



ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH UNIT
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY AND ARCHAEOLOGY
UNIVERSITY OF CYPRUS

AN INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP ON

THE 'PHILIA CULTURE'
AND THE TRANSITION FROM CHALCOLITHIC TO
EARLY CYPRIOTE

SATURDAY, 9 NOVEMBER 2002
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12 GLADSTONE STREET - NICOSIA



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Department of Antiquities

The “Philia Culture”

The Development of a Theoretical Problem

This paper deals with the presentation of the creation and development of a theoretical problem, the Philia issue, created in 1942 and not as of yet resolved. Tomb groups excavated by Porphyrios Dikaïos that year, revealed finds of a type unknown until then. Through these finds Dikaïos interpreted a cultural stage of transition from the Chalcolithic to Early Bronze Age.

In opposition to this view, another prominent figure of prehistoric Cypriot studies, James Stewart, saw the Philia finds as a local phenomenon, restricted to northwestern Cyprus, contemporary with Early Bronze I-II period. The schism was restricted not only to chronological classification, but to interpretation of the transitional period also. Dikaïos understood the transition to Early Bronze Age as a result of foreign immigration to Cyprus, while Stewart preferred a model of an internal Cypriot process. The first period of development of the Philia issue ended in 1962, with the publication of Volume IV:1A of the Swedish Cyprus Expedition, where the two opposing views were fully expressed.

In the years that followed 1962, all archaeologists engaged in prehistoric Cypriot studies followed one of these two theories, while they enriched both of them with aspects of new theoretical approaches. This paper aims to discern the stages of development of the Philia issue and report ideological and theoretical implications of the proposed models. Prospects and possibilities for a consensus for the main aspects of the problem are discussed.

Edgar Peltenburg

University of Edinburgh

Lemba Archaeological Research Centre

**Broadening the Philia debate:
chronology, consumption and climate**

Much information has accumulated on the Chalcolithic – Early Cypriot transition since the initial debates of Stewart and Dikaios on the native or foreign genesis of the Philia culture. This is mainly derived from excavations at Kissonerga-Mosphilia, Marki-Alonia and Sotira-Kaminoudhia. We now have better chronological frameworks and clearer characterisations of the situation in Cyprus ‘before’ and ‘after’ the transition. Yet to state ‘before and after’ is to condition the discussion of culture change as event rather than process. Process can include the influx of migrants, since most migration studies suggest that they are embedded in long-term interactions. As shown in recent papers, much of the debate still focuses on our interpretations of 2nd half of the 3rd millennium cal BC innovations as locally generated or exogenous. This paper argues that we need to view the transition over a more extended period of time and that climatic factors, which hitherto have played little role in the debate, may have significantly affected developments.

Changes in the preceding LChal are often treated as minor and probably due to influences from early Philia settlers. These views underestimate the radical and formative nature of the changes, particularly as seen with the benefit of hindsight from the EC. Evidence is confined to western Cyprus, but at least it seems consistent there. The transformation appears suddenly, fully formed and shows few signs of evolution within the LChal. It may be that we are missing a preceding evolutionary change, but radiocarbon dates suggest it must have been of short duration very early in the 3rd millennium cal BC. If we accept that they are derived from Philia pioneers in Cyprus, then their initial settlement must be pushed back to c. 2800-2700 cal BC. Evaluation of LChal ceramics, however, demonstrates that

this is unlikely and that technology, function and finish were directly associated with ceramics prevalent in EB 2 western Anatolia.

While detailed stylistic parallels will be adduced to support this argument, the more general point will be made that it represents a LChal appropriation of ideas in which social agents chose to adapt only specific customs. Cyprus, therefore, was not isolated, but was part of a Cypro-W. Anatolian interaction sphere in the early 3rd millennium cal BC. The selected types suggest the adoption during a contact phase of new foodways and, since they were widespread, mealtime conventions that point to shifts in family structures, ones seen also in burial customs.

If LChal ceramics suggest a Cypriot predisposition towards W. Anatolia well before the Philia, aspects of that culture system have much more heterogeneous Anatolian connections. Current global research on palaeoclimatic data indicates a correlation of major climatic change or air blast event with population disruptions c. 2350 – 2200 cal BC. Anatolia was undoubtedly affected by widespread societal collapse. Given existing contacts with Cyprus, these conditions need to be factored into interpretations of the transition. It will be argued that environmental changes ultimately help to account for the hybrid nature of Philia assemblages and for the encapsulation rather than assimilation of the LChal population of the island.

Diane Boiger

University of Edinburgh

**Cultural Interaction in the Chalcolithic-Early Bronze Age Transition:
Evidence of Ceramics**

In order to understand the processes involved in the emergence of Bronze Age culture in Cyprus, it is essential to examine socio-economic developments in Cyprus prior to c. 2500 B.C., when traditional modes of existence began to be profoundly altered by the influx of exotic artifacts, cultural practices, belief systems and social groups from southwest Anatolia. Close analysis of Chalcolithic pottery can shed valuable light on the dynamics of culture change by highlighting innovations in technology, production and distribution of material culture, and by furnishing evidence for modes of cultural interaction between indigenous and foreign populations. This paper contributes to the discussion of acculturation during the Chalcolithic-Bronze Age transition by addressing the following questions:

- 1) How can we account for dramatic cultural developments in Cyprus during the Late Chalcolithic and earliest phase of the Bronze Age?
- 2) What was the nature of interaction between indigenous populations and foreigners whose material culture becomes increasingly evident in Cyprus during the course of the 3rd millennium?
- 3) What impact did the arrival of new technologies, customs and people have upon Cypriot society in general, and how can we define more explicitly the processes of acculturation of the island's pre-Bronze Age populations?
- 4) How can evidence of ceramic production and distribution during the 3rd millennium in Cyprus help to answer these and other related questions?

While the accelerated scale and standardization of production of LChal ceramics is linked to increasing levels of socio-economic complexity in Cyprus, some aspects of vessel formation and decoration reflect widespread Anatolian influence already at the start of the

LChal period. Several centuries later, the appearance of Red Polished and other Philia pottery wares in restricted geographical areas, as well as the abandonment of large numbers of LChal sites, signal a sharp cultural discontinuity and demographic reorientation of the island's Chalcolithic populations.

Evidence from the Paphos district, particularly from sites of the Lemba cluster, suggests that local reactions to incoming groups varied not only between regions but between neighboring sites, comprising heterogeneous patterns of emulation, acculturation, resistance and hostility. Toward the end of the 3rd millennium B.C., there are fewer indications of bi-directional interaction between native and migrant groups, and traditional cultural practices had either disappeared or become fully absorbed into EB cultural norms. Evidence of destruction at some sites suggests that the "transition" to the Bronze Age was not always peaceful and that the assimilation of the island's Chalcolithic populations into the Bronze Age "mainstream" may in some cases have been achieved through acts of repression and submission, rather than by homogenization and reciprocal integration.

David Frankel and Jennifer Webb

La Trobe University

From Philia to Early Cypriot: Central Cyprus 2500 to 2000 BC

Part 1. A Philia Village at Marki.

Until recently knowledge of the Philia facies of the Early Bronze Age in Cyprus was based almost entirely on evidence from tombs. The Australian excavations at Marki Alonia in central Cyprus provide the first substantial data from a settlement of this earliest manifestation of the Bronze Age on the island. Part 1 of this presentation will offer a comprehensive illustrated overview of the site, concentrating on the Philia evidence and its place within the overall history of the settlement. It will provide a review of our current understanding of the stratigraphy, architecture, dating and material culture of the Philia occupation at Marki and place this central Cypriot settlement into its wider regional context.

Part 2. Understanding the Philia culture

Part 2 will address broader issues relating to the Philia culture. This cultural system forms a bridge between the earlier Chalcolithic system and that of the normative Early Bronze Age during the mid- to late-third millennium BC. The way in which Philia settlements were established in different parts of the island and interacted with one another as components of a closely-knit and uniform cultural system will be discussed. Together with the question of the origin and development of the Philia cultural system and its relationships to the final phase of the Chalcolithic, an important issue is the subsequent development of the Early Bronze Age. This saw the emergence of greater regional diversity across the island. Several keys to these changing forms of cultural interaction will be considered, including the role of inter-regional exchange, processes of technology transfer and learning and changes in population size and settlement pattern.

Ellen Herscher and Stuart Swiny

Vice President CAARI and

SUNY at Albany

Defining Philia in the South. Material Culture and Chronology

Part 1. Ceramic Evidence

The excavations at Sotira *Kaminoudhia* demonstrated conclusively that the “Philia Culture” was not simply a regional phenomenon centered in the vicinity of the Ovgos Valley in northwestern Cyprus, but in fact was attested as far as the south coast. Nevertheless, the ceramic repertoire from the four Philia tombs excavated at *Kaminoudhia* displays several features that distinguish it from that of the previously known Philia type-sites. A few shapes are not represented (most significantly, the jug with long beaked spout), and a new type of storage vessel appears. In addition, two wares (Black Slip and Combed and White Painted/Philia) known from other sites do not appear at *Kaminoudhia*. While these variations may be attributed to regional factors, we suggest that they are rather chronological in origin, indicative of a late stage of the Philia phase.

The ceramic material from *Kaminoudhia* also demonstrates strong continuity between the Philia corpus and the “EC I/II” phase that succeeds it. South coast ceramics of the later EC retain several features that are hallmarks of the Philia style, such as flat bases and a broken linear style of incised decoration. Only toward the end of the EC - as represented by the *Kamnoudhia* settlement - do these features begin to give way to forms more typical of the north coast and EC sites elsewhere on the island.

Part 2. Metal and other Prestige Goods

There has been much recent discussion by Webb and Frankel in 1999 and Knapp in 2001 concerning the manner in which the new cultural traits appearing in Cyprus at the beginning of the Early Bronze Age were transferred to Cyprus.

Some have argued for the arrival of colonists or refugees, others for a simple natural evolution of indigenous features on the grounds that none of the new traits are identical to those from the postulated country of origin, namely Anatolia. Yet others see these changes on the island as responses to outside stimuli caused by increasing overseas contacts perhaps in the form of trade. The reality is probably a combination of all three scenarios.

It is important to note that the two categories of objects which would arguably have been viewed as most prestigious and thus desirable by the Cypriots, specifically the large copper daggers with flat mid-ribs and the flat axes, are absolutely identical to Anatolian prototypes. And it is surely no coincidence that the rare (to date unique) and thus even more prestigious gold earrings from a Philia tomb at Sotira *Kaminoudhia*, find a close parallel in the same metal from the Early Bronze Age Level II at Tarsus. In light of such close similarities between these highly diagnostic objects one can hardly argue for the development of an indigenous Cypriot metal tradition. Identical earrings in copper and bronze are so often found at Philia sites that they should now be considered as horizon markers for the Philia phase.

Although the *Kaminoudhia* settlement dates to later in the Early Bronze period, not the Philia phase, a study of the metal, including evidence for copper slag from the 2002 season along with the metal finds from some of the chronologically earlier tombs, will help advance discussions focusing on the genesis of the Cypriot Bronze Age.