

## Preface

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The present volume is the result of the research interests developed throughout my academic experience as a student and researcher. The arguments exposed in the three core chapters of the book are partially based on my doctoral thesis at the University of Reading entitled *Architecture and Urbanisation in Bronze Age Cyprus: Local and Regional Innovation in Materials, Technology and Social Representation*. In this thesis, I examined how the development of new forms and concepts of architecture and the increasing appearance of social, cultural and economic forms of complexity at the end of Prehistoric Bronze Age Cyprus, are mutually constituted. In this book, I have decided to expand the discussion presented in my doctoral research and include in my analysis the examination of the social and architectural transformations of the early communities in Cyprus from the Late Aceramic Neolithic until the end of the Middle Bronze Age. The idea, when I set up the arguments of the volume, was following the process of building construction, starting from the examination of building activities as key indicators of social practices until the analysis of building forms and settlement spaces as loci of encounters and interaction between social agents.

The discussions presented in this volume represent elements of a work in progress and should be considered a starting point more than a conclusive study of the built and social environment of prehistoric Cyprus. What it is important to stress is that architectural

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evidence has not been examined only as a collection of shapes and design. Instead, every section of the volume was animated by questions about social structures and domains of relationships between individuals and the natural and social environment they interacted with. As a cultural artefact, architecture was treated as a metaphor for human engagement and communication.

For the accomplishment of this book, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my PhD supervisors, Wendy Matthews and Roger Matthews, for the fruitful discussion and their constructive feedback. Thanks to my PhD programme at the University of Reading I expanded the horizon of my research and I developed a strong interest in the study of the ancient built environment. My sincere thanks go to Luca Bombardieri, who encouraged me to complete this work and has supported my research since the very beginning of my academic experience. Thanks also to the members of the Erimi Archaeological project and to the colleagues and friends I met in Cyprus during these years; many ideas embedded in this volume have been stimulated by informal discussions with them. I am very grateful to the two reviewers who greatly helped to improve the arguments presented in the volume. I would like to thank Lindy Crewe, in particular, for having accepted to review the volume despite her work appointments. I am grateful to the community of scholars and researchers working in Cyprus, in particular to Jenny Webb, Diane Bolger and Stuart Swiny, who supportively granted me permission of using some of the photographs included in the book. I would like to thank also the Department of Antiquities of Cyprus, particularly the director Marina Solomidou-Ieronimdou. This book could not have been accomplished without the financial support of the Dipartimento di Studi Umanistici, Università degli Studi di Torino and the Dipartimento di Civiltà e Forme del Sapere, Università di Pisa, where I am currently working as a post-doc fellow. Finally, my sincere acknowledgements to the staff of the book series *Studi Ciprioti*, Edizioni Ca' Foscari, who assisted me in the making of this book.

**Abbreviations used throughout the volume:**

LAN = Late Aceramic Neolithic  
CN = Ceramic Neolithic  
EChal = Early Chalcolithic  
MChal = Middle Chalcolithic  
LChal = Late Chalcolithic  
EC = Early Cypriot (Early Bronze Age Cyprus)  
MC = Middle Cypriot (Middle Bronze Age Cyprus)