic touch but near the close of the Early Cypriot I period, the symbol for the snake seems to have progressed to a mere wavy line, if that does indeed indicate a snake (Stewart, 1999).

In Conjunction with Bull Iconography

Snakes and bulls have been seen in relationship with each other in many different instances, possibly pointing to a spiritual interaction between the two animals. If the development of zoomorphic interpretation did indeed correlate with a development in deification of spiritual beliefs, then this may represent a relationship between two deities. This would begin to tie the spiritual beliefs of this isolated island with the surrounding religious beliefs of the Levant, Anatolia, Egypt, and Mesopotamia. There is nothing to positively suggest whether they had definite gender roles, but these deities may have originated as more androgynous beings, having both male and female aspects but not yet solidifying into genders. This is in line with the still relatively egalitarian system of the Cypriots where sexual division of labor and roles was not extreme and social hierarchy was still in its infancy of development, especially in the north of the island.

In the Vounous Model (Figure III) found by Dikaïos, both bulls and possible snakes are found together in what seems to represent a sacred ritual or gathering (Dikaïos, 1940). Although suggested by Dikaïos that the gathering is focused on the chthonic properties of the snakes, the appearance of bucrania on poles seems to detract from this observation, considering the continuous appearance of the two animals throughout the Early Bronze Age and an increase in their representation into the Late Bronze Age. As pointed out by Morris (1985), the assumption of the entire scene as a snake-focused ritual based off of two wavy lines on the inner facade of the wall is shaky. Considering that no clear indication of a head is shown, than this assumption is simply conjecture without more evidence uncovered of such a ritual. Also pointed out by Morris is the possibility of these lines representing ropes, which is quite plausible, but does not detract from the importance of the bull imagery.

If the Vounous Model does in fact include snakes, then the representation of both bulls and snakes could represent the three important features of early religion: fertility (or life), death, and by continuation, the process of rebirth. Hutchinson (1962) stated that the snake of the Minoan ancient religion represented a domestic guardian spirit as opposed to the underworld aspect of the snake in Greek underworld cults. However, the same idea may not apply to Cyprus considering its proximity and interaction with the Levant and Anatolia to a greater degree than the Minoan civilization. It is believed that if the Model does in fact represent that of a funerary ritual than the bulls and snakes must be representative spirits. The proposition that the snakes of Cyprus did not have the same meaning as that of the Minoan civilization and instead were close to Greece does not take away from this possibility, rather suggesting that the snakes hold some kind of dominion over the underworld and may have watched the progression of spirits into the afterlife.

Transmission of Ištar-Hathor to Cyprus

Inanna-Ištar

A more definitive appearance of deity worship and the presence of the snake as a prominent symbol in Cyprus during the Early Bronze Age presents an interesting, yet complicated, problem. A definitive reason for this use of a chthonic symbol is not present, unlike the use of the bull as a symbol of divinity. With the widespread presence of plank-shaped figurines dating to the Red Polished Ware period of the end of the Early Bronze Age (Karageorghis, 1991; Cles-Reden, 1962; Steel, 2004; Morris, 1985) and the symbols that were found on these objects, the question of what these represented and if they were a continuation of the Chalcolithic cruciform figurines has been hotly debated (Morris, 1985; Steel, 2004). Also thrown into question is the nature of the so-called "Comb figures" found throughout the EBA period (Washbourne, 1997; Karageorghis, 1991).

One possible explanation for the symbolic nature of these various anthropomorphic figurines, symbolic use of snakes (and possibly an extension of the bull motif), and the presence of these Comb figures is the transmission of a Mesopotamian-Egyptian fusion of powerful goddesses from the northern Levant, most likely though the locus of Byblos. Within the recent past couple of decades, the idea of the figurines representing Ištar, or Inanna, rather than simply a fertility idol, has become more of a theory to investigate (Webb, 2003). Negbi (1972) has suggested the opposite interaction, that Cypriot religion began influencing Byblos significantly. However, considering the interaction between Syria and both Mesopotamia and Egypt and the increasing importance of Byblos as a Mediterranean trading center, it seems more likely that the opening of trade and exchange between Byblos and Cyprus caused a transmission of ideas to the island, rather than from the island. Sufficient evidence to support this claim and, if proven valid,

its route of transmission, has not come to light yet. However, one possible journey and its possible supporting evidence will be presented here.

Symbols

The vessels that have been uncovered in the northern settlements (dating to the EC I-II period) of Bellapais-*Vounous*, Karmi-*Lapatsa*, and *Palealona* have revealed a strikingly large amount of cross-cultural iconographic representations between Cyprus and the Levant. Included in these symbols are the swastika, rosette and dots of Inanna-Ištar, the six or eight-pointed star of Inanna-Ištar, crosses, bulls and other quadrupeds, snakes, birds, and a multitude of other motifs that, although already present in Cypriot ware, may have acquired a new meaning or association.

An important symbol of the goddess Ištar is the eight-pointed star (Figure V) representing the evening star, or Venus (Black and Green, 1992). Interestingly, eight-pointed stars are often visible in various ceramic objects during the EC I period in Cyprus (Figures VI, VII, and VIII). Although these may have independently originated on the island, the association with bulls and various other combinations with other symbols presents the possibility of transmission of this symbol with Ištar. It provides the avenue of exploration to find if there is some association between the two. On a bowl from Tomb 160A.13 and another from Tomb 91-14 in Bellapais-*Vounous* (Figure VI), eight-pointed stars are found in association with bull heads, which is a common animal of representation in both the Levant and Mesopotamia, as discussed earlier (Webb and Frankel, 2010). Horns were often shown on Near Eastern deities as a sign of their divinity, and so bulls became an association with divine power and strength (Wilkinson, 2003). On the bowl from Tomb 160A.13, there are also swastikas decorating the exterior, which is a symbol known to have derived from India and made its transition from there. On a jug from

Tomb 160A.16 and a motif from a bowl in Tomb 90-7, both also from Bellapais-*Vounous*, eight-pointed stars are also visible (Webb and Frankel, 2010).

It has been argued that the circular symbols are all representative of lunar solar symbols (Stewart, 1999). However, I believe this interpretation too narrow and unaccommodating to cultural influence from the mainland. Stewart argues that the symbols consisting of concentric circles and circles with either spokes or dots within them are examples of this classification. However, evidence supports that it could be a cultural transmission from the Near East, especially when made aware that the swastika was also in use during the ECI in Cyprus (Stewart, 1999), an important symbol of use on the mainland.

The question of the circle of dots on pottery found at Vounous was also thrown into question. It is my belief that these are an adoption of the symbol of Inanna-Ištar. One of the primary symbols of Ištar was the rosette, found at her temple in Assur, and this was later adapted to the format of seven dots set in the same pattern (Black and Green, 1992). In many instances, such as a vessel from Tomb 111 at Vounous (Stewart, 1999), the exact number of dots does not fit this proposal. However, it must be kept in mind that cultural adaptation and/or artistic preference could be a reason for this. The dots were used as a representation of the Pleiades in Mesopotamia (Black and Green, 1992). However, the frequency of the use of this formation of dots, but not the exact number, may suggest that this symbol took on a different meaning in the Cypriot context. There are many instances of the use of this symbol with seven dots, meaning that this may have been carried over but also adapted for other uses, becoming more of a general symbol of divinity with the dots loosely associated with a certain aspect that is attempting to be presented (Figures VI, VII, and VIII).

One a jug from Tomb 160A.16 in Bellapais-*Vounous*, both the circle of seven dots within an encompassing circle and the eight-pointed star are represented together, each a symbolic representation of Inanna-Ištar. Although one example, it shows the correlation between the symbolic use of these symbols and suggests that recognition of the common identity between the representations was in existence. The occurrence of a human form with these symbols may suggest that this figure has a divine significance. Frankel and Webb (2010) present the idea that this human form with antlers may be a supernatural being, humans dressed as an animal, or a human doing a ritualistic performance (Figure IX). With respect to the symbols presented on the same jug, I favor the first suggestion, the possibility that this schematic human form may be that of possibly a divine being, or at least something of a more mystical nature. One possibility is that the antlers are actually a crown of horns and the dashes incised on either side of the figure are possibly garments or something of a more symbolic nature. If it is a crown of horns than it would be in line with the use of horns as a symbol of divinity in the Near East and may suggest that this particular example is a depiction of Inanna-Ištar.

Also, interestingly, in Byblos, Cypriot vessels containing images of doves (Figure XIII) were located (Negbi, 1972). One of the sacred animals of Inanna-Ištar was the dove (Black and Green, 1992). As a result, the trade between the two regions and the importance of creating images of doves would be logical if the Inanna-Ištar cult spread from Byblos to Cyprus, and it progressed to a point where their objects became interchangeable. This interpretation by Negbi, however, is tenuous at best due to the lack of detail in the representations for species identification.

The swastika was also used in Mesopotamia and the Levant, supporting possible transmission to Cyprus during the ECI period. The frequency of use in this area is not very high,

making the chances of it unlikely, but possible nonetheless. With transmission of one symbol, others were likely to come with it, including the rosette and formation of seven dots. It is thought that the symbol represents a solar deity or the four winds, but no evidence supports this conclusion in Mesopotamia (Black and Green, 1992).

Another Mesopotamian symbol of significance found in Cypriot art is that of the cross. The cross is not very prevalent on the artwork of the island. However, the frequency of its occurrence is enough to pay it some attention. The cross was used in Mesopotamia as a solar symbol (Black and Green, 1992). If symbols such as the cross and the dots of Ištar made their way to Cyprus with their cosmological meaning attached, then this may suggest that the religious beliefs not only became more complex with the formation of a personification of deity but also began to show evidence of connections to the heavenly universe. There is no evidence suggesting that the ancient Cypriots did not have symbolic interpretations of bodies in space. However, there is also no evidence until this point suggesting that they did. It may be that with the adoption of a more concrete version of worship and the divine, the practice of placing symbolic meaning and explanation of events on these deities leads to the process of finding previously unknown connections or delving into aspects of life that had been regarded very lightly, if at all.

Comb figures

The "Comb figures" of the Bronze Age have been a matter of discussion for many years. These objects are characterized by their shape, the incisions placed on the front and the back, and the series of vertical lines seen on the bottom of the front side of the figure (Figure X). Many theories for the presence of these objects have been presented. Morris (1985) suggests that they were a symbol for fertility. Peltenburg (1981) states the most literal approach as a representation

of a comb. Karageorghis (1991) presents the idea that these are actually representations of a lock of hair, similar in style to the tails of oxen in later years. The anthropomorphic depictions on some "Comb figures" have thrown more confusion into the matter as to whether or not these symbolize fertility idols and are in some way related to the cruciform idols or plank-idols.

However, another possible explanation for these "Comb figures" is that of counterweights to multi-stranded necklaces (Washbourne, 1997). Flourentzos (1975) noticed the presence of "Comb figures" on the back of Plank figures and determined it to mean that the brush had an important symbolic part to play in a temple ritual. However, being on the back of the Plank figure may have been a literal representation of its use as a counterweight that goes down the back of an individual. Many Plank figures have several incised lines that circle around the base of the neck, and these in all likelihood represent necklaces, the weight of which would have been quite heavy and a counterweight would have been necessary to take pressure off of the back of the neck (Washbourne, 1997).

Possible connections occurred between Mesopotamia and Cyprus, presented by Peltenburg who suggested that a jar from an EC I tomb at Vounous is similar to a tablet from the Ur III period at Tell Sweyhat (Washbourne, 1997). A figurine from Diqdiqqeh from the Ur III period (2112-2095) has similar incised lines on the back of it, possibly also representing a counterweight. It is also possible that this connection between the two locations was more of an indirect trading system and the heavy influence of Mesopotamian divinity was more through the locus of Byblos and the Levantine coast than direct interaction with Mesopotamia.

In Egypt, the counterweights of necklaces were associated with Hathor and were used as offerings in her temples (Washbourne, 1997). This may have syncretized with the traditional Mesopotamian usage as a garment accessory and symbol of divinity and transmitted to Cyprus as

this fused symbol. This may explain why some Red Polished Plank Idols show incised decorations similar to that of Comb figures on the back side.

Plank figures

Plank figures have also been a topic of confusion in Cypriot archaeology, in relation to their role in Cypriot society. Possible roles range from the protection of the dead in tombs (Flourenzos, 1975), as fertility charms (Morris, 1985), and as representations of Inanna (Washbourne, 2000). It is this third line of reasoning that seems to make the most sense in light of the contact that Cyprus began to have in the third-millennium B.C.E. and the development into a cult of Aphrodite that was to come (Figure XI).

On a large number of the Plank idols found to this date, incised lines have been starting from where the shoulders of the object would be to approximately halfway down the body of the piece, further on some objects. Examples of these include: one from Lapithos Tomb 201, three from Vounous, and three with no provenance. These do not include the double-headed variations (Morris, 1985). These incised lines have often been referred to as arms, despite the fact that some Plank figures have clearly defined arms in conjunction with these incised lines. Washbourne (2000) suggests that these incised lines actually represent *tudittu*, an article of clothing worn by Inanna-Ištar and other gods and mortals in the Near East. The designs at the terminal ends of these lines may represent jewelry that is customarily worn at the end of this garment. The horizontal strip at the bottom of the Plank figure may be a belt. Where it lies between the *tudittu* and is cut off, it may be simply covered by the garment. *Tudittu* were given to women at their marriage, strengthening the idea of fertility that is also in line with Inanna-Ištar. Also, the toggle pins associated with the *tudittu* are also found in Megiddo, Tepe Gawra,

and Byblos, securing yet another connection between Cyprus and Byblos and possible transmission of religious ideology (Washbourne, 2000).

The costume applied to the plank figures seems to have been just as important, if not more, than the features applied to the body of the figure. As suggested by Cles-Reden (1961), the style of the designs placed on these objects most likely indicate elaborate garments and the rectangular formations common on the front are belts. Clothing may have become more of an important detail to include in Cypriot artwork during the Middle Bronze Age, ornamentation changing as Levantine and Mesopotamian influence began changing the culture of the island. An important component of the myth of Inanna's descent to the underworld to her sister Ereshkigal's realm is the removal of different pieces of clothing and accessories as she descended through seven gates (Black and Green, 1992). Though this meaning may not be applicable to all occurrences of these designs, it is an example of the importance of clothing in representations.

Much debate has surrounded the presence of the plank figures that seem to occur with two or three necks, indicating separate individuals, which have been found primarily in Lapithos (Figure XII). Theories proposed have been: an amulet used to promote twins or triplets, a family with the amount of children represented by the number of necks, and simply an artistic decision (Morris, 1985). The idea that plank figures represented fertility charms, funerary accompaniments to represent the widow or child left behind, or as a protective guardian over the deceased may all be correct. One possible answer not explicitly evident in these idols is an association with the nature of an Inanna-Ištar crossover to Cyprus. The dual, and even triple nature of this goddess, may explain the presence of plank figures in different contexts and may also provide an explanation for the variety of necks, depending on the purpose of the object or

the specific taste of the artist. Black and Green (1992) present the idea of the triple nature of Inanna-Ištar. One is that of love and sexuality, clearly presenting attributes that would come handily to an agricultural society with an ideology focused on the cycle of life. The second is battle, which is not a very strong argument, as the Cypriots do not seem to have experienced much conflict at this point, but may have been translated to ferocity of protection for both the living and the dead. The third aspect is the planet Venus, which can be tied into her first aspect and can also be seen as a chthonic element as the morning and evening star. Although the third aspect present can be translated loosely as a chthonic element which would have held significance to Cyprus, a more solid chthonic interpretation of Inanna-Ištar in burial customs and ancestor worship would have been the descent of Inanna into the underworld to her sister Ereshkigal's realm. The ability to go to the underworld and back presents a chthonic aspect onto her and would have related to the snake imagery presented by the Cypriots. This triple aspect of the goddess may have been represented in these triple-necked idols, an all-encompassing representation of the transplanted goddess in Cypriot culture that could adapt her characteristics to a living system already in place.

The double-necked plank idols can also fit according to this model. According to Goodison and Morris (1998), the goddess has a two-sided presentation that can be seen in her representation as Venus, the morning and evening star that represents the two transitions in the extremes of the day. Inanna-Ištar has a large amount of variety that stretches from her femininity to masculinity, the earth goddess characteristic of representing life and death, power and gentleness. This duality could have also been represented in these two-necked idols. There is also the possibility that these figures also represent marriage present in many nearby religions. However, the first option seems the more likely of the two. Further research and excavation will

be needed to support this claim and may only be possible through speculation due to the abstractness of the idea but it is an avenue for investigation.

Hathor

Ištar did not make it to Cyprus in an untouched fashion, but instead came in a hybrid combination with an equivalent goddess in the Egyptian pantheon, Hathor. The avenues of both deities led to a central focus in Byblos, which had an important impact on the surrounding countryside, surely influencing the religious beliefs of nearby Syrian peoples which also would have had contact with the Cypriots. In Byblos, the Temple of Ba'alat Gebal was the divine house of this fused deity, brought together under the name of Ba'alat Gebal, a characteristic Canaanite name.

Vessels at the Temple of Ba'alat Gebal were dedicated to Hathor of Byblos and a cylinder seal of Chephren had an inscription that read "beloved of Hathor." A fragment of Pepy I found at the temple also referred to the primary center of Hathor in Egypt, providing another piece to the puzzle. This temple and the iconography inside of it show the strongest association between Syria and Egypt than anywhere else in the area (Smith, 1965). The reason for this dwelling place of Hathor, rather than in her native land of Egypt, may be due to the acquirement of new functions. Taking on the role of protectress of the lumber trade, she may have been called upon by traders making the voyage back and forth, and therefore developed a home in the land to which they were travelling to ensure greater safety. By the third millennium B.C.E., Egypt and Byblos had developed a strong trading route with each other, and so a firmer connection between the two and ensuring the continuation of this strong trade system only makes sense. This blending of two cultural deities in the locus of Byblos suggests that if the Mesopotamian deity of

Inanna-Ištar traveled to Cyprus through the region surrounding this important port city, it may have taken on qualities of this fusion goddess.

Astarte/Ba'alat Gebal

The Syro-Palestine region was heavily influenced by the nearby Mesopotamian civilization (Garbini, 1966). Evidence of this is reflected in the artwork of the area.

In the 1920s, Maurice Dunand (1928) uncovered a temple in Byblos dedicated to Ba'alat Gebal constructed around 2700-2800 B.C.E. (Dunand, 1928; Stone, 1976). It is believed that trading connections existed between Syria, and Byblos specifically, and Egypt at least before 2700 B.C.E., which would allow for this reasonable date for the construction of this major temple (Smith, 1965). Ba'alat-Gebal, or Baalat on a more basic level, was a Canaanite goddess that became the principal deity of Byblos due to her protection of the cedar wood trading that was crucially important at this port with Egypt (Hart, 2005). This goddess became connected with the Egyptian goddess, Hathor, due to their similarities and developing connection between the two civilizations (Hart, 2005). Hathor is a cow goddess of the Egyptian pantheon, represented with not only cow horns and a sun disk, but also as a snake in conjunction with Wadjet, the protectress of Lower Egypt and the signifier of the pharaoh. In the Middle Kingdom (2181-1550 B.C.E.), she is known to have been closely associated with a cult center at Byblos, also tied closely with the Canaanite goddess Astarte, who also can be seen wearing bull horns as a sign of divinity (Hart, 2005).

Here, there are two common Cypriot motifs joined together in one location that presumably had some sort of contact with Cyprus, although little is known at this point. With further evidence, archaeologists may be able to uncover a direct, heavily supported trading system between Cyprus and Byblos. However, currently there are a few objects of interest and an

established trading system with other areas of the Levant, mostly concentrated in the south. Possible Byblite or Ugarit daggers were found in various tombs at Lapithos, a couple of which date to the Early Bronze III period, and the other dating to the Middle Bronze Age (Branigan, 1966). Although a tenuous connection, it does provide some evidence suggesting that there may have been some sort of contact between Byblos and Cyprus during the Early Bronze Age, and possibly beforehand. Also, considering the importance of the Ba'alat Gebal Temple as a cult center in the Levant, it is likely that the influence of this religious center made an impact on the surrounding area of the Levant. As a result, it is possible that the beliefs of the Byblite religious center may have spread to Cyprus through another location that was participating in more trading and interaction with the island than Byblos itself.

Vounous

Vounous represents an exceptional amount of potentially religious-related material in Cyprus. This may be due to insufficient excavation so far in both presently discovered settlements and settlements that have not been located yet. However, compared to many other contemporary sites, it currently reflects an especially religious atmosphere that helps to contribute to our understanding of Cypriot religion. It is important to consider that Vounous, located near the northern coast of the island, will most likely exhibit regional differences from settlements focused in the south, possibly due to more direct contact with the Anatolian mainland, different social organization, and/or different trading networks. However, it still contributes a large deal to our understanding of the ideological thinking and practices of the Early Bronze Age inhabitants of the island.

Stewart (1962) believed that Vounous "was either a leading religious centre or the population was unusually religious." Peltenburg (1994) stated that the importation of cattle to

Cyprus could likely have occurred in great force at Vounous. This significant importation of cattle would provide an explanation for the religious zeal of this location. The arrival of the cattle also indicated a significant arrival of Anatolians to this settlement, an indication of assimilation of religious ideas from the mainland.

The most prominent object that comes to mind in relation to Vounous and religion is the Vounous Model that dates to the end of the Early Bronze Age. Much debate has occurred over the meaning of this object but the general consensus lies on its interpretation as an image of a sacred ceremony, whether in devotion to a deity or being or as a funerary ritual. Dikaios (1940), who discovered this model, strongly believed it was a religious model and presented the idea that the bulls represented fertility and the snakes represented death. Frankel and Tamvaki (1973) present the idea that is actually a burial scene, which presents some intriguing possibilities as it was found in a tomb. Morris (1985) believes it to be a scene of village life.

Karageorghis (1991) questioned the meaning of the circular formation of the model, pointing out that the common architecture of the time period was a rectilinear fashion, as opposed to the circular formations of pre-Bronze Age Cyprus. While Kargeorghis suggests that sacred spaces may have gone against secular architectural norms, it may be artistic taste. Either for the purpose of being compact or to present the scene in a unique fashion, the presentation of the ritual in a circular format may simply be the desire of the artist who created it

As previously discussed, much of the evidence uncovered relating to religious practices has been found in Bellapais-*Vounous*. This is probably due to the fact that the area was a large trading center for both external and internal systems. With increased interaction of different populations, an admixture of ideas occurred that allowed profound and dramatic changes in the belief system of the surrounding population. This most likely describes why there is such a

prominent religious character in this settlement in comparison to other locations, especially the southern region of the island.

Conclusion

Through this comparative approach of Cypriot religion, I have come to the conclusion that Early Bronze Age Cypriot religion is a continuation of Near Eastern and Anatolian beliefs. Whether or not these beliefs are fully present during the Chalcolithic and even before this point is beyond the scope of this particular project. The characteristic nature of Cypriot religion is probably due to the circumstances of the islanders as they made contact with these new areas after such a long period of isolation and the adaptation of the new systems to their own previous ideologies and the consequent development from island insularity. The lack of writing until the Late Bronze Age stunts absolute research in this field. However, the examination of artifacts, iconographic representations, and the similarities in locations that Cyprus most likely had contact with, may provide some clues with a strong probability of truth.

It is my conclusion that the bull cult was first introduced to Cyprus by the Anatolian migrants in the mid-third millennium as they began to settle on the island. The close interaction and heavy influence seen by material evidence leaves little doubt that this same group of people would have affected their religious beliefs as well. The reason for the differences in the bull cults of Anatolia and of Cyprus is due to the introductory nature of the species. While Anatolia dealt with the wild aurochs for a longer period of time, the Cypriots were introduced to already domesticated bulls and oxen. These bulls were calmer in nature and were bred for meat, strength, and fertility. As such, these factors became the all-encompassing qualities of this species and resulted in the incorporation of this animal as a gentle fertility symbol that had a quality of strength and power to it.

The facet of the snake presents more of a difficulty that requires further research to fully comprehend. There is possible evidence of the use of the snake in iconography and as a charm prior to the Early Bronze Age. However, its sudden development as a religious symbol has little concrete evidence to provide a mode and reason for transmission. Also, unlike bulls with their distinctive shape that can be easily recognized, the depiction of snakes on ceramics is more difficult to accurately interpret. As stated by other scholars, it is quite possible that every wavy line and zig-zag formation previously seen as representing a snake could simply be what it looks like, the artistic style of the creator of the ceramic. Due to the lack of realistic depiction until the Late Bronze Age, it is near impossible to reach a positive conclusion that these lines are, in fact, snakes. While it is a strong possibility, we cannot say with confidence.

Taking this cautionary piece of advice into consideration, we may still proceed with the assumption that these lines are perhaps simplistic representations of this common symbol throughout the Mediterranean basin and much of Europe and the Near East. It is likely that the snake had some type of foothold already in Cyprus prior to the island's exposure to the opening of the Eastern Mediterranean trading network. It is likely that with the opening of its interaction with the surrounding populations, the snake took on acquired meanings and developed an association with the bull. The snake probably represented a fertility charm and chthonic being and so fit in with the terrestrial, aggressively fertile and virile bull. The two animals may have taken on complementary qualities.

The use of animals as powerful symbols during the Bronze Age most likely represented a transition from simple charms and a recognition of supernatural forces into a concrete belief in deities. This makes sense when seen in conjunction with the fact that Cyprus had left a period of insularity and became exposed to major religions all built around divine beings. The

development of the bull clearly comes from the Anatolian transmission of the bull cult and the shipment of domesticated cattle from the mainland. The existence of the snake as a religious symbol may have been already present on the island but gained further traction and popularity when a complementary symbol was incorporated. The possible existence and interpretation of the bird figures as doves may show the increasing animalistic representation of Inanna-Ištar.

However, religions are not likely to take root if there is nothing for them to hold on to, if there is nothing that can be related to by the native population. As a result, the previous symbols and traditions were adapted to associate them with these incoming divine beings.

The transmission of Inanna-Ištar to this island most likely took place during the latter half of the third millennium B.C.E, as evident by the increasing use of characteristically Mesopotamian symbols and the trading connections to the mainland. This likely represents the beginning of the long Cypriote process of forming the Aphrodite cult that would eventually come to symbolize the island in the Mediterranean during ancient times. Without the aid of a written language at this point, it is hard to tell if there was any specific name that the deities were referenced as. However, with the available evidence and the comparative process, it can be assumed that, most likely through connections with Byblos and other mainland settlements, the opening of Cypriot borders to these surrounding civilizations greatly affected the islanders. The Cypriots, previously stuck in insularity and unaware of the interactions occurring around them, became exposed to new ideas and ways of living. The acceptance of Cypriots to adapt to mainland ideas proved a pivotal point for the island's religious history.

Figures

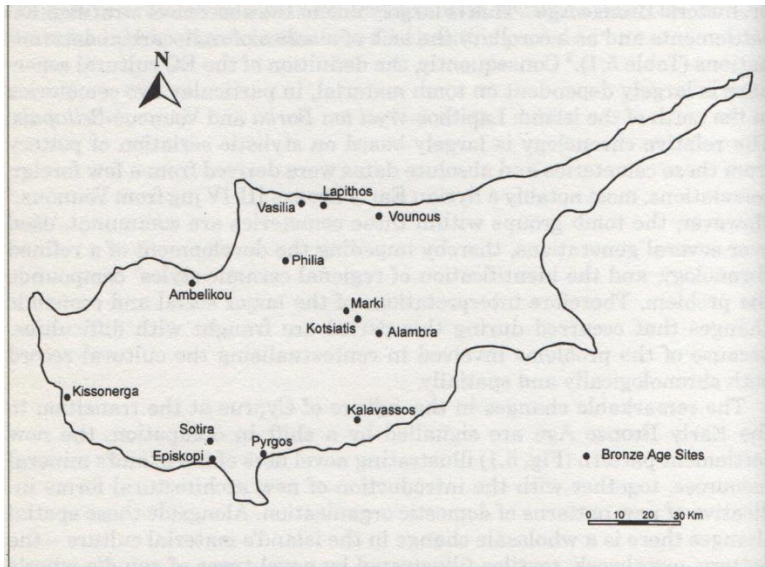


Figure I: Bronze Age settlements in Cyprus (*Adapted from Steel, 2004*)



Figure II: Bowl from Vounous depicting bull heads (*Adapted from Stewart, 1999*)



Figure III: Vounous Model from Bellapais-Vounous (*Adapted from Bolger, 1996*)

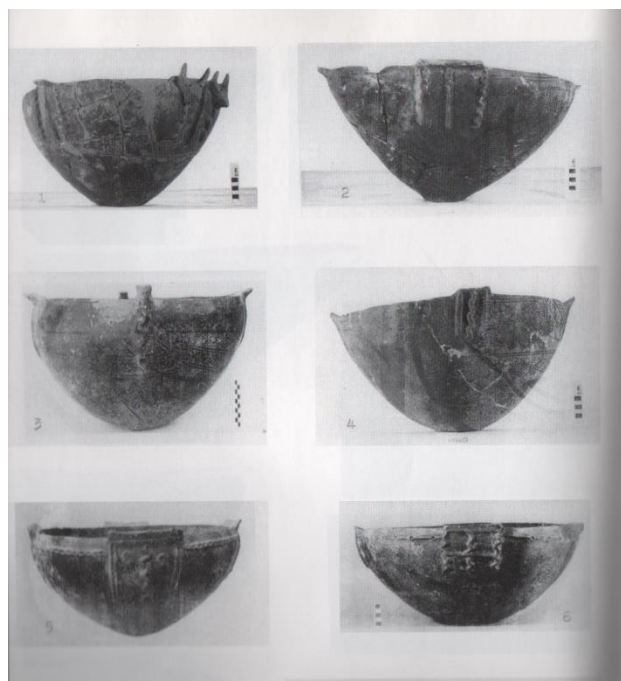


Figure IV: *Vounous* bowls with snake and bull iconography (Adapted from Stewart, 1999)

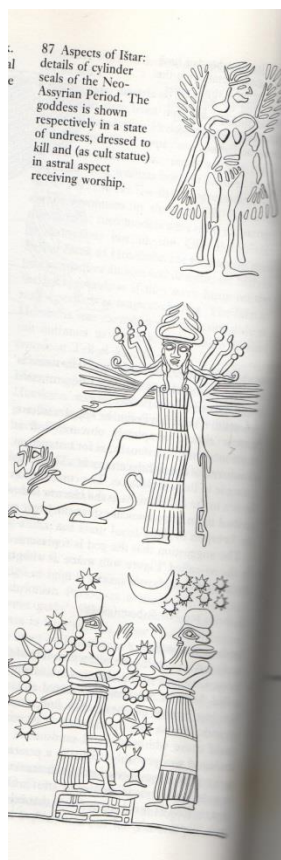


Figure V: Representations of Innanna-Ištar (Adapted from Black and Green, 1992)

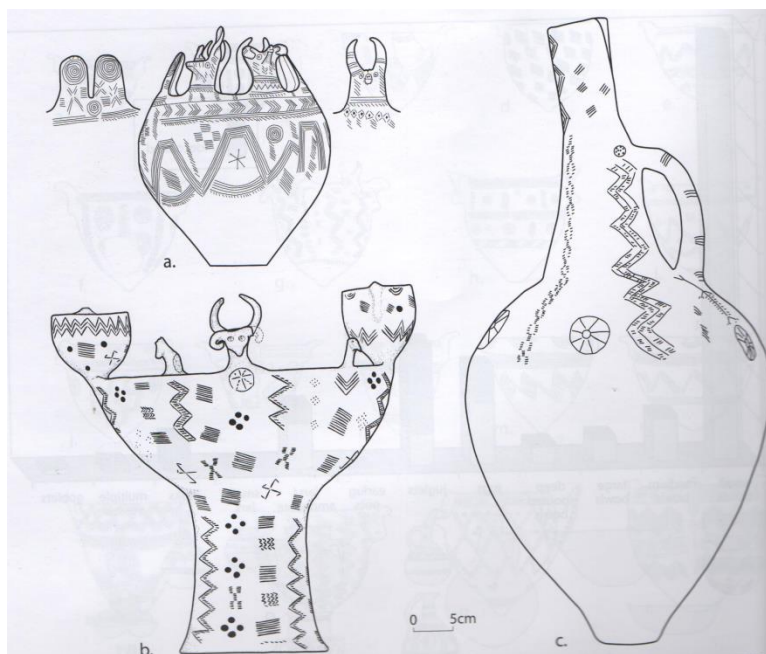


Figure VI: ECI bowl and jug from *Vounous* a) Tomb 155-1; b) Tomb 160A.13; c) Tomb 160A.16 (Adapted from Webb and Frankel, 2010)

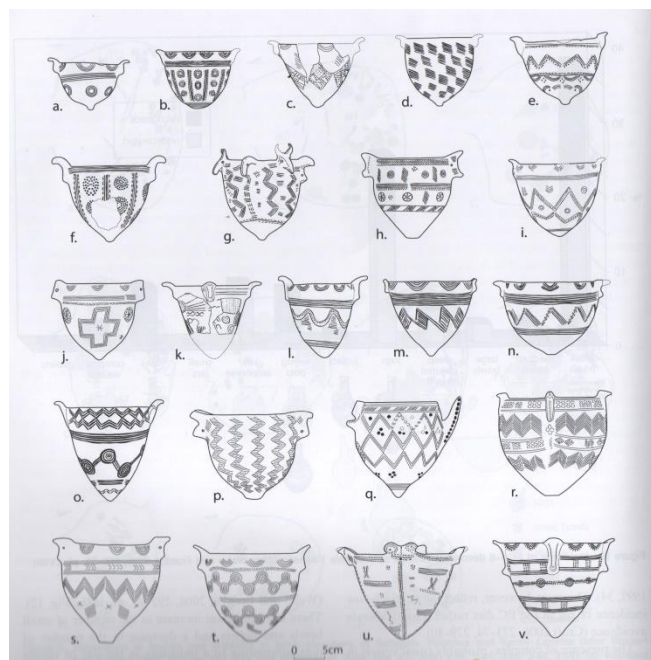


Figure VII: Tulip bowls from Vounous (Adapted from Webb and Frankel, 2010)

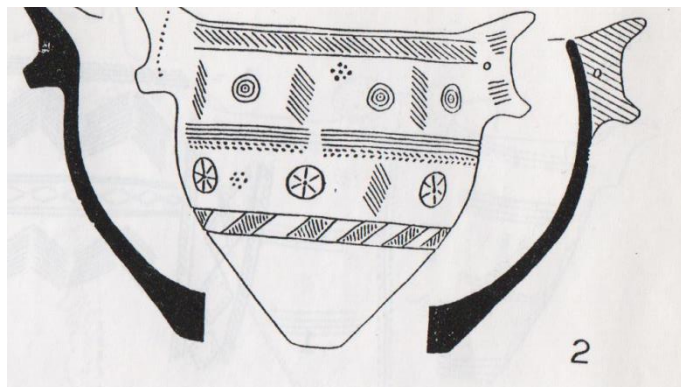


Figure VIII: Tulip bowl from Vounous Tomb 84 (Adapted from Stewart, 1999)

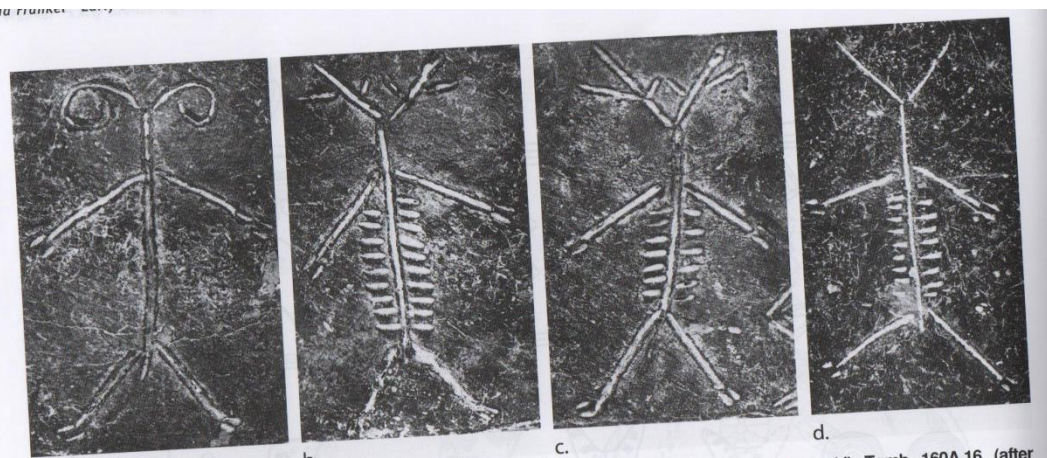


Figure IX: Anthropomorphic representations with animal features from Vounous (Adapted from Webb and Frankel, 2010)

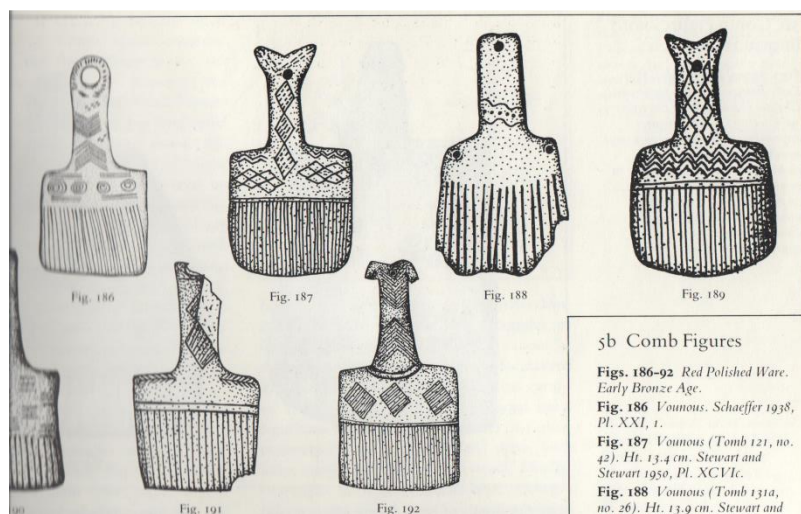


Figure X: ECI Comb figures (Adapted from Morris, 1985)

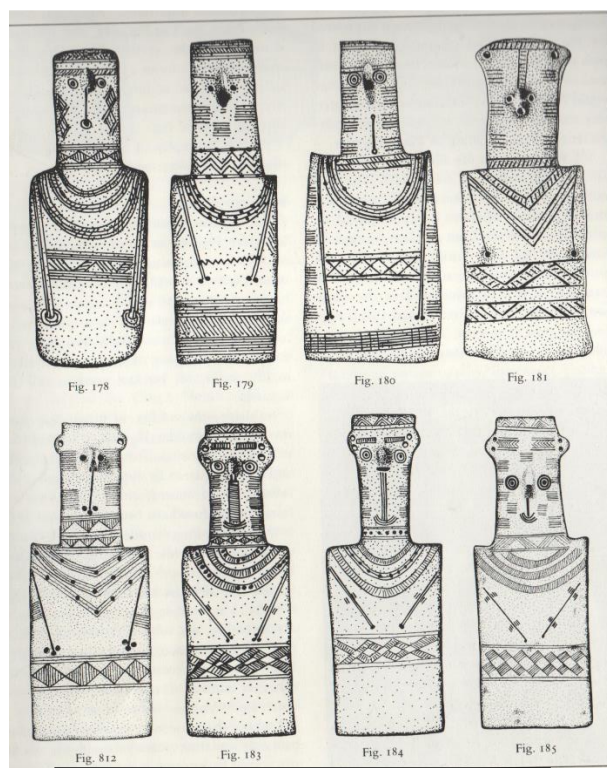


Figure XI: ECI Plank Idols (Adapted from Morris, 1985)

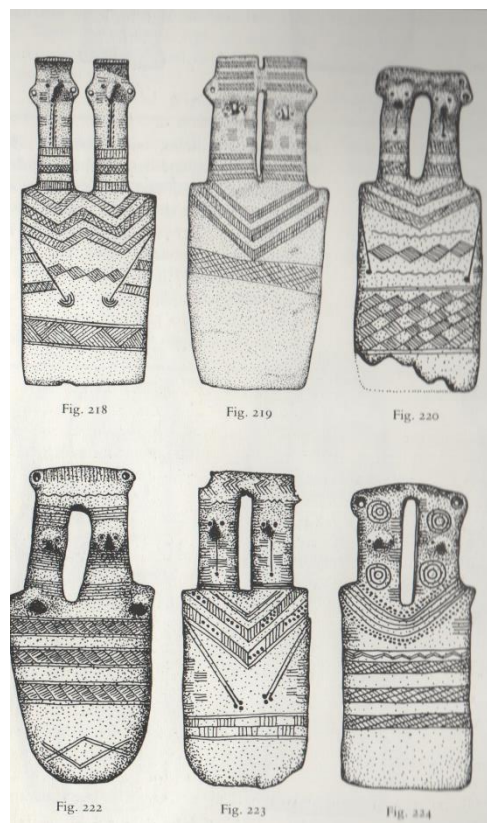


Figure XII: Double-headed Plank Idols (Adapted from Morris, 1985)

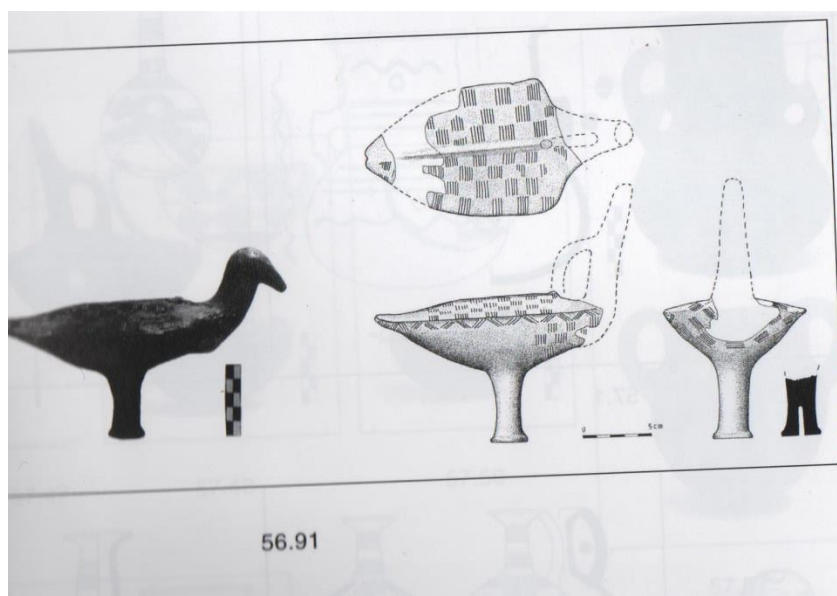


Figure XIII: Bird zoomorphic representation similar to that proposed by Negbi (1972) as a dove (*Adapted from Dunn-Vaturi, 2003*)

Bibliography

- Alastos, D. 1976. *Cyprus in history: A survey of 5000 years* London: Zeno.
- Balthazar, J.W. 1990. *Copper and Bronze Working in Early Through Middle Bronze Age Cyprus*. Paul Åströms förlag.
- Belgiorno, M.R. 1995. "Pyrgos in the Early Bronze Age." *RDAC*: 52-58.
- Belgiorno, M.R. 2000. "Project "Pyrame" 1998-1999: Archaeological, metallurgical and historical evidence at Pyrgos (Limassol)." *RDAC*. 1-17.
- Black, J.A. and A. Green. 1992. *Gods, Demons and Symbols of Ancient Mesopotamia: An Illustrated Dictionary*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Bolger, D.L. 1996. "Figurines, fertility, and the emergence of complex society in prehistoric Cyprus." *Current Anthropology*. 37: 365-373.
- Branigan, K. 1966. "Byblite daggers in Cyprus and Crete." *American Journal of Archaeology*. 70: 123-6.
- Briault, C. 2007. "High Fidelity or Chinese Whispers? Cult Symbols and Ritual Transmission in the Bronze Age Aegean." *Journal of Mediterranean Archaeology*. 20:2 239-265.
- Broodbank, C. 2006. "The Origins and Early Development of Mediterranean Maritime Activity." *Journal of Mediterranean Archaeology*. 19:2 199-230.
- Cameron, D. 1981. *Symbols of Birth and Death in the Neolithic Era*. London: Denyon-Deane Ltd.
- Cles-Reden, S. von. 1961. *The Realm of the Great Goddess*. London: Thames and Hudson.
- Conrad, J. R. 1959. *The Horn and the Sword. The History of the Bull as Symbol of Power and Fertility*. London: MacGibbon & Kee.
- Crewe, L., E. Peltenburg, S. Spanou. 2002. "Contexts for cruciform: figurines of prehistoric Cyprus." *Antiquity*. 76: 21-22.
- Croft, P. 2003. "The Animal Remains." In Swiny, S., Rapp, G., and Herscher, E. (ed.), *Sotira Kaminoudhia: An Early Bronze Age Site in Cyprus*. American Schools of Oriental Research: Boston. 439-448.
- Dikaio, P. 1940. 'The excavations at "Vounous", Bellapais' *Proceedings of the First International Congress of Prehistoric and Protohistoric Sciences, London 1932*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Dikaio, P. 1962. "The Stone Age" In Dikaio, P. and Stewart, J.R. (eds.), *The Stone Age and the Early Bronze Age in Cyprus*. Swedish Cyprus Expedition IV, IA: 1-204. Lund: Swedish Cyprus Expedition

- Dunand, M. 1928. "La sixième champagne des fouilles Byblos: (mai juillet 1927)." *In Syria; revue d'art oriental et d'archeologie*. P. Geuthner.
- Falconer, S, P.L. Fall, T. Davis, M. Horowitz, and J. Hunt. 2005. "Initial Archaeological Investigations at Politiko-Troullia." *RDAC*. 69-85.
- Flourenzos, P. 1975. 'Notes of the Red Polished III plank-shaped idols from Cyprus.' *RDAC* pp. 29-35
- Frankel, D. and A. Tamvaki. 1973. "Cypriot shrine models and decorated tombs," *Australian Journal of Biblical Archaeology* 1:6 39-44.
- Frankel, D., C. Eslick, and J.M. Webb. 1995. "Anatolia and Cyprus in the third millennium BCE: A speculative model of interaction." *Abr-Nahrain Supplement* 5: 37-50.
- Garbini, G. 1966. *The Ancient World*. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company.
- Gimbutas, M. 1974. *The Gods and Goddesses of Old Europe: 7000-3500 BC Myths, Legends and Cult Images*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Gjerstad, E. 1926. *Studies on Prehistoric Cyprus*. Uppsala.
- Gjerstad, E. 1980. "The Origin and Chronology of the Early Bronze Age in Cyprus." *RDAC*: 1-16.
- Hart, G. 2005. *The Routledge Dictionary of Egyptian Gods and Goddesses*. London: Routledge.
- Held, S.O. 1993. "Insularity as a modifier of cultural change: the case of prehistoric Cyprus." *BASOR* 292: 25-33.
- Hutchinson, R.W. 1962. *Prehistoric Crete*. London: Penguin.
- Karageorghis, V. 1970. *Annual Report of the Director of the Department of Antiquities*. Nicosia.
- Karageorghis, V. 1981. *Ancient Cyprus: 7,000 Years of Art and Archaeology*. Greece: Ekdoitke Hellados S.A.
- Karageorghis, V. 1983. *The Civilization of Prehistoric Cyprus*. Greece: Ekdoitke Athenon.
- Karageorghis, V. 1991. *The Coroplastic Art of Ancient Cyprus: I. Chalcolithic-Late Cypriote I*. Nicosia: A.G. Leventis Foundation.
- Knapp, A.B. 1993. "Social complexity: incipience, emergence, and development on prehistoric Cyprus." *BASOR* 292: 85-106.
- Knapp, A.B. 2008. *Prehistoric and Protohistoric Cyprus: Identity, Insularity, and Connectivity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 116-119.

- Kouka, O. 2011. "Symbolism, ritual feasting and ethnicity in Early Bronze Age Cyprus and Anatolia." In V. Karageorghis & O. Kouka. (eds.), *On Cooking Pots, Drinking Cups, Loomweights and Ethnicity in Bronze Age Cyprus and Neighbouring Regions*, *International Archaeological Symposium - 6th-7th November 2010*, A.G. Leventis Foundation, 43-56.
- Manning, S.W. 1993. "Prestige, distinction, and competition: the anatomy of socioeconomic complexity in the fourth to second millennium B.C.E." *BASOR* 192: 35-58.
- Marcus, J. and Flannery, K.V. 1994. "Ancient Zapotec ritual and religion: an application of the direct historical approach." In Renfrew, C. and Zubrow, E. (eds.), *The Ancient Mind: Elements of Cognitive Archaeology*, 55-74. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Mellaart, J. 1967. "Excavations at Chatal Hüyük, 1962, Second Preliminary Report." *Anat St.* 13: 43-104.
- Merrillees, R. S. 1973. "Settlement, Sanctuary, and Cemetery in Bronze Age Cyprus." *The Cypriot Bronze Age: Some Recent Australian Contributions to the Prehistory of Cyprus*, Edited by J. Birmingham, 44-57. Australian Studies in Archaeology 1. Sydney: Department of Archaeology, University of Sydney.
- Merrillees, R.S. 1979. "Cyprus, the Cyclades and Crete in the Early to Middle Bronze Ages." In V. Karageorghis (ed.), *Acts of the International Archaeological Symposium: The Relations between Cyprus and Crete, ca.2000-500 B.C.*, pp. 8-55. Nicosia: Department of Antiquities, Cyprus.
- Morris, D. 1985. *The Art of Ancient Cyprus*. Oxford: Phaidon.
- Mundkur, B. 1983. *The Cult of the Serpent: An Interdisciplinary Survey of Its Manifestation and Origins*. Albany: SUNY Press.
- Negbi, O. 1972. "Contacts between Byblos and Cyprus at the end of the Third Millennium B.C." *Levant*. 4:98-110.
- Oosterbeek, L. 2001. "Diffusion, Dissemination, and Interaction: The contradictions of past realities or of present perspectives." In B. Werbart (ed.) *BAR International Series 985* Oxford: Archaeopress.
- Peltenburg, E. 1989. "The beginnings of religion in Cyprus." In Peltenberg, E. (ed.), *Early Society in Cyprus*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press. 108-126.
- Peltenburg, E. 1994. "Constructing authority: the Vounous enclosure model." *Opuscula Athenisia* 20: 157-162.
- Peltenburg, E.J. 1996. "From isolation to state formation in Cyprus, c.3500-1500 B.C." In V. Karageorghis and D. Michaelides (eds.), *The Development of the Cypriot Economy*, pp. 17-44. Nicosia: University of Cyprus and the Bank of Cyprus.
- Pilides, D. 2008. "An Outline of the History of Archaeological Research in Cyprus." *Annual of the American Schools of Oriental Research*. 63: 15-24.

- Price, N.P.S. 1977. "Khirokitia and the Initial Settlement of Cyprus." *Levant* 9: 66-89.
- Relke, J. 2007. "Interpreting the Bucrania of Çatalhöyük: James Mellaart, Dorothy Cameron, and Beyond." *Anthrozoos* 20:4 pp. 317-328.
- Rice, M. 1998. *The Power of the Bull*. New York: Routledge.
- Shaw, R. and Stewart, C. 1994. "Introduction: problematizing syncretism." In Stewart, C. and Shaw, R. (eds.), *Syncretism/Antisyncretism: The Politics of Religious Synthesis*, London: Routledge. 1-26.
- Simmons, A.H. 2005. "Ais Yiorkis, An Upland Aceramic Neolithic Site in Western Cyprus: Progress Report of the 2003 Excavations." *RDAC*. 23-30.
- Smith, W.S. 1965. *Interconnections in the Ancient Near East: A Study of the Relationships between the Arts of Egypt, the Aegean, and Western Asia*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Sperber, D. 1985. "Anthropology and psychology: towards an epidemiology of representations." *Man*. (n.s.) 20: 23-89.
- Stanley, J.W. 2008. "Snakes: Objects of Religion, Fear, and Myth." *Journal of Integrative Biology* 2:2 42-58.
- Steel, L. 2004. *Cyprus Before History: From the Earliest Settlers to the End of the Bronze Age*. London: Duckworth.
- Stewart, J.R. 1962. *The Swedish Cyprus Expedition IV, 1a. The Early Bronze Age in Cyprus*. Lund.
- Stewart, J.R. 1999. *Corpus of Cypriot Artefacts of the Early Bronze Age Part III:1*. Studies in Mediterranean Archaeology III/1. Göteborg: Paul Åströms Förlag.
- Stone, M. 1976. *When God Was a Woman*. New York: The Dial Press.
- Swiny, S. 1985. "Sotira-Kaminoudhia and the Chalcolithic/Early Bronze Age transition in Cyprus." In V. Karageorghis (ed.), *Archaeology in Cyprus 1960-1985*. Nicosia, 115-124.
- Swiny, S. 1986. "The Philia culture and its foreign relations." In Karageorghis, V. (ed.), *Acts of the International Archaeological Symposium 'Cyprus between the Orient and the Occident'*, 12-28. Nicosia: Department of Antiquities.
- Swiny, S. 1989. "From round house to duplex: a reassessment of prehistoric Cypriot Bronze Age society." In Peltenburg, E.J. (ed.), *Early Society in Cyprus*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press: 14-31.
- Swiny, S. 1991. "Reading the Prehistoric Record: A View from the South in the Late Third Millennium B.C." In J.A. Barlow, D. Bolger, and B. Kling (eds.), *Cypriot Ceramics: Reading the Prehistoric Record*. Ephrata: The University Museum.

- Swiny, S. 2001. "The Earliest Prehistory of Cyprus: From Colonization to Exploitations." (ed.) *Cyprus American Archaeological Research Institute Monograph Series, Vol. 2*. Boston: American Schools of Oriental Research Publications.
- Swiny, S. 2003a. "The Settlement, with an Appendix on Roof Beams in Cypriot Vernacular Architecture." In Swiny, S., Rapp, G., and Herscher, E. (ed.), *Sotira Kaminoudhia: An Early Bronze Age Site in Cyprus*. American Schools of Oriental Research: Boston. 9-101.
- Swiny, S. 2003b. "The Ground Stone." In Swiny, S., Rapp, G., and Herscher, E. (ed.), *Sotira Kaminoudhia: An Early Bronze Age Site in Cyprus*. American Schools of Oriental Research: Boston. 221-289.
- Swiny, S. 2003c. "The Metal, with an Appendix on Archaeometallurgical Studies by Claudio Giardino, Giovanni E. Gigante, and Stefano Ridolfi." In Swiny, S., Rapp, G., and Herscher, E. (ed.), *Sotira Kaminoudhia: An Early Bronze Age Site in Cyprus*. American Schools of Oriental Research: Boston. 369-396.
- Swiny, S. 2008. "Of Cows, Copper, Corners, and cult: The Emergence of the Cypriot Bronze Age." *Near Eastern Archaeology*. 71:1-2 pp. 41-51.
- Taeuber, I.B. 1955. "The Demography of a Strategic Island." *Population Index*. 21:1 pp. 4-20.
- Takaoğlu, T. 2000. "Hearth structures in the religious pattern of Early Bronze Age northeast Anatolia." *Anatolian Studies* 50: 11-16.
- Washbourne, R. 1997. "A possible interpretation of the 'comb figures' of Bronze Age Cyprus." *RDAC*: 27-30.
- Washbourne, R. 2000. "Cypriot plank figures and the Near Eastern *tudittu*." *RDAC*: 95-100.
- Webb, J. 2003. *From Ishtar to Aphrodite: 3200 Years of Cypriot Hellenism – Treasures from the Museums of Cyprus*. New York: Onassis Public Benefit Foundation.
- Webb, J.M., and Frankel, D. 2010. "Social Strategies, Ritual and Cosmology in Early Bronze Age Cyprus: An Investigation of Burial Data from the North Coast." *Levant* 42: 185-209.
- Webb, J.M. and Frankel, D. 2013. "Cultural Regionalism and Divergent Social Trajectories in Early Bronze Age in Cyprus." *American Journal of Archaeology* 117:1: 59-81.
- Webb, J., D. Frankel, Z.A. Stos, and N. Gale. 2006. "Early Bronze Age metals trade in the eastern Mediterranean: New compositional and lead isotope evidence from Cyprus." *Oxford Journal of Archaeology*. 25: 261-288.
- Westenholz, J.G. 1998. "Goddesses of the Ancient Near East 3000-1000 BC." In Goodison, L. and Morris, C. (ed.), *Ancient Goddesses*. University of Wisconsin Press: Madison: 63-82.
- Wilkinson, R. H., 2003. *The Complete Gods and Goddesses of Ancient Egypt*. London: Thames & Hudson.

