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ARCHAEOLOGY IN GREECE 2020–2021

Prehistoric Cyprus: fieldwork and research, 2003–2020

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The aim of this overview is to present a detailed survey of the major fieldwork and relevant research on the Neolithic and Bronze Age of Cyprus that took place between 2003 and 2020. This presentation is not meant to be exhaustive, as almost two decades of excavations, surface surveys and publications cannot be covered fully in a review of this length. The following discussion is divided geographically and chronologically, starting with the Neolithic period and moving through to the end of the Bronze Age. It focuses on settlement patterns, aspects of chronology and the roles of mining and seafaring, via fieldwork, conferences, research projects and their subsequent publications.

Introduction

The 18 years between 2003 and 2020 have been very productive for the archaeology of Cyprus, not unlike the period of the last update presented in *AR*, 1997–2002 (Steel 2004; for an earlier review, see Herscher 1998). The aim of this overview is to show the extent of archaeological work in the Republic of Cyprus deriving primarily from excavations and field surveys, as well as from various research projects, and their subsequent publications on the prehistoric archaeology of the island from the Neolithic to end of the Bronze Age.

Neolithic period	*Tenth to fifth millennium BC*
Pre-Pottery (Aceramic) Neolithic	Tenth to sixth millennium BC
Ceramic Neolithic	5500–3900 BC
Chalcolithic period	*3900–2500 BC*
Early Chalcolithic	3900–3400 BC
Middle Chalcolithic	3400–2800/2700 BC
Late Chalcolithic	2800/2700–2500 BC
Early Bronze Age (Early Cypriot)	*2500–2000 BC*
Philia phase	2500–2400/2300 BC
Early Cypriot I	2400/2300–2200 BC
Early Cypriot II	2200–2100 BC
Early Cypriot III	2100–2000 BC
Middle Bronze Age (Middle Cypriot)	*2000–1650 BC*
Middle Cypriot I	2000–1850 BC
Middle Cypriot II	1850–1750 BC
Middle Cypriot III	1750–1650 BC
Late Bronze Age (Late Cypriot)	*1650–1050 BC*
Late Cypriot I	1650–1550 BC
Late Cypriot IIA	1550–1450 BC
Late Cypriot IIB	1450–1300 BC
Late Cypriot IIC	1300–1200 BC
Late Cypriot IIIA	1200–1125/1100 BC
Late Cypriot IIIB	1125/1100–1050 BC

Table A. Chronological table of the Cypriot Neolithic and Bronze Age (adapted from Pilides and Papadimitriou 2012: 10).

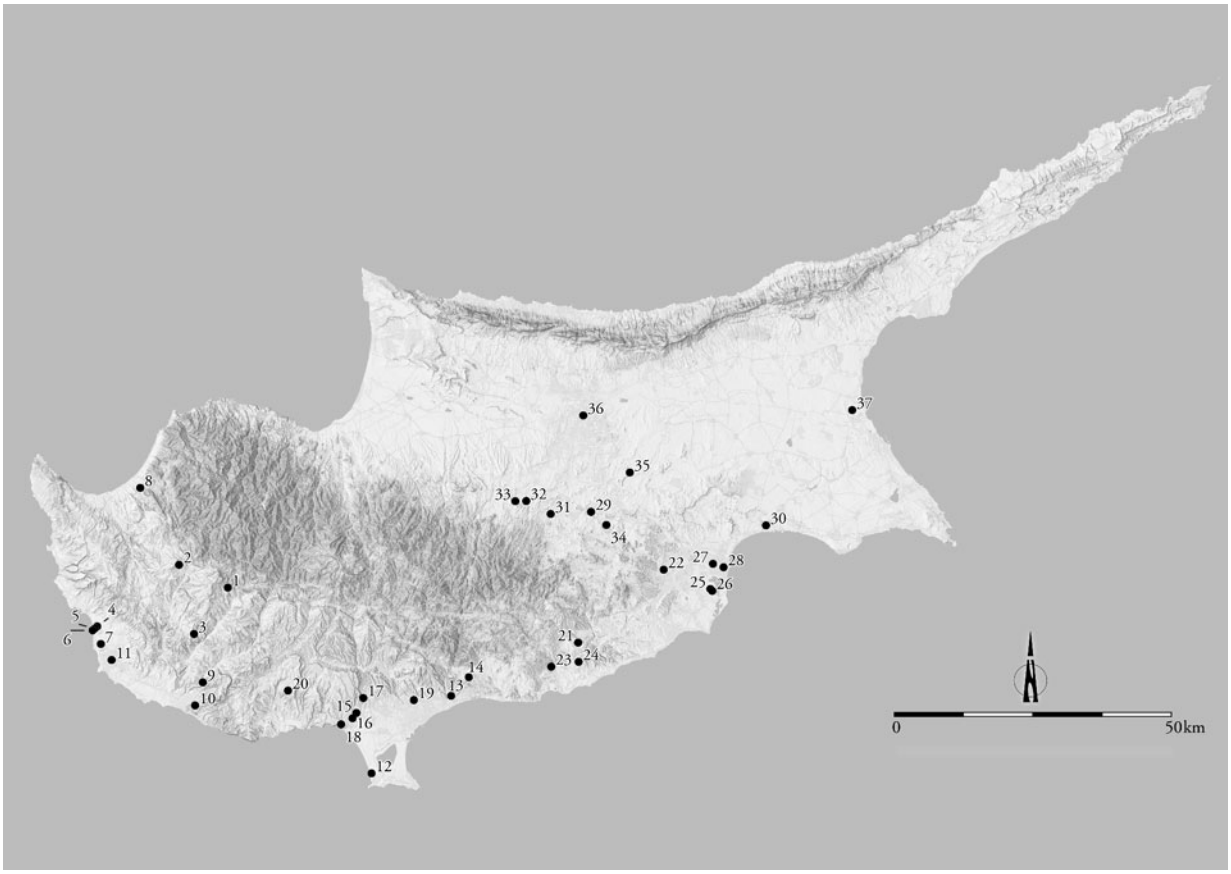
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Given the truly immense amount of archaeological activity, this survey focuses mainly (but not exclusively) on sites reported in *AGOnline*, supplemented by the online press releases of the Department of Antiquities of Cyprus and the numerous publications that have appeared in recent years and which are described briefly below.

Research on prehistoric Cyprus

The major institutions dedicated to Cypriot archaeology are the Department of Antiquities of Cyprus (hereafter Department of Antiquities), the Archaeological Research Unit (ARU) of the University of Cyprus, the Cyprus American Archaeological Research Institute (CAARI) and the Science and Technology in Archaeology and Culture Research Center (STARC) of the Cyprus Institute. All are based in Nicosia and dynamically involved in fieldwork and research. Research projects have been, and still are, conducted on Cyprus by all these institutions, frequently in collaboration with each other and/or foreign institutions, primarily universities from Europe, Australia and the United States. What follows is an attempt to provide an overview of all the major projects, both in the field and located elsewhere, of the past two decades and to highlight some of the major discoveries and contributions to the study of prehistoric Cyprus. The following discussion is organized by region (from west to east) and chronologically (from the Neolithic to the Late Bronze Age).



Map 4. Sites referred to in the text. 1. Vretsia/Agios Ioannis-Rhoudias; 2. Kretou Marottou-Ais Yiorkis; 3. Amargeti; 4. Kissonerga-Ammoudia; 5. Kissonerga-Skalia; 6. Kissonerga; 7. Chlorakas-Palloures; 8. Makounta-Voules; 9. Souskiou-Laona; 10. Kouklia (Palaepaphos); 11. Paphos; 12. Akrotiri Dunes; 13. Klimonas; 14. Pyrgos Mavrorachi; 15. Kouris valley; 16. Erimi Pitharka; 17. Erimi-Laonin tou Porakou; 18. Episkopi-Bamboula; 19. Limassol; 20. Prastio-Mesorotsos; 21. Choirokoitia; 22. Tremithos; 23. Kalavasos-Kokkinoyia; 24. Psematismenos-Trelloukkas; 25. Dromolaxia-Vizakia; 26. Hala Sultan Tekke; 27. Larnaca; 28. Kition-Bamboula; 29. Agia Varvara-Asprokremnos; 30. Pyla-Kokkinokremos; 31. Kataliondas-Kourvellos; 32. Politiko-Kokkinorotsos; 33. Politiko-Troullia; 34. Alampra Mouttes; 35. Agios Sozomenos; 36. Agios Georgios (PA.SY.D.Y.); 37. Enkomi. © BSA.

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Paphos district

The discovery in 2004 of a new site at **Aspros** (**ID59**) in the Akamas area near Paphos shed new light on the earliest archaeological sites on Cyprus (dating back 10,500–12,500 years), when the island was first frequented by seafaring foragers. An underwater survey was conducted in 2007 by Pavlos Flourentzos (Department of Antiquities) and Albert Ammerman (Colgate University). The finds included chipped-stone tools and ground-stone implements from several submerged areas of the site, which dates back prior to 10,000 BC. These archaeological remains show that the pre-Neolithic site was originally several times larger than the area that is visible on land today. The richest area documented by the survey is located at a depth of 10m, 100m from the present coastline. It is very rare for archaeological material of such an early date (before the Aceramic Neolithic) to be recovered from a submerged context off the coast of Cyprus. In the case of Aspros, the known site now extends for more than 250m along the top of the cliff on the northern side of the Aspros river. Of particular interest are the close parallels between the reduction technologies and the stone-tool types at Aspros Dive Site C and those from the levels of the Öküzini Cave in southern Turkey that date to the time of the Younger Dryas (Ammerman 2020).

Further inland, excavations at **Vretsia**/**Agios Ioannis-Rhoudias** were conducted by the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki under the direction of Nikolaos Efstratiou (**ID2882**; see also **ID1406**, **ID2751**, **ID2878**). The pre-Neolithic site of Rhoudias is situated in the southern foothills of the Troodos mountains. The area's environmental dynamics must have affected greatly the decisions made by the hunter-gatherer groups who seem to have visited this area frequently throughout the island's early prehistory (10,000–6000 BC), as shown by the typology of the lithics. The geoarchaeological investigation conducted at the site confirmed the relation between the presence of tools and the existence of clearly defined depositional episodes, which then led to the identification of palaeosurfaces and consequently to the reconstruction of the site's palaeoenvironmental history. The finds, mostly stone tools dating to the pre-Neolithic phase of Rhoudias, number in the hundreds. They confirm the richness of the material and reinforce the view that this Pleistocene river terrace in the Troodos mountains, next to the Xeros river, was repeatedly visited by groups of hunter-gatherers who remained at the site for an unknown period each time; these trips followed a route from the coast to the mountains and vice versa.

The 2018 season revealed the architectural remains of another site (Vretsia/Agios Ioannis-Upper Rhoudias) and portable finds included a number of ground stones, lithics, picrolite ornaments and animal bones. The site was of pastoral character, probably dating to the Aceramic Neolithic (the Kalavasos-Choirokitian phase, middle of the seventh millennium BC). The island's upland areas are as intriguing and important as the lowlands and the coastal areas. According to the excavators, these finds confirm that the Troodos mountains were not only used for seasonal and marginal activities (for example, hunting and gathering) during early prehistory, but that they also hosted farming and herding communities, characterized by intense mobility and contacts with other groups, as well as exchange networks involving raw materials, such as picrolite (Department of Antiquities 2018b). The 2019 investigations revealed a very large portion of an impressive circular building that had been identified in 2018. It is of a monumental character, since its diameter exceeds 7m, and its walls are composed of two rows of stones (**Fig. 120**; Department of Antiquities 2019c).

Continuing with the Neolithic period near Troodos, the site of **Kretou Marottou-Ais Yiorkis** dates to the Cypriot Pre-Pottery Neolithic B (PPNB) with an occupation centred on a calibrated date of 7800 BC. It is located in the foothills of the Troodos mountains rather than near the coast, a more common Neolithic pattern. The site contains many unique features, with six structures including circular plastered platforms, a huge chipped-stone assemblage and well-preserved palaeo-economic data, including from cattle, which previously had not been documented on Cyprus until the Bronze Age. The 2014 season directed by Alan Simmons (University of Nevada) yielded a huge amount of chipped-stone artefacts (approximately 37,000), and the assemblage is now nearing a total of 300,000 pieces including several carved picrolite ornaments. The faunal assemblage at the site is also huge, with a predominance of deer, followed by pig. Several additional cattle bones were also recovered in 2014. Furthermore, a human burial was excavated, which constitutes one of the earliest documented formal human burials found on

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120. Rhoudias: terrace. The top circle indicates the Epipalaeolithic site (tenth to ninth millennium BC) and the bottom circle the Aceramic Neolithic site (seventh millennium BC). © Department of Antiquities of Cyprus/Aristotle University of Thessaloniki.

Cyprus to date. The burial was in a tightly flexed position, in a grave cut into a larger, somewhat earlier pit. It consists of an adult individual, probably a male, and appears to be primary. The grave fill was especially rich in stones, animal bones and chipped stone, compared with the fill of the larger pit. There was no evidence for direct grave goods, although a broken obsidian blade was found in the pelvis area. Cypriot PPNB sites have now shown that the island was in early and consistent contact with the mainland Neolithic and indicate that Cyprus was colonized far earlier than previously thought. As human remains have been elusive at most, if not all, Early Neolithic sites, the discovery of this formal burial is all the more significant for adding to our knowledge of practices performed at this time (Department of Antiquities 2014).

The infilled shaft of a Neolithic well was revealed on a building site beside the main coastal road at **Kissonerga**, near Paphos. It was investigated by the Department of Antiquities and Edinburgh University in 2009. The shaft proved to be cylindrical, 75cm in diameter and preserved to a depth of 5m below the surface of the bedrock. A number of small niches had been cut into the side of the shaft on the east and the west to accommodate the hands and feet of the people who originally dug the well as they climbed in and out of it. At the base of the shaft were several small natural channels in the bedrock through which water would have flowed. Once the well had gone out of use as a water source, it silted up. During the course of its infilling, various items fell into the well or were deliberately dumped or placed there by people. These items include animal bones (sheep, goat, pig and fallow deer), worked flint, a few stone beads and pendants, as well as pieces of broken stone vessels, and are typical of the Early Aceramic Neolithic period on Cyprus. About halfway down the shaft was found the poorly preserved skeleton of a

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young woman. Towards the base were found an intact small, crude bowl and a dish of much finer quality that had clearly smashed when it fell, or was thrown, into the well. Both were carved from chalk and were perhaps vessels that had been placed around the well-head. These and the other finds indicate that this latest well to come to light is of broadly similar date to six other wells that have previously been excavated in the vicinity by a team from the University of Edinburgh. Radiocarbon dates indicate an age of 9000 to 10,500 BC for these wells, placing them amongst the earliest water wells known anywhere in the world (Department of Antiquities 2009).

Moving to the Chalcolithic period, the late Edgar Peltenburg (Edinburgh and Centre for Archaeological Research in Lemba) excavated at the Chalcolithic site in **Souskiou-Laona** for six seasons (**ID36**, **ID78**, **ID1405**, **ID2750**, **ID2877**). In 2006, it became clear that many inhabitants of this community made cruciform idols. This is suggested by the amount of debitage and also the frequency of these idols in tombs. According to the excavators, the settlement at Souskiou is just as important as the cemeteries, which alone attracted attention as early as 1950. During the 2007 season, graves were discovered in the area. Three children and one adult had been placed in pits under a building (no. 648) located at the top of the hill (**Fig. 121**). This building differs from the other known structures, not only because of the presence of the burials, but also because of its neat construction of carefully superimposed flat limestone slabs, which is unmatched elsewhere. The interior space was devoid of artefacts and features, which is quite unusual for an excavated Chalcolithic building. The children were buried while the building was in use; the adult was deposited in a pit filled with large stones after its abandonment. Systematic surveys have continued to obtain information on the production of the cruciform figurines and also picrolite pendants, which were probably intended for use alongside burials. Debitage is scattered throughout the settlement, which shows that production was not confined to a workshop or artisanal neighbourhood.

A new cemetery was discovered in 2008 located on the west hill of Laona. Only a few pit graves dug into the rock survive at the edge of the wall that was severely cut into this slope by the Diarizos river. To the south, further exploration of the Vathyrkakas plateau, located in front of the settlement, showed that there were still further tombs between the cemeteries of Vathyrkakas 1 and 2, suggesting that graves were placed continuously along the plateau over a length of about 450m. It had been assumed



121. Souskiou-Laona: burials under Building 648. © Lemba Archaeological Research Centre/University of Edinburgh.

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that the limited material collected in this area during previous surveys was the result of specialized activities that did not involve permanent residence, but it appears that the buildings covered a much larger area than previously assumed. Their location on the edge of the precipice indicates that a considerable part of the site has been eroded. Three, maybe four, new buildings have been discovered on the west hill. Two of the structures date from the Middle Chalcolithic, based on ceramics collected from the soil. A high concentration of picrolite waste seems to indicate the presence of a workshop that made the cruciform figurines and large pendants. The material consists mainly of raw picrolite, perhaps collected from Troodos rather than imported in the form of pebbles from the Kouris valley, according to the excavators. The 2009 exploration, however, did not yield any human bones: it is possible that the pits and other structures found on the hill were actually reserved for other uses. The chronologies of the settlement and cemeteries require further clarification. In fact, calibrated radiocarbon dating has revealed a longer occupation during the Middle Chalcolithic than previously assumed. This development shows that the settlement remained in use until the beginning of the third millennium BC. Open-air kitchen facilities were identified on the west hill and they preceded any construction. It can be inferred that the Laona site was initially a place of encampment before becoming a permanent settlement (Peltenburg 2006).

Chlorakas-Palloures is a Chalcolithic site located in the Paphos region, best known from earlier excavations at Lemba-Lakous and Kissonerga-Mosphilia, which also revealed several picrolite cruciform figurines. The sherds collected from surface surveys date the site to the Middle and Late Chalcolithic (*ca*. 3500–2500 BC) and show that there was a substantial settlement of about 4ha at this location. The 2015 campaign led by Bleda Düring (Leiden) brought to light the remains of four Chalcolithic round houses, ranging from *ca.* 5m to monumental structures measuring up to *ca.* 20m. A large range of features, including storage jars, hearths and grinding installations, were found, as well as a very large raised hearth feature. A unique picrolite figurine of a quadruped with two piercings was also found. In the northern section of the area a large and monumental, well-built, domestic building was unearthed during the 2016 season, with plastered interior and exterior surfaces. In the centre of the building a large mortar installation was found as well as a hearth measuring 2.5m across. Next to the building, other similar structures were identified (Department of Antiquities 2016).

A number of sites present a lengthy period of habitation, such as that of **Makounta-Voules**. Under the direction of Kathryn Grossman (North Carolina) the *Makounta-Voules Archaeological Project* (MVAP) conducted intensive survey in 2017, including surface collection and geophysical prospection. This survey showed the site to be a large settlement dating from the Late Chalcolithic through to the Middle Cypriot period. Excavations began in 2018 to test the results of surface survey and to identify the most productive areas for future excavation. The work in 2018 revealed two Chalcolithic round houses, as well as some enigmatic stone features and a large fire installation. In 2019, excavations continued in two parts of the site. The first Chalcolithic round house with an intact floor assemblage was uncovered in Area A. The second round house was exposed in Area C and was set into a deep cut in the bedrock; the door of the house was located, complete with an *in-situ* door socket. On the interior of the house, a plaster platform (possibly a hearth) was partially preserved, alongside smashed vessels sitting on the floor and several pits cut into the bedrock (Department of Antiquities 2019b).

The Bronze Age is very well represented in the Paphos district. The site of **Kissonerga-Skalia** (**ID63**, **ID1393**, **ID2744**, **ID2872**, **ID2879**, **ID2888**) demonstrates a long Bronze Age sequence and an earlier Chalcolithic occupation, beginning before 2500 BC and connected with the neighbouring Neolithic to Philia phase settlement of Kissonerga-Mosphilia. The site was abandoned around 1600 BC, during the transition to the Late Cypriot. Excavations led by Lindy Crewe (formerly Manchester, currently CAARI) began in 2007.

The majority of features and emplacements are associated with the primary construction phase, and during a second later phase some of these were deliberately floored over. This is likely evidence of decline in the site, with a decrease in activities and perhaps a slow abandonment. This is further suggested by the number of mended pottery vessels found on the final floors, perhaps indicating that there were no potters

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122. Kissonerga-Skalia: the Area B courtyard with the remains of a mud-plaster drying kiln at the far end. In the background are the earlier Early to Middle Cypriot domestic structures of Area D. © L. Crewe.

remaining in the last years of occupation. In the north of the plot (seemingly outside the settlement), the Bronze Age deposits had been completely truncated during agricultural activity in the 1970s, exposing earlier Chalcolithic levels including four pit graves cut into a trampled occupation surface. As burials at neighbouring Kissonerga-Mosphilia were previously thought to be entirely within the settlement, this is important new data for understanding wider Chalcolithic burial practices. It appears that we have here a dedicated burial area. In one burial excavated, the remains of a single adult female were found, lying on her right side. No grave goods were present in any of the burials in this area, all of which have been identified as belonging to women or children.

During the final occupation phase, a complex that included some roofed areas and large open spaces was constructed. The complex has no evidence for domestic occupation and activities seem to be industrial, as indicated by large fire-related installations and a malting kiln likely used in beer production (Crewe and Hill 2012). This final-phase complex encompasses an area of 1200m². All areas excavated have revealed evidence for large-scale cooking/heating or processing working areas, and the excavators have yet to establish a possible purpose for the large open spaces. For example, a large courtyard was unearthed, bounded by imposing walls, the foundations of which are built of large limestone plates; the latter are associated with a plaster floor on which ceramics, spindle-whorls and weights were found and in which plastered pits had been dug.

Kissonerga-Skalia is an example of a phenomenon that occurs at the transition to the Late Cypriot, when people began to build monumentally and produce goods at a greater scale. As the site was abandoned shortly after the complex was built and the remains are not obscured by later human activity, it is possible to examine this phenomenon in detail. As part of an experimental archaeology programme, the drying oven was recreated; this is thought to have been used to ferment grains to make beer and to dry food (**Figs 122**, **123**).

Rescue excavations were conducted in 2008 by the author (Department of Antiquities) at one of the nearby plots at **Kissonerga-Ammoudia**, revealing a large number (*ca.* 35) of late Early Cypriot to early Middle Cypriot chamber tombs. The tombs were dug in the *havara* (local hard soil) and were mostly severely damaged by building activity in the area. A number of them were not looted and large quantities of locally made drab pottery were identified. In addition, bronze daggers and perhaps hair-rings, bone and stone tools, as well as a large number of necklace beads were recovered, bringing to light another part of the large cemetery at Kissonerga. Although the study of the material is still in progress, the minimum estimate of pottery vessels is striking, as some single tombs contained hundreds of vases. It is worth mentioning that some years earlier the Department of Antiquities excavated another plot in the vicinity (Kissonerga-Choiromandres), and similar tombs with identical grave offerings were identified (**Fig. 124**; Flourentzos 2010; Graham 2015).

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123. Kissonerga-Skalia: Area P/B2 at the close of the 2019 season showing a working area with an embedded pithos and emplacement or inbuilt mortar to the right and grinding stones with flat stone platforms in the lower left. © L. Crewe.



124. Kissonerga-Ammoudia: Tomb 13 during excavation. © A. Papadopoulos/Department of Antiquities of Cyprus.

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The ongoing ***Palaepaphos Urban Landscape Project*** (**PULP**) (**ID26**, **ID68**, **ID1398**, **ID2874**) aims to gather information on the urban topography of the second and first millennia BC, when Paphos (later known as Palaepaphos) was the administrative and economic centre of the Late Cypriot period and then the capital of the kingdom of Paphos until the last decades of the fourth century BC. The programme is based on the *Palaepaphos Computerized Archaeological Atlas* and the results of geophysical surveys that were conducted in 2002 and 2003. PULP, which has been running since 2006 under the direction of Maria Iacovou (ARU), has brought to light new monuments on the plateau. Fieldwork concentrated on the plateau of Hadjiabdoulla, 1km east of the sanctuary of Aphrodite at Kouklia. From 2009 until 2019 the University of Cyprus team excavated an extensive production and storage complex that occupies the northern side of the plateau. Although this project focuses primarily on the Cypriot kingdoms in the later historical periods, the Late Bronze Age foundations of the area have been established clearly with the presence of architectural remains and tombs.

A number of tombs dating to the Late Bronze Age discovered at **Paphos** indicate that there are more to be found (Raptou and Vilain 2018). The finds include typical Late Cypriot pottery such as Base Ring juglets, White Slip bowls and imported Mycenaean ceramics. Such assemblages are not unknown in the wider area, and, in fact, some were extremely wealthy, such as that from the well-known Late Cypriot Tomb 8 at Evreti (Catling 1968).

Further fieldwork in the region has revealed the presence of diachronic sites. In 2019, Gabriele Koiner (Graz) conducted a systematic and interdisciplinary survey investigation of the archaeological landscape and remains of **Amargeti** in order to document surface finds and to detect subsurface structures by geophysical and remote-sensing methods. During this campaign, intensive field walking at the locales of Asomatos and Petros Anthropos took place, and the collected finds range from the Bronze Age to the Byzantine period (Department of Antiquities 2019a).

The importance of the Paphos region within the local maritime networks and its connection to maritime activities is clearly highlighted through underwater fieldwork. The ***Southwest Cyprus Maritime Landscape Project***, an underwater survey in the area adjacent to Kouklia undertaken by a joint team of maritime archaeologists and remote-sensing specialists from the universities of Cambridge and Southampton and the UK's National Oceanography Centre, took place in 2006. The area of archaeological significance was first brought to the attention of Duncan Howitt-Marshall in 2005 by a local spear-fisherman, Filios Saziedes. During the first season of fieldwork the team located 120 stone anchors using a simple method of non-intrusive survey; this is the second-largest collection of such artefacts found to date in the eastern Mediterranean. The precise chronology of the anchors has not yet been determined fully, but from the types recorded many could date back as far as the Bronze Age (Howitt-Marshall 2012).

Limassol district

The primary goal of the 2010 ***Akrotiri Dunes Project*** led by Alan Simmons (Nevada, Las Vegas) (**ID2866**) was to investigate the earliest inhabitants of Cyprus, searching in particular for remains dating to the Late Epipaleolithic (Akrotiri phase) and Early Neolithic. When excavations were undertaken at Akrotiri-Aetokremnos two decades ago, three possibly related sites were briefly test excavated. The three sites (Site 2, Site 3 and Site 23) all contained chipped-stone materials that were similar overall to those from Aetokremnos. On Site 2, the closest to Aetokremnos, 400m^2 of soil were screened and collected, and a test pit was dug. Material was relatively abundant, although there was little evidence for subsurface materials. Site 3 was restudied and a test pit was also dug here. There were no subsurface finds and the surface materials were very sparse. Site 23 was recollected and two test pits were excavated, one of which revealed a hearth of uncertain date. These small sites are likely to be chronologically related to Aetokremnos. It is noteworthy that they have been badly damaged by natural and human factors, and so, according to the excavators, the likelihood of them producing further additional information is limited (Department of Antiquities 2010).

Fieldwork at the site of **Klimonas**, east of Agios Tychonas (**ID2649**, **ID4765**, **ID5428**) was undertaken by François Briois, Jean-Denis Vigne and Jean Guilaine (École des hautes études en sciences sociales, CNRS, Collège de France). The first C^{14} dates place it between 9000 and 8700 BC, making the site part of an advanced stage of the Levantine Pre-Pottery Neolithic A (PPNA), a problematic period for Cyprus. Many

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lithic remains have been collected, including several varieties of translucent flint and good-quality opaque vitreous chert. Amongst these, a wide variety of 106 projectile points were identified, perhaps an indication of the role of hunting in the local economy. Domestic buildings have been investigated, such as building St 800, which is circular in shape, bounded by a perimeter wall of raw earth and implanted in a ring-shaped trench. Internal organization was observed, with a central pole and two large poles aligned to the east and west, a fireplace to the north and small curvilinear ditches that mark the locations of benches or partitions that divided the space into three zones. There was only one construction-demolition cycle, followed by a definitive abandonment and a gradual filling. The stripping of Sector B has revealed an exceptional complex of at least 23 buildings of raw earth juxtaposed or intersecting with each other.

These discoveries offer an accurate picture of the village's extension, across nearly half a hectare. Good-quality bioarchaeological material has been collected, including the first cultivated cereal seeds (wild starch wheat) ever found in Cyprus. In general, buildings are circular, oval or elliptical, they are grounded in the slope and range in size from 4m^2 to 40m^2 (average size 17.3m^2; average diameter 4.5m). Their terraces are specific to each building, with no evident pre-established collective development plan, but are often reused by one or even two successive buildings. Although domestic and craft activities were probably not separated, there is a difference noted between some smaller (workshops) and some larger (domestic) buildings. In addition, the stratigraphic analysis of the relationships between buildings suggests a succession of eight phases. It is estimated that the village had a lifespan of just under a century on this slope.

Moving to the Bronze Age, archaeological excavations at **Pyrgos Mavrorachi** by the Italian National Research Council for Researches in Cyprus have brought to light an architectural complex of about 2000m^2 that was destroyed by an earthquake around 1800 BC. The area of the entire site is calculated by geophysical prospection and GIS systems to be 4000m^2. The excavators suggest that the site was in use during the earliest phases of the Early Cypriot I (2400–2000 BC), based on finds from the deepest layers of the excavation. They have also identified an industrial zone organized around the production of olive oil. This area was also used for the refining of copper, production of bronzes, extraction of aromatic essences for the preparation of perfumes, dyeing and preparation of plant fibres and animal products, weaving and making of pharmaceutical substances. In addition, a special room with specific equipment for the preparation of wine was discovered.

In 2008, a second building was discovered and brought to light, to the south of the industrial area. This is a unique construction, consisting of two rooms arranged in a triangular area. Like the nearby building, it was probably destroyed by an earthquake and abandoned around 1800 BC. According to the excavator, this building was a cult site with an altar flanked by a channel on two sides. In the middle of a triangular structure, a large hole surrounded by a double line of stones was probably the original location of the pithos jar found in fragments around the altar. Fragments of a second pithos jar were found to the south of the altar, together with a fragmentary four-legged red-polished bowl of rare shape. A pair of copper earrings of the Philia phase was recovered from the deepest layers, together with shell pendants and flat-based vessels characteristic of the earliest phase of the Early Bronze Age. This all suggests that the building is one of the earliest constructions at the site (Department of Antiquities 2008b).

The ***Kouris Valley Project*** (**ID1395**), a survey on the western river bank of the Kouris valley, was conducted by the universities of Florence, Chieti and Pescara in 2008. The eastern side of the river was revisited and the presence of a so-called farm with an occupation phase dating to the Early to Middle Bronze Age was noted, based on the large amount of surface red-polished ware. This hypothesis has been supported by the results of the magnetometry survey. Excavations were limited to the northernmost site that was surveyed in 2007 on the eastern side of the Kouris. The excavations have revealed the presence of structures dating back to the Early to Middle Cypriot period, as confirmed by the ceramic evidence: red-polished wares are the most commonly attested within the pottery assemblage for all the excavated trenches. A complex system of what appears to be two circuit walls has been identified. According to the excavators, a sequence of two phases was revealed, the first of which could possibly date to the Early to Middle Bronze Age. A larger trench on the hilltop revealed the presence of a large workshop, which yielded spindle-whorls and loomweights. In a small cemetery area on the third lower terrace, a series of three rock-cut tombs has

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been excavated. Among the grave goods found inside two of the tombs was a large number of vessels of red-polished ware as well as some small objects (decorated spindle-whorls, picrolite ornamental disks). The excavators interpret the similarity noted between the funerary finds and those of the workshop contexts as the use of craft equipment as grave goods. The analysis of the skeletal remains has revealed a multiple inhumation of three individuals (a man, a woman and a child) and a single inhumation of a woman.

The excavation at Cave 1 (**Fig. 125**) at the site of **Erimi Pitharka** (**ID1389**; see also Department of Antiquities 2008a; Flourentzos 2010: 55–56) in 2008 was conducted by Eleni Prokopiou and Anthi Kaldeli (Department of Antiquities) as part of the interregional programme (Interreg IIIA) entitled Ellinokamara Kasou–Erimi Pitharka. The aim was to complete the excavation of all the chambers of the cave and, as a result, several structures were revealed: benches, two fireplaces and a curved stone wall that includes part of a built antechamber. In addition, stones that were parts of circular bases were cleared, as well as a stone pavement that was probably linked to work areas. The most important discovery was an oval construction with clear traces of fire on its inner surface and ventilation holes in its lower part. It was identified as the base of a kiln, possibly linked to ceramic production. Traces of fire can be seen throughout the cave. Numbers of pithoi and storage jars, as well as the presence of fired clay, support the possibility of ceramic production. Finds include pottery of the Late Bronze Age.



125. Erimi Pitharka: Cave 1. © Department of Antiquities of Cyprus; Flourentzos 2010: fig. 96.

In **Episkopi-Bamboula** excavations were conducted under the direction of Gisela Walberg (Cincinnati) (**ID1388**, **ID2735**). Twenty-seven exploratory surveys were conducted in order to study the arrangement of walls, spaces and other architectural features, as well as the relationship between a large stone structure (Wall 37) and other walls. It is suggested that walls were constructed on two different levels: four of them surrounded and protected the area on all four sides, while the last one, oriented north–south, protected the eastern side, along the Kouris river. The ground of the passage that was excavated in 2008 was located at a level much higher than that of Wall 37, and so belongs to a later phase. Based on their thickness, the excavators suggest that the walls must be defensive in character and, judging by their plan and architectural technique, some can be compared to those of the Late Cypriot I–IIB fortress excavated at Nitovikla, on the Karpass peninsula, by the Swedish mission in 1929. In addition, three fields were explored: one on the Bamboula plateau, south of Sector XVI, and two to the east of the area. Pottery sherds date from the Late Bronze Age to the Roman and Medieval periods.

A mission of the University of Florence (and later University of Torino), under the direction of Anna Margerita Jasink and Luca Bombardieri, identified the site of **Erimi-Laonin tou Porakou** in 2007, during intensive exploration of the area of the Kouris valley (**ID2736**, **ID2737**, **ID2335**, **ID2885**). Fourteen sites were located, ranging from the Early/Middle Bronze Age to the Byzantine and Medieval periods. The ancient settlement is located on a high plateau on the eastern bank of the Kouris, covering an average area of 2ha. While surface materials suggest that the area was scantily used during the Late Hellenistic and Roman periods, a major occupation is documented during the Middle Bronze Age to Late Bronze Age I (phases A and B). A workshop complex, a residential area, a large circuit wall and a funerary cluster have been identified. The investigation of the workshop complex on the top of the hill revealed that this area, mainly intended for the production of dyed textiles, had a pivotal role and a peculiar ideological significance for the prehistoric community of Erimi. The location of a large rectangular unit (SA XII) in the northernmost extension of the workshop, facing the valley cliff, is a strong indication of the coherent design of the complex, which now appears to have had a central courtyard enclosed by three series of parallel rooms to the north, west and south. The entrance to SA XII from the east is equipped with a stepped monolithic threshold; this unit served as a multi-functional space for storage and processing, as documented

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126. Erimi-Laonin tou Porakou: pithos and spouted juglets in place, workshop complex (Area A), Middle Bronze Age (Middle Cypriot II–III). © Erimi Archaeological Project/*Missione Archeologica Italiana a Erimi, Università di Siena.*



127. Erimi-Laonin tou Porakou: detail of the spouted juglet inside the pithos in the workshop complex (Area A), Middle Bronze Age. © Erimi Archaeological Project/*Missione Archeologica Italiana a Erimi, Università di Siena.*

by the presence of pithoi (**Figs 126**, **127**) and other large vessels set in the floor, along with grinding and mortar-like installations. The excavation in the residential quarter, located on the major lower terrace of the settlement, revealed a long-term use and transformation of the architectural layout.

An exception to the standard burial customs at Middle Bronze Age Erimi was revealed by the excavation of Unit 1 in the residential Area T3. Within the collapsed structures pertaining to the abandonment of this unit, the inhumation of a female individual was found. The body was placed face down near a pre-existing stone basin set into the floor, where two single red-polished hemispherical bowls were deposited, possibly as offerings. Preliminary analysis of the human remains confirmed that her age at death was between 15 and 20 years. The excavators note that a few parallel cases of intramural anomalous female burials come from Early and Middle Bronze Age contexts on Cyprus, suggesting a possible differentiated mortuary treatment in certain contexts.

A number of Late Bronze Age tombs from the area of **Limassol**, which have been investigated over a number of years, have been published collectively (Karageorghis and Violaris 2012). This publication provides further useful information on the homogenous material culture (White Slip bowls and tankards, Base Ring juglets and other local vessels, alongside imported pottery from the Aegean) that was used as burial offerings in the region. Similar artefacts have been found in funerary assemblages around the island.

Diachronic sites are also present, as shown by the British mission under Andrew McCarthy (Edinburgh) at **Prastio-Mesorotsos** (**ID2748**, **ID2876**, **ID2337**, **ID2892**). The site was excavated for several seasons, revealing traces of occupation spanning from the Neolithic period to modern times. The site is located in the Diarizos valley and is situated around a rocky outcrop that acts as one of the most important topographical features in the valley. The excavators consider the site a crossroads between the lowlands and the uplands and between the west of Cyprus and the rest of the island. The oldest phase dates from the Early Neolithic and extends to the Late Neolithic/Early Chalcolithic. The architectural phases of the Middle Cypriot, which cover the levels of the Chalcolithic and Early Cypriot, are particularly well preserved. The site was apparently abandoned at the beginning of the Late Bronze Age, when Palaepaphos became the regional centre of western Cyprus. It is likely that at that time the inhabitants of Prastio left the rural lands of the interior to reach the coast. It is suggested by the excavators that, after this hiatus (which covers the entire Late Bronze Age), a new occupation is attested in the Iron Age.

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Larnaca district

The 2012 campaign at the PPNA site (ninth millennium BC) of **Agia Varvara-Asprokremnos** under the direction of the late Carole McCartney (Cyprus, Toronto and Cornell) was designed to fill the chronological hiatus that exists in Cyprus between 10,000 and 8200 BC (**ID58**, **ID2731**, **ID3780**). The data collected show that the Cypriot Neolithic began much earlier, when groups of hunter-gatherers migrated from coastal facilities to the interior of the island. The site, with a calibrated date of 8800–8600 BC, marks the initiation of the Cypriot Neolithic period at a time when the transition from hunting to farming economies was beginning across the Middle East. Evidence of significant manufacturing activity associated with the production of chipped-stone tools and access to a second resource – of ochre – combine to explain the choice of site location adjacent to the Lefkara chalk belt and the sulphide deposits of Mathiati. In a partially hollow structure, hundreds of nodules of ochre pigments were found. The excavation has not been completed, but a wide variety of red, yellow, orange, purple and grey ochre pigments and bright-green terra verde have been collected. The processing of multi-coloured pigments was facilitated by a large array of ground-stone tools dominated by pounding tools and grinders that were used in the processing of pigments as evidenced by significant numbers of tools with ochre residues. Amongst the 2012 finds was a large teardrop-shaped picrolite pendant, carefully engraved and of a more advanced type than the other ornaments discovered so far on the site (**Fig. 128**). A curvilinear semi-subterranean structure dominated the northern end of the site (Feature 300). A large array of stone tools deposited on the floor of this structure along with numerous pits and postholes cut into the floor were documented. Unique among these finds were two large pits each with a thick clay lining that could have facilitated the storage of water within the structure. Postholes and burnt mud plaster encircling the circumference of the interior pit wall of the structure provide evidence of a substantial timber superstructure used to roof the building.

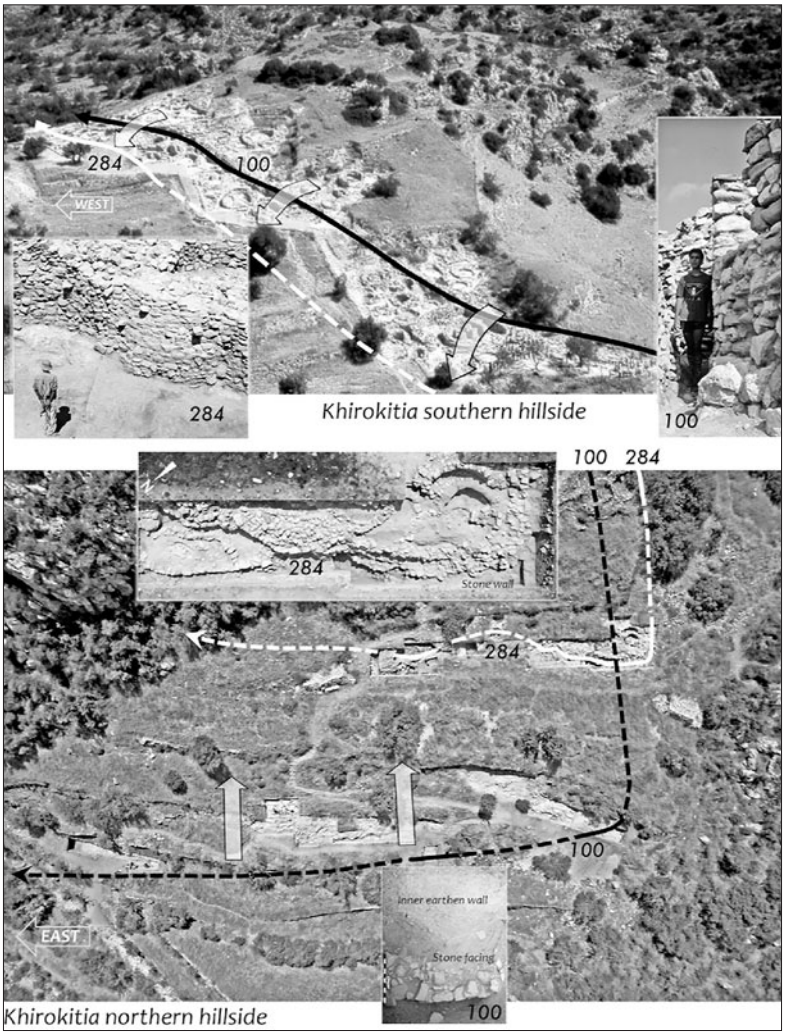


*128. Agia Varvara-Asprokremnos: teardrop-shaped picrolite pendant. © C. McCartney/ University of Cyprus/*Elaborating Early Neolithic Cyprus Project.

The 2013 excavations unearthed two new structures that were constructed after Feature 300 was abandoned. The earlier (Feature 848) appeared beneath the ochre-processing area already documented in 2012 in the centre of the site. Though only a quarter of the structure was excavated in 2013, Feature 848 showed a simplified method of construction in comparison to the earlier Feature 300, revealing a clear devolution of architectural form, according to the excavators. Feature 848 was similarly a semi-subterranean pit structure, but lacked evidence of the complex timbered superstructure seen in the earlier building; instead, it exhibited a single posthole dug into the flat floor of the building along with a number of pit features, some of which contained caches of stone tools. A collection of four igneous stone objects was associated with this building, comprising two flat cobbles, one with an extensive red ochre residue, a perfectly pecked stone sphere and a complete female statuette. This group of artefacts was apparently used to mark the abandonment of the structure and provides one of the earliest complete human figurines found on Cyprus.

At the Neolithic site of **Choirokoitia**, several excavation seasons were organized by the CNRS of France under the direction of Alain Le Brun (**ID18**, **ID62**, **ID1392**). The aim of the 2005 investigations was to determine the outline of the walls, which constituted the successive boundaries of the settlement. The results profoundly altered the scholarly view of the site of Choirokoitia and the last phase of the Neolithic Aceramic period of Cyprus. Previous research over the years has shown that the expansion of the built area on the southern side occurred simultaneously with the abandonment of the northern side. However, the history of the settlement needed to be reconsidered, as it was possible that there was a rearrangement of the built environment, rather than an expansion of the village. The wall, which constitutes the primary limit of the settlement, was found in a deep trench near the river. Initially it was thought that the course of the wall was

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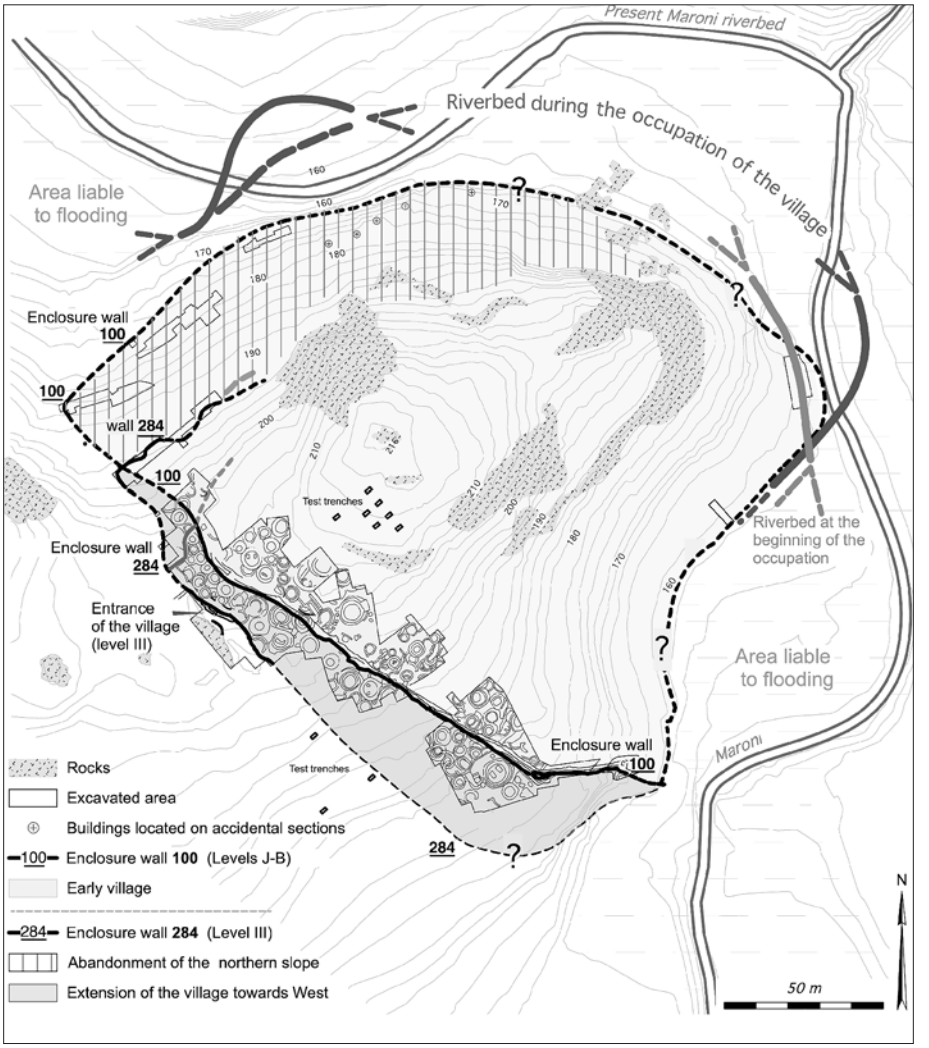


129. Choirokoitia: variations in the spatial extent of the village on the southern and northern hillsides. 100 = enclosure wall of the early village (levels J–B); 284 = enclosure wall after the main shift of the village (level III). © Mission Archéologique de Khirokitia/T. Sagory.

perpendicular to the flow of the river, thus completing the natural protection offered by the river. The new evidence, however, has shown that the wall followed a course parallel to the Maroni riverbed. As a result, the village has to be viewed differently, as a settlement enclosed by a wall made of massive pisé with an exterior stone façade .The elevation of such a construction at such a length expresses a collective effort which presupposes a well-structured social organization (**Figs 129**, **130**; Daune-Le Brun *et al.* 2017).

The ***Tremithos Neolithic Survey*** under the direction of Sarah Stewart (Trent) was completed in 2018. The surface survey focused on the area along the coast east and west of the Tremithos river delta and north of the Kiti dam to the Larnaca–Limassol highway. The beach floor and any associated sections as well as the terraces above the beach were examined, while numerous chert nodules, cores and flakes, often water worn and manufactured from a wide variety of chert raw materials, were found. The fact that relatively fresh lithics were found in the area where the terrace meets the beach suggests that there is *in-situ* cultural material below the surface. Clear stratigraphy was identified in the beach sections, which included a series of palaeosols, with the upper the primary artefact-bearing deposit with a quantity of Roman pottery and lithics. On the east bank of the Tremithos river mouth early diagnostic material was found during the 2015 surface survey. The east terraces above the banks of the Pouzis river between the sea and the highway are

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130. Choirokoitia: variations in the spatial extent and organization of the village. © Mission Archéologique de Khirokitia.

under wheat cultivation, but several chert cores and numerous retouched flakes of a distinctive Epipalaeolithic typology were located (Department of Antiquities 2018c).

A team from the University of East Anglia, under the direction of Joanne Clarke, explored the Late Neolithic/Early Chalcolithic site of **Kalavasos-Kokkinoyia** (**ID17**, **ID2743**). Kokkinoyia is situated within an area of farmland, approximately 4km south of the village of Kalavasos. In recent years, excavations at Kokkinoyia have uncovered an impressive 'chamber and tunnel complex' and a series of individual and interconnected chambers. The purpose of these underground features remains enigmatic. Many were sealed up following primary use or were reused for activities such as the processing of ochre or the storage of objects; their primary use and why they were dug in the first place cannot be ascertained as most were completely empty. In addition to the chamber and tunnel complex and the individual chambers, excavations also uncovered a single circular structure, partly sunk into the bedrock, with a central posthole, fire pit and a series of crushed limestone floors. This structure appears to have been associated with at least some of the underground chambers, but clearly had a different use. Burials were discovered as well; at least six individuals were interred in pits and chambers around the structure. In one shallow pit the fully articulated bones of a young female and the long bones of a second individual were found. In another pit were three fully articulated skeletons, one on top of the other, and in a chamber-like feature were the stacked bones of another individual.

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Moving later in the prehistory of the region, as part of the post-excavation processing of the unpublished Swedish excavation campaigns (1979–2005), led by the late Paul Åström, Karin Nys (Vrije Universiteit Brussel) conducted field investigations in Area 8 of the Late Bronze Age site of **Dromolaxia-Vizakia** (Hala Sultan Tekke) near the Larnaca airport (**ID2334**). The aim was to acquire a detailed picture of the building history and to verify and complete the remaining field notes of the previous Swedish campaigns. The research mainly focused on 'Building C', since here it was still possible to examine the stratigraphy of two former trenches of the Swedish excavations. In addition, 13 small soundings were investigated in order to clarify the complex building history. The preliminary results indicate that there were four Late Bronze Age occupation phases, of which the latest may be dated to Late Cypriot IIIA2 (*ca.* 1150–1110 BC). The finds collected suggest the presence of both workshops and living spaces: molten lead and copper slag indicating the possible presence of a metalworking workshop, bronze and lead beads, weights and tools, terracotta spindle-whorls and murex shells used to dye textiles, as well as fine Mycenaean ceramics and local productions of Base Ring and White Slip wares. The ceramic assemblage includes jugs, bowls, kraters and jars. A haematite cylinder seal bearing six religious scenes, probably imported from Syria, was also discovered along with and a black and white stone figurine depicting a female deity, possibly from Mesopotamia.

Another excavation site within the vicinity of **Hala Sultan Tekke** was excavated by Peter Fischer (Goteborg) at the Late Bronze Age harbour city. The excavations were supported by large-scale geophysical prospection which led to the discovery of several city quarters, the cemetery and the possible city wall. According to these surveys, the size of the city seems to have exceeded 25ha (perhaps even reaching 50ha, which would make it one of the largest in the Late Bronze Age Mediterranean). CQ1 (City Quarter 1) must have been an industrial area, with domestic architecture and workshops for the production of copper and purple-dyed textiles. It is noteworthy that almost 1 tonne of copper slag has been found in the area. CQ2 was also apparently connected to the manufacture of purple-dyed textiles, while many finds related to Mycenaean Greece and Egypt were recovered from CQ3. Geophysical survey at CQ4 revealed massive stone structures, and the area is considered to have been an administrative centre. An extra-urban cemetery has been identified in Area A, to the east of the city, with numerous tombs and offering pits. Imported burial gifts and offered items came from a vast area: from Sardinia to Mesopotamia, and from Anatolia to Egypt. Tomb RR is of great interest as it contained the burials of 38 individuals with impressive offerings, including a chariot krater amongst other Mycenaean pottery (*ca.* 1350 BC), a bronze knife with an ivory handle and an Egyptian ivory button (Fischer 2019).

The amounts of local Cypriot (Base Ring, White Slip, etc) and imported pottery, as well as other rich finds, indicate, according to the excavators, the multicultural nature of the local society, the wealth of which must have been connected to the export of copper and purple-dyed textiles. In addition, the excavators propose that cultural connections from Sardinia to Mesopotamia and from Scandinavia to Egypt can be ascertained from 1650 to 1150 BC (Fischer 2019). The presence of Aegean pottery highlights, once again, the role of Cyprus as a possible mediator between mainland Greece and the Levant in terms of distributing good-quality Mycenaean pictorial vessels (**Figs 131**, **132**; Fischer and Bürge 2018a; 2018b; 2019). The city of Hala Sultan Tekke was destroyed and abandoned sometime in the 12th century BC.

The site of **Pyla-Kokkinokremos** represents a singularly short-lived settlement of the island's Late Bronze Age history. It has been the focus of research for several decades, resulting in a number of significant publications (Georgiou 2012; Karageorghis and Kanta 2014). Established only a generation or so prior to its abandonment in the early 12th century BC, the site provides important evidence relating to the crucial period of the end of the 13th and the beginning of the 12th centuries BC. Former excavations suggested that the entire plateau of *ca.* 7ha was densely occupied.

Joachim Bretschneider, Jan Driessen and Athanasia Kanta (Ghent, Louvain and the Mediterranean Archaeological Society) conducted excavations that have provided new information about the site. Specific stratigraphic details point to a natural disaster, possibly a seismic event, that led to the collapse of part of the plateau and the partial sealing of rooms built against it. The excavation of these rooms brought to light novel details suggesting a sudden and very quick departure of the inhabitants from the site, presumably in the face

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131. Hala Sultan Tekke: drone photo showing (from foreground to background): City Quarter (CQ) 2, CQ1, CQ4 and Area A (cemetery) in front of the mosque. © P. Fischer.



132. Hala Sultan Tekke: Mycenaean 'Sword-bearer' krater from Tomb RR, Area A, ca. *1350 BC. © P. Fischer (after Fischer and Bürge 2019: 312, fig. 27).*

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133. Pyla-Kokkinokremos: Sardinian vases in situ *in Zone 3. © Cyprus Pyla Excavation Project/S. Jusseret.*

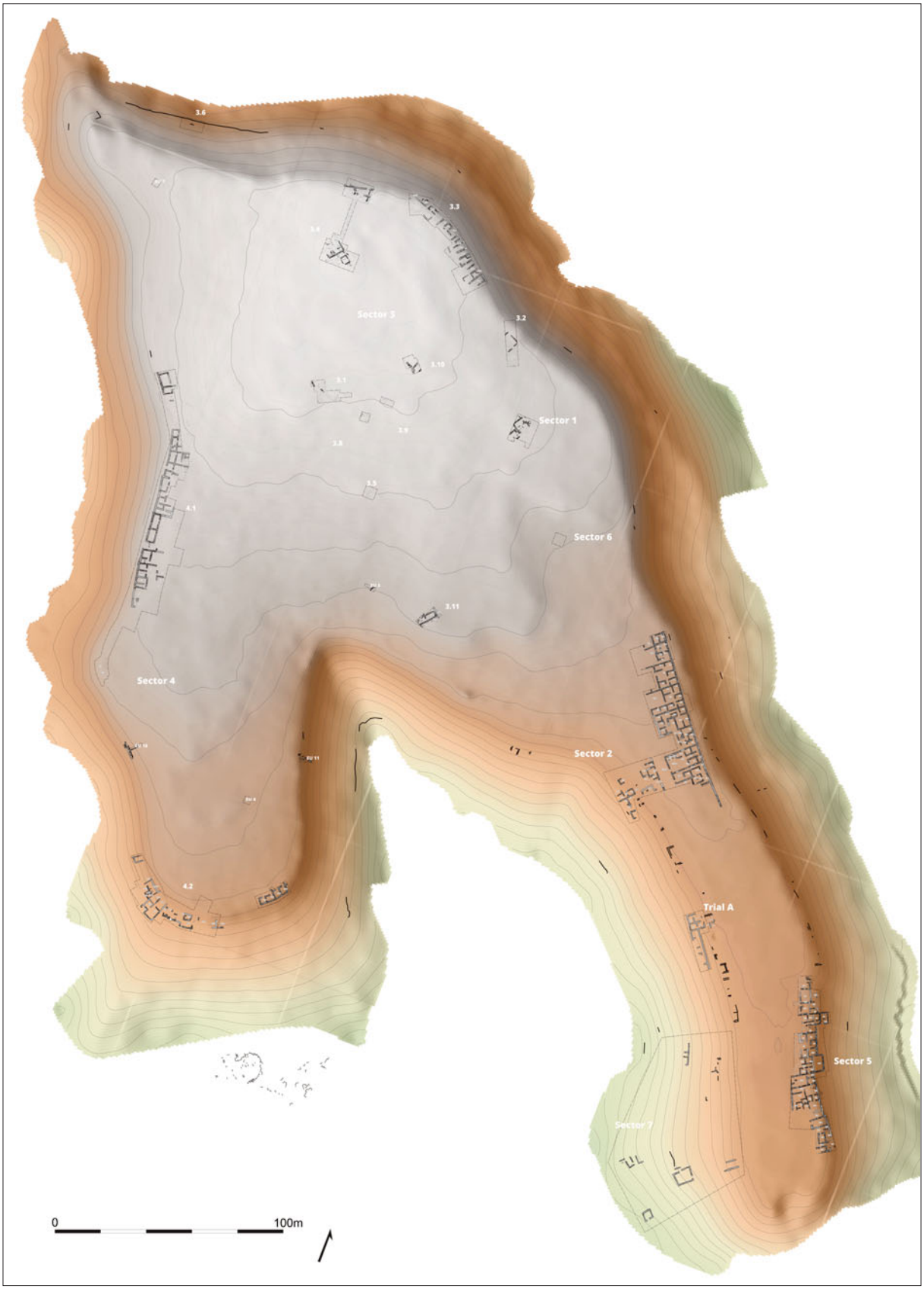
of acute danger. Thus, in Room 8 *ca.* 100 loomweights, still unbaked and in the process of being made from raw strips of clay, were placed in a perishable container, possibly a basket with an oval shape, as their location on the bedrock suggests. The strips of clay were still malleable. It is the first time that such 12th-century BC clay has become available in considerable quantities and it is ideal for scientific investigation. The excavation continued in the partly investigated Rooms 25 and 43-37b in Sector 4.1. It became clear that these rooms continue further to the east, towards the centre of the western lobe of the plateau. Sector 5 is located in the southeastern area of the summit plateau. The architecture within this sector is remarkably well preserved, especially against the slope. Assemblages of bronze objects were unearthed in Spaces 5.2 (excavated in 2014) and 5.21. The latter yielded a concentration of more than 100 bronze fragments as well as a sickle, an arrowhead and earrings; presumably, all these bronze objects had been collected in a vessel.

In the northern and central areas of the site remains of metalworking activities were identified in 2015. A complete Egyptian alabaster flask painted with a garland of lotus flowers was discovered in this sector, hidden in a rock-cut pit. Cleaning revealed that the flask was filled with small items (a knife, rings, a cylinder seal, beads, etc.) of various materials (for example, bronze, faience, bone and ivory).

During the topographical survey of the Kokkinokremos hill a large, hitherto unpublished limestone quarry was discovered. Located immediately below the western lobe of the plateau on which the Late Bronze Age settlement was situated (Sector 4), the quarry extents over *ca.* 500m^2, with a width of 40m and a length of 15–24m. The exploitation, either by chisels or stone picks, is illustrated by the usual extraction channels (*ca.* 8–10cm wide) in the rock, as well as several unfinished regular blocks (**Figs 133**, **134**; Department of Antiquities 2018a).

At **Psematismenos-Trelloukkas** near Maroni, 47 tombs and associated ceramic finds discovered in 2008 represent the second-largest corpus of material of this date after the defining type-site of the Early Cypriot period at Bellapais-Vounous Site A near the central-north coast. The predominant ceramic types are Red Polished Mottled I–II wares to generic Red Polished I–II wares, Red Polished South Coast wares, Red Polished

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134. Pyla-Kokkinokremos: plan (by N. Kress). © Cyprus Pyla Excavation Project.

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incised wares and Brown Polished fabrics. Only a handful of spindle-whorls was found and metal items were limited. Analysis of the burial customs suggests that by Early Cypriot I–II there was some degree of variation in tomb occupancy. Single inhumations were quite common, but multiple burials were present as well. The importance of mining and metallurgy should be stressed in association with the Limassol Forest copper sources. The analysis of these tombs shows the differences between the north coast and the rest of the island in terms of social complexity and mortuary practices during the period in question (Georgiou *et al.* 2011).

In 2016 excavations took place in the northern part of the site of **Kition-Bamboula** under the direction of Sabine Fourrier (Ministère des Affaires Etrangères et du Développement, Histoire et Sources des Mondes Antiques Laboratoire, CNRS Lyon 2 University) (**ID6169**, **ID6409**, **ID6780**). This fieldwork was part of a wider research programme on the topography of the ancient city of Kition in the Iron Age. The main objectives of the campaign were to test the hypothesis that a portion of the Late Bronze Age city wall ran in a northern direction, parallel to the harbour basin, and to explore its relationship with an Early Iron Age settlement that was partially exposed in a small sounding in 1976. The first layers of ancient occupation were reached at *ca.* 1m below the modern surface. They consisted of a series of Hellenistic floors, above a Classical layer (with associated walls). The excavation stopped at a Late Archaic layer (sixth century BC). Sondage 10 of 2016 revealed a full occupation sequence for the earlier phases of habitation, and the Late Bronze Age (13th-century BC) layers were attested immediately above the rock to the east. The presence of several deep holes (Loci 867–69) seems to invalidate the hypothesis that this Late Bronze Age settlement abutted a portion of the city wall.

The complex stratigraphy of the site includes Early Geometric walls and floors preserved to the north and east. To the northwest of the trench, an infant inhumation in a Canaanite jar was found under a floor. The neck of the jar had been cut and protected the body. The child wore a bronze fibula and an amber bead. A skyphos and a juglet of Proto-White Painted ware, which were deposited with the jar, suggest a date at the beginning of the 11th century BC. The Early Geometric floor levels rested on earlier Late Bronze Age floors, which, on the basis of the present state of research, can be dated to the 12th century BC. They yielded fragmentary material dated to the 13th century BC; some luxury pieces (ivory boxes, Egyptian faience vases, high-quality Mycenaean ceramic imports) are noteworthy. It seems that the northern part of Bamboula was inhabited from at least the 13th century BC and continued to be frequented until at least the second or third century BC. These Early Iron and Late Bronze Age floor levels document a chronological sequence poorly known on Cyprus, where most sites were abandoned towards the end of the Bronze Age.

Rescue excavations during the construction of the sewerage network of **Larnaka**, conducted between 2016 and 2018, revealed more than 110 tombs in a wide area covering several kilometres. These testify to the presence of a vast necropolis, associated with the city-kingdom of Kition. The dating of the tombs ranges from the Early Bronze Age to the Late Roman period (fourth century AD). In addition, excavations in Archbishop Kyrillos II Street brought to light two tombs that date to 2500 BC (Department of Antiquities 2020).

Nicosia district

Kataliondas-Kourvellos (**ID2870**, **ID2338**) is a Pre-Pottery Neolithic site located in the eastern Troodos foothills, about 20km from Nicosia. It was surveyed in 1972, but never excavated, as it was believed that due to erosion there was little hope of finding stratified deposits. Eventually, a team from the University of Geneva, under the direction of Julien Beck, excavated the site in 2010–2011. Trenches were dug on the slopes of the hill and hundreds of river stones were found, which, according to the excavators, could only have been brought from some distance. In every trench Neolithic remains were found, but they were mixed with finds from the Cypro–Classical period, including pieces of bronze and iron weaponry. Preliminary study of the finds revealed that during the Neolithic period the site was occupied in the eighth millennium BC.

A Chalcolithic site near Politiko in the Nicosia district was excavated in 2007 by a team from La Trobe University in Melbourne. The results from **Politiko-Kokkinorotsos** (**ID74**) provide a valuable insight into life on the island between about 3500 and 2500 BC. A large area of the site was exposed, revealing three circular pits characteristic of the period. Beside them a large deep natural hollow was found which was filled with stones, pottery and animal bones. Altogether 54,000 fragments of pottery

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135. Alampra Mouttes: one of six storage vessels over 1m tall that once occupied a room in a Middle Bronze Age house, the remains of which came to light in 2012. © University of Queensland.

were excavated, together with a large number of stone artefacts. Study of the bones revealed that the inhabitants of the region hunted fallow deer (which disappeared from the island around 1000 BC) and that they raised sheep and goats. Previously, the Chalcolithic period was documented by sites located in southwestern Cyprus only. The research conducted at Politiko shows that at that time there were great differences, in terms of both the material and the economic organization of communities, between the different regions of the island.

The Early and Middle Bronze Age settlement of **Alampra Mouttes** (**ID3781**) was identified in the 19th century, and the first scientific investigation of the site was conducted by Cornell University in the 1970s and 1980s. After the Department of Antiquities discovered a new part of the settlement in 2005, the University of Queensland was assigned to excavate the site further in 2012. Consequently, the *Queensland Alampra Archaeological Mission* conducted a small-scale excavation by opening trial trenches. This confirmed that more architectural remains of the settlement were preserved at the site. Geophysical investigation (ground-penetrating radar and gradiometer) was carried out over a much wider area, revealing indications of the existence of architectural remains, possibly of houses belonging to a settlement, as well as tombs. A *ca.* 3,500-year-old domestic building was found 200–300m away from the Cornell excavations. This Middle Bronze Age house survives as a narrow rectangular room measuring some 5m × 3m, with low stone wall footings that once supported mud-brick walls. The house incorporated a well-preserved storage room that contained at least six large storage pithoi that probably once contained products such as grain, water and olive oil (**Fig. 135**). The house appears to have been destroyed by a catastrophic fire around 1600 BC, which may explain the state of its preservation.

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The Bronze Age settlement of **Politiko-Troullia** is located about 25km southwest of Nicosia, near Agios Irakleidios Monastery in the copper-bearing foothills of the Troodos mountains (**ID75**, **ID1402**, **ID2747**). Excavations were conducted under the direction of Steven Falconer and Patricia Fall (Arizona State). It is thought that this community (*ca*. 2000–1500 BC) could have been the predecessor of ancient Tamassos, the seat of a centrally important kingdom during the subsequent Iron Age. The excavations brought to light a series of households around a large communal courtyard that produced evidence of intensive animal husbandry and crop processing, copper metallurgy and sophisticated ceramic technology during the Middle Bronze Age. The 2018 archaeological investigations featured expanded analysis of archaeological evidence excavated and surveyed between 2004 and 2017. According to the excavators, the remains of deer carcasses indicate large-scale community feasting at Politiko-Troullia on Mesopotamian fallow deer, which were hunted in nearby oak/pine woodlands. They also suggest that the villagers of Politiko-Troullia mined local copper deposits and conducted household copper metallurgy, including smelting and casting a variety of copper and bronze tools (for example, blades, chisels and axe-heads). The settlement was likely abandoned due to substantial erosion (possibly fuelled by heavy rains) and the lowering of the neighbouring Kamaras creek, after which the village well and water source dried up.

In 2006 the last of 14 excavation seasons led by Despina Pilides of the Department of Antiquities at the hill of **Agios Georgios** (otherwise known as PA.SY.D.Y.) took place (**ID22**, **ID67**). In total, an area of approximately 11,000m^2 was investigated. A very fragmentary stone structure which may be assigned to the Late Chalcolithic period was found on the southwestern slope, where the deeper deposits had been preserved. The site is otherwise a large settlement of the Hellenistic period, built on a grid plan.

The lack of excavations in fertile central Cyprus led to the launch of the ***Agios Sozomenos Survey and Excavation Project*** (ASESP), led by Despina Pilides (Department of Antiquities). The region of Agios Sozomenos is located in the northeastern foothills of the Troodos mountain range, in the valley of the rivers Yialias and Alykos. At Djirpoulos, a rectilinear building of northwest–southeast orientation has been revealed, with evidence of workshops and small-scale metallurgical activity (**Fig. 136**). Imports from abroad, such as Minoan and Mycenaean pottery, as well as a Canaanite jar have been recorded. At Ampelia, a building overlooking the workshops was excavated; more than 16 pithoi in one storage room indicate the concentration of agricultural produce in this structure. It was violently destroyed by fire in the 12th century BC. The workshops of Djirpoulos, together with the associated site of Ampelia seem to have flourished from *ca.* the 16th century BC to the beginning of the 12th century BC, when they were abandoned. It is very possible that they were associated with a fortress immediately above the site at Barsak. These excavations shed light on the 21 Middle Cypriot III to Late Cypriot I forts around the island and their role in the control of routes through the Mesaoria valley; all of them were located in close proximity (Pilides 2017; personal communication, August 2021).

Finally, the major Bronze Age site of **Enkomi** (now in occupied Cyprus) is a place of extreme interest because of its size, architecture and material culture. Although no fieldwork can be conducted currently, research on finds from earlier excavations has been undertaken over the past two decades. The digitization of the finds from the British Museum excavations (1896) has been part of a wider and ambitious project run by Lindy Crewe and Thomas Kiely in London (British Museum). As a result, all finds that formed the official share of the British Museum have been digitized and made available to the public (see Crewe 2007).

In the same spirit, another project directed by Despina Pilides of the Department of Antiquities took place in 2009 and 2010 with the aim of publishing online the Cyprus Museum share of the finds that remained in Nicosia (Pilides 2019). As part of this project, a specialists' workshop took place in Cyprus, at which several aspects of the material culture from Enkomi (that stayed in Nicosia and is now available at the Cyprus Museum) were presented and discussed for the first time. These included Cypriot and Mycenaean pottery, burial practices and aspects of trade and interconnections, as well as archival research. Additionally, a publication focused on material that was not included in the monumental work by Porphyrios Dikaios, where he discusses the excavations conducted from 1948 to 1959, has appeared, in which Vassos Karageorghis and Nicole Hirschfeld focus on figurines and vessel handles with engraved Cypro-Minoan signs (Karageorghis 2011).

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136. Agios Sozomenos. © Department of Antiquities/D. Pilides (Director of excavations at Agios Sozomenos).

Major publications on Cypriot archaeology

The large number of field projects and the subsequent discovery of new data have led to significant publications appearing in the period covered by this review. These are mostly related to excavation results or conference proceedings. The Department of Antiquities publishes the *Report of the Department of Antiquities* (latest volume 2011–2012), which includes preliminary results presented in some detail, as well as more analytical research papers; the Department also publishes the *Annual Report of the Department of Antiquities* (latest volume 2010), with summaries of all excavations, museum acquisitions and restoration work conducted on Cyprus under its auspices. In addition, several other publications have provided significant information on the prehistoric archaeology of Cyprus; they can be summarized as follows: (1) monographs; (2) edited volumes and conference proceedings; and (3) exhibition catalogues.

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Monographs

Many monographs have appeared over the past two decades, with the majority focused on the publication and discussion of previous excavations on the island. The Bronze Age is very well represented with major studies. These publications can be divided into the following categories (with some indicative selections).

Settlements and their characteristics. Kling and Muhly 2007 presents the excavations by Joan du Plat Taylor at the Late Bronze Age mining settlement at Apliki Karamallos; Hadjisavvas 2017 focuses on the major site of Alassa (Pano Mantilaris and Paliotaverna); Webb and Frankel 2013 discusses metallurgy and pottery production in Middle Bronze Age Cyprus through the case study of Ambelikou Aletri; as mentioned already, Karageorghis and Kanta 2014 presents data from the late 13th-century BC fortified settlement of Pyla-Kokkinokremos; Bombardieri 2017 presents work on the Middle Bronze Age region of Erimi Laonin tou Porakou; Fischer and Bürge 2018a updates the archaeological record of the harbour town of Hala Sultan Tekke with discussion of two Late Cypriot city quarters revealed during recent excavations (2010–2017); Peltenburg *et al.* 2019, an edited volume, presents a synthesis of the archaeological work in the area of Chalcolithic Souskiou (both at the settlement and the cemeteries).



137. Lapithos 1917: pottery from Tomb 5. © J. Webb.

Tombs and cemeteries. Frankel and Webb 2007 continues the authors' record of detailed and thorough publications with a presentation of the cemeteries at Deneia; Webb *et al*. 2009, meanwhile, presents the older excavations conducted by J.R.B. Stewart at Palealona and Lapatsa (Karmi); Åström and Nys 2007 focuses on Tomb 24 from Hala Sultan Tekke, especially the stone anchors, the faunal remains and pottery provenance; Webb 2018 continues the author's work on the study of material from older excavations, this time presenting the Early and Middle Bronze Age tombs at Lapithos Vrysi tou Barba that were excavated by Menelaos Markides (**Fig. 137**); finally, Todd 2007 publishes Kalavasos Village Tombs 52–79, as part of the *Vasilikos Valley Project*.

Edited volumes and conference proceedings

A number of international conferences, colloquia and workshops took place during the period under consideration, leading to several subsequent publications. Several focus on the prehistoric period of Cyprus, although many have a more diachronic overview, starting from the Bronze Age. The majority of these events were dedicated to particular topics related to the interconnections between Cyprus and the rest of the Mediterranean region. They include: *Ancient Cyprus Today: Museum Collections and New Research* (Bourogiannis and Mühlenbock 2016); *Embodied Identities in the Prehistoric Eastern Mediterranean: Convergence of Theory and Practice* (Mina *et al.* 2016); *On Cooking Pots, Drinking Cups, Loom Weights and Ethnicity in Bronze Age Cyprus and Neighbouring Regions* (Karageorghis and Kouka 2011); *International Conference in Honour of James D. Muhly: Eastern Mediterranean Metallurgy and Metalwork in the Second Millennium BC* (Kassianidou and Papasavvas 2012); *Cyprus and the East Aegean: Intercultural Contacts from 3000 to 500 BC* (Karageorghis and Kouka 2009); *Parallel Lives: Ancient Island Societies in Crete and Cyprus* (2006); *International Conference: Egypt and Cyprus in Antiquity* (Michaelides *et al.* 2009); finally, the *4th Cyprological Conference* took place in Nicosia with a variety of themes (Dimitriou 2011). In 2020, a virtual conference was hosted in Athens that brought together scholars from around the globe, focusing especially on the theme of connectivity: *Beyond Cyprus: Investigating Cypriot Connectivity in the Mediterranean from the Late Bronze Age to the End of the Classical Period*.

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Major research and archival work has also been conducted. Much of this has focused on the study of the numerous Cypriote antiquities in various museums, such as the project run by Thomas Kiely in London: *Ancient Cyprus in the British Museum* (Kiely 2012; https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/publications/online-research-catalogues). Similarly, the Penn Museum has launched an online database including excavation data, photographs and find descriptions from its excavations on Cyprus (https://www.penn.museum/sites/kourion/history.php).

Research programmes focusing on aspects of Cypriot archaeology have taken place (and are ongoing) in academic institutions on Cyprus and beyond, such as the NHRF's *Kyprios Character*: *History, Archaeology and Numismatics of Ancient Cyprus* (2014–2015; http://kyprioscharacter.eie.gr/en/) and *CyCoMed*: *Cypriot Connectivity in the Mediterranean from the Late Bronze Age to the End of the Classical Period: An Interdisciplinary Approach* (2018–2021; https://cycomedproject.eie.gr/about/?lang=en). Significant work has also been conducted in the field of Late Bronze Age and Iron Age Cypriot scripts, namely the so-called Cypro-Minoan and Cypriot Syllabic, and a number of major volumes focusing on the presentation and analysis of several inscriptions have appeared (Olivier 2007; Ferrara 2012; 2013; Steele 2013a; 2013b; 2018). Finally, an ongoing interdisciplinary project entitled *Kalavasos and Maroni Built Environment Project* (https://kambe.cnrs.ubc.ca/) is focusing on two important urban centres (Kalavasos-Agios Dhimitrios and the Maroni complex) located in neighbouring river valleys in south-central Cyprus.

Museum exhibitions and catalogues

The Department of Antiquities has organized (or co-organized) a series of exhibitions at various museums globally. Although generally focused on the diachronic character and nature of Cyprus, a major interest has been the prehistory of the island, and the informative catalogues that have accompanied these exhibitions are very useful brief guides. The exhibitions include: *Cyprus: A Dynamic Island*, Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden, October 2019 to March 2020 (Halbertsma and Pilides 2019); *Ancient Cyprus: Cultures in Dialogue*, Royal Museums of Art and History, Brussels, October 2012 to March 2013 (Pilides and Papadimitriou 2012); *Cipro: Isola di Afrodite*, Palazzo Quirinale, Rome, October 2012 to January 2013 and *Cyprus: Crossroads of Civilizations*, Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History, September 2010 to May 2011 (Hadjisavvas 2010).

A number of Cypriot galleries have been created worldwide within the premises of major museums, both private and public. The A.G. Leventis Foundation has funded a large number of projects related to the redesign and eventual exhibition of Cypriot antiquities in Europe and the US, usually with the subsequent publication of a catalogue of the artefacts, such as those at the Medelhavsmuseet in Stockholm (Karageorghis 2003a) and the National Archaeological Museum in Athens (Karageorghis 2003b). Galleries were inaugurated at the British Museum (London), the Ashmolean Museum (Oxford), the Fitzwilliam Museum (Cambridge), the Metropolitan Museum (New York), the Thanos N. Zintilis Collection at the Museum of Cycladic Art (Athens), the National Archaeological Museum (Athens) and the Medelhavsmuseet (Stockholm). The antiquities themselves arrived at these museums at different times, yet all the new galleries provide access, archaeological information and research funding to support the study of this material and enrich scholarly knowledge of ancient Cyprus.

Instead of an epilogue

As Bernard Knapp (2013: 74) has stated: 'over the past two decades, new excavations and survey have pushed back the date for the earliest Neolithic occupation of Cyprus by at least 2,000 years from *ca.* 7000/6800 Cal BC to as early as 9000 Cal BC'. This is clearly the case, as the data from early sites continue to provide information about this matter. The material culture from Psematismenos and Kissonerga-Ammoudia shows that there is strong regionalism. At the same time, there is still a lot to be learned from the publication and dissemination not only of long-term systematic excavations, but also of rescue projects which frequently lack the luxury of appropriate digging equipment, specialists and, more crucially, time.

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Research on the archaeology of prehistoric Cyprus has been focused over the past 20 years on a number of themes, as is visible within the publications that derive either from the study of the results of fieldwork or from more generalized conferences and research projects. Mining and metallurgy remain important areas of research, as these activities clearly played a major role in the life of prehistoric Cypriots. The islanders imported impressive artefacts for internal consumption and exported copper and other products; their maritime and mercantile activities were major elements in their lives, judging from major finds both on and beyond their island. Settlement patterns and the presence of workshops show a complex society, set truly at the crossroads of three continents. Ongoing research projects, international collaborations and conferences ensure that the archaeology of prehistoric Cyprus will continue to be a vibrant, active and most rewarding field of research.

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