PRACTICES OF PERSONAL ADORNMENT IN NEOLITHIC GREECE

ΠΡΑΚΤΙΚΕΣ ΠΡΟΣΩΠΙΚΗΣ ΚΟΣΜΗΣΗΣ ΣΤΗ ΝΕΟΛΙΘΙΚΗ ΕΛΛΑΔΑ

Fotis Ifantidis

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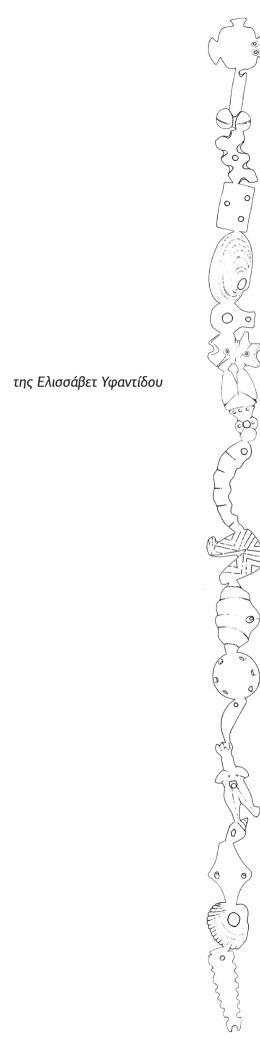
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Προέλευση εικονογραφικού υλικού

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Εικ. 2.3-2.4, 3.16-3.20, 4.5, 4.16-4.17, 5.2-5.3, Εικόνες στις σελ. xxv, 1, 11, 25, 39, 87, 183, 203, 319, 473, 507, & 557, Χάρτες στα Κεφάλαια 6, 8 & 9: Φώτης Υφαντίδης

Εικ. 0.1-0.2, 3.1α-β, 3.1δ, 4.1α, 4.3-4.4, 4.6-4.9, 4.10α, 4.11-4.15, 4.18-4.23, 4.24α, 4.25-4.63 & 5.4, Εικόνες κοσμημάτων από το Δισπηλιό στο Κεφάλαιο 7: Φώτης Υφαντίδης / Αρχείο Ανασκαφών Δισπηλιού

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Sources of iconographic material

The source of the pictures / drawings is credited in the legends either by a bibliographic reference and / or the name of the photographer / designer. In the cases of Eik. 3.4-3.15, as well as the iconographic material used in Chapters 6, 8 & 9, a reference is made to each archaeological site from where the depicted ornaments / site photos originate.

Eικ. 2.3-2.4, 3.16-3.20, 4.5, 4.16-4.17, 5.2-5.3, Photos in pages xxv, 1, 11, 25, 39, 87, 183, 203, 319, 473, 507 & 557, Maps in Chapters 6, 8 & 9: Fotis Ifantidis

Eiκ. 0.1-0.2, 3.1α-β, 3.1δ, 4.1α, 4.3-4.4, 4.6-4.9, 4.10α, 4.11-4.15, 4.18-4.23, 4.24α, 4.25-4.63 & 5.4, Photos of Dispilio ornaments in Chapter 7: Fotis Ifantidis / Archive of Dispilio Excavations

Εικ. 4.1β, 4.2: Archive of Dispilio Excavations

η όποια ταξινόμηση ή αιτιολόγηση των «ευχαριστώ» είναι, τις περισσότερες φορές, παραπλανητική όπως ακριβώς η ταξινόμηση των «ορφανών» νεολιθικών χαντρών: ανεξαρτήτως πάχους, διαμέτρου οπής ή υλικού κατασκευής ίσως στοιχειοθετούσαν, πολλές μαζί, ένα, χαμένο πλέον, περιδέραιο –η αιτιολόγηση της χρήσης του οποίου, τις περισσότερες φορές, δε μας είναι ξεκάθαρη.

για αυτό το περιδέραιο, που έψαχνα όλα αυτά τα χρόνια,

τα –άνευ εισαγωγικών– ευχαριστώ μου προς:

(τον Γ.Χ.Χ.) | τις / τους καθηγήτριες / καθηγητές του Α.Π.Θ.: Αικατερίνη Παπαευθυμίου-Παπανθίμου, Σουλτάνα-Μαρία Βαλαμώτη, Κώστα Κωτσάκη | τις / τους αναγνώστριες / αναγνώστες: Λίτσα Βούλγαρη, Δημήτρη Νικάκη, Μαριάννα Νικολαΐδου, Νάσια Χουρμουζιάδη | τις / τους συζητήτριες / συζητήτες: Κώστα Δημάκο, Γιάννη Μανιάτη, Βασίλη Μέλφο, Δήμητρα Μυλωνά, Βανέσσα Παπαγεωργίου, Γιάννη Χαμηλάκη, Daniella Bar-Yosef, John Chapman, Alice Choyke, Scott Haddow, Roberto Micheli, Catherine Perlès, Nerissa Russell, Selena Vitezović, Arne Windler | τα καφέ της πόλης: be, (piece of) cake, defacto, tom's | τις / τους συνανασκαφείς: Κλέα Δαραβίγκα, Ειρήνη Δελιδάκη, Σοφία Δουλκερίδου, Χαρά Λιατίφη, Τάσο Σιάννο, Γιάννη Σταυριδόπουλο | την οικογένειά μου



Summary

The objective of this book is the reconsideration of the practices of personal adornment during the Neolithic period in Greece, through the assemblage, extensive bibliographic documentation, and critical evaluation of all the available data deriving from more than a hundred sites in the mainland and the Aegean islands –an archaeological archive of wide geographical and chronological scope. In addition, a thorough study of the personal ornament *corpus* from the Middle-Late Neolithic Dispilio in Kastoria, an important lakeside settlement in northwestern Greece, was conducted.

The book begins with an overview of the anthropological and archaeological literature on theoretical and methodological issues concerning practices of personal adornment. Then follows an examination of the problems and key points of study regarding personal adornment in Neolithic Greece, as well as a critical evaluation of the methodological approaches and classification schemes that have been applied in previous archaeological works. Subsequently, the technologies and processes of production, consumption, recycling, deposition, and distribution of personal ornaments in Neolithic Greece are discussed. Finally, the social correlates of personal adornment are explored, as they are reflected in the choice of different raw materials (shell, clay, bone, stone, and metal) and ornament types (beads, pendants, annulets, and so forth).

The last years have seen a large number of archaeological studies –either papers or collective volumes– on practices of personal adornment. Quite notably, the majority of these works focuses on artefacts deriving from prehistoric contexts. This increasing academic production results from an overall shift of research interest towards parts of material culture which have been so far underrepresented in archaeological writings –as compared, for example, with pottery or other well-known 'toolkits'. Equally important is the recognition that there is a rich potential for the study of such 'minor' artefacts through interdisciplinary approaches, such archaeometric analyses or indepth reconstruction of the technological chains of production and use.

What is evident in these recent publications –most of which are not limited to mere documentation and typological catalogues– is the effort to redefine and interpret personal adornment; a practice that, seemingly at least, resonates with our contemporary experiences of ornaments as a vital and intense presence in our personal lives –in contrast, for example, to flint tools.

Additionally, it is emphasized that personal adornment –that is the means for the decoration of a human body– does not only objectify a mood for embellishment or a superficial demonstration of 'valuable' objects by an agent to the members of her/his group; nor does it necessarily signify a social privilege attached to a specific gender or a clearly defined class.

On the contrary, beads, bracelets, and pendants can be associated with various aspects of life and with many life histories in a past society, either on an individual or on a collective level. By analogy, the archaeological studies of ornament manufacture, conditions of use, destruction, repair, deposition, and/or exchange can be examined under various epistemological prisms.

Even though the ancient Greek etymological origin of jewelry, kosmos, states order (among other things), anthropological and ethnographic literature on the subject presents a rather chaotic view about what a piece of jewelry is and means. Early attempts, from the 19th century onwards, to record and classify practices of bodily adornment, were often permeated by colonialist, western, and/or romantic preconceptions. Adornment and clothing were considered as practices distinguishing the undressed from the dressed; in other words, the primitive 'wild' from the 'civilized'. During the following decades jewelry and body decoration in general would be placed in the context of non-verbal communication, a language with its own vocabulary and syntax which can potentially be decoded. The thorough anthropological field studies of later years would highlight the multiple and complex social, economic, and symbolic mechanisms that are related to personal adornment; practices which involve an inexhaustible variety of permanent and/or ephemeral transformations and attachments to the human body, including not only tangible objects -such as jewelry or dress paraphernalia- but even the management of the movements of body movements or odors. These practices were interpreted as means of individual expression, indicative of social wealth, rank, age, and gender; as political or sexual representations and connotations; as elements that facilitate ritual activities; and so on.

All this rich anthropological tradition was not automatically adopted as a theoretical and methodological tool for the archaeological study of ornaments. An obvious example are studies of Graeco-Roman jewelry as objects of 'minor' decorative arts, whereby the main interest was limited to the chronological attribution of the (almost exclusively) 'precious' –that is, gold– jewelry. With the turning points in archaeological theory –the New Archaeology and later the post-processual movement, which bring forward, respectively, the scientific approach in archaeology and the active, vital role of the individual and the material culture– came a wider range of questions concerning the study of personal adornment; for example, the association of ornaments with the

formation, promotion, and/or negotiation of the agents' individual identity, gender, and body; their interpretation as distinctive elements of cultural or even ethno-linguistic communities in space and time, or as evidence of symbolic thought and self-awareness –a field of study that is of strong interest during the last years in the paleolithic research, in the context of the identification of the earliest practices of adornment.

Despite these advances, there are still no developed and commonly accepted theoretical and methodological tools for the study of archaeological artefacts related to personal adornment – which is largely due to the fact that each jewelry assemblage has its own idiosyncrasies. Consequently, the effort of organizing (and taming) a large jewelry *corpus* of artefacts spanning considerable space and time in the Neolithic period of Greece, the case study of this book, faces many problems:

First, and most obvious, is the problem of **identification** (an act of interpretation in itself) of an artefact as a jewelry item and, consequently, its **classification** into a single –though conventional– typology for further analysis.

Second, the fact that only a **small percentage** of the original components of the prehistoric 'toolkit' of personal adornment has survived; that is, artefacts made of durable materials such as bone, stone, shell, clay, and metal. Thus, we have at our disposal only a few strands of direct evidence for the practice of adornment, to which may be added possible tools for the decoration of the body, such as stamps or color residues. On the other hand, there is also indirect evidence for ornamentation, mainly iconographic elements of clay figurines and pottery –at least as far as Neolithic Greece is concerned.

Third, the **limited excavational presence** of these generally small-sized objects –even though their representation is largely dependent on the specific excavation methods at each site—, as well as the problems concerning their statistical analysis. For example, the unitary numbering of a bead which originally belonged to a composite piece of jewelry, such as a necklace, can be rather misleading in constituting a 'safe', objective statistical sample.

Fourth, the very **heterogeneous nature** of this assemblage of objects, made from various raw materials and with different technological characteristics – qualities, that ideally, require different areas of expertise and analytical techniques for in-depth study.

Fifth, the problem of the frequently **inadequate chronological** and **contextual information** from limited sources, and the accompanying lack of iconographic documentation. The majority of publications on Neolithic personal adornment are preliminary reports, while studies of synthetic character (either monographs focusing on the assemblages from one site or inter-regional studies) are rare. In addition, much of the bibliography focuses on specific raw materials and/or ornament types, that treating them comprehensively.

Finally, the **difficulties of secure dating** and the **incomplete contextual support** due to the circumstances of recovery; the majority of Neolithic jewelry in Greece comes from excavated settlements, not from 'closed' contexts,

such as cemeteries, similar to those from the Chalcolithic Balkans.

The present study attempts, on the one hand, the comprehensive collection and critical re-interpretation of all the available data concerning the production and use of personal ornaments in Neolithic Greece; and, on the other, the thorough examination of the jewelry *corpus* excavated in the Neolithic lakeside settlement of Dispilio, Kastoria, in northwestern Greece.

As far as the first part is concerned, the effort was focused initially on the management of all the available data in order to highlight a unified –albeit conventional– typology. The assemblage of more than 27000 objects of personal adornment –beads, annulets, rings, pendants, 'pins', 'earrings', 'buttons', 'belt-buckles'– derives from more than a hundred sites dating in all phases of the Neolithic period in Greece. Both the excavation data and the documentation of the specific *corpora* were computed for each site; review and comparison of the available information led to the configuration of quantitative and qualitative patterns, which shed fresh light on the production and use of personal ornaments in each site, as well as across sites.

For the main case study in the second part, the personal ornament *corpus* from Dispilio, the level of information is more detailed and systematic, thanks to the author's participation in consecutive excavation seasons there. The construction of a comprehensive database for the ornaments and thorough correlation with contextual data and other aspects of material culture, allowed a better understanding of the production and use of jewelry at this site.

In addition, an overview of international research on adornment was deemed necessary, in order to obtain comparative information from other key Neolithic cultures Europe, the Balkans, as well as Anatolia.

Finally, a supplementary aim of the book was the re-examination of the data concerning artefacts made from the *Spondylus gaederopus* shell and –the equally important– *Glycymeris* seashell. The production, use, and distribution of these artefacts (the majority of which are personal ornaments) in prehistoric Europe, the Balkans, and Anatolia has been traditionally placed in the discussion concerning the existence of prehistoric 'trade' networks. The update of the available data upon this issue aimed to the identification of the complexity of this phenomenon –especially as it concerns directly Neolithic Greece as the Mediterranean Sea is considered the main source of the raw material of these shells.

During the **Early Neolithic** (6700/6500-5800/5600 BC) period in Greece the majority of personal ornaments are simple in terms of morphology and/or technological process; for example, pebbles, animal teeth or shells perforated for suspension. More elaborate ornaments –although fewer– are recorded as well, such as miniscule beads and (predominantly stone) pendants with anthropomorphic and/or zoomorphic characteristics. In addition, elongated bone and stone ornaments, known in the literature as 'studs' or 'earrings', as well as hook-shaped 'belt-buckles' bone –both types known from early Anatolian sites– are also found in many Greek sites during this early period.

During the **Middle Neolithic** (5800/5600-5400/5300 BC) both the variety, as well as the quantity of ornaments is increased. Stone and shell annulets appear in a larger scale, while an advanced exploitation of different kinds of shells for the construction of pendants is noted.

It is, however, during the next phases, the **Late** and **Final Neolithic** (5400/5300-4700/4500 & 4700/4500-3300/3100 BC) that ornament production reaches its peak, in terms both of quantity and variety of products. There are indications for an extensive and, in some cases, standardized production of jewelry, as in the case of annulets made from the marine seashell *Spondylus gaederopus* at several sites in Thessaly and Northern Greece; steatite beads, which were most probably thermally processed, at various sites in the Greek mainland; and marble jewelry found in Northern Greek sites, the raw material for which originated in the Cycladic islands. During the same period certain types of ornaments have a wide distribution and share common characteristics, for example the so-called 'ring-idol' pendants. Many of these ring-shaped pendants were made of metal, which began to be used as raw material for ornaments during these later phases of the Neolithic.

In this concise view of the Neolithic Greek personal ornament *corpora*, the focus in certain technological and typological characteristics of the use and the circulation of jewelry across space and time, can highlight many significant aspects, that arise discussion:

The choice of **raw materials** for the manufacture of personal ornaments bears little relation to those materials' local availability and accessibility, or to their physical properties –for example, malleability– that would lend themselves to effortless transformation into artefacts. Indeed, many raw materials originated in distant places; for example, ornaments made of the marine shell *Spondylus gaederopus* are found in sites far from the coast, and marble from the Cyclades appears to have reached the inland region of Kastoria in northwestern Greece. The rarity of these substances was perhaps felt as a connection between the producers and users of ornaments with the unknown (or indirectly known via third parties) environments of the ornaments' material origin. On the contrary, we see relatively little interest in the use of local resources such as clay or bone, which were directly available in every settlement, could be easily modified, and were intensively used to manufacture other types of artefacts.

The frequent preference for certain raw materials with an already 'predetermined' form that required only minimal intervention, such as animal teeth and freshwater and sea shells, may reflect meaningful associations beyond the mere expediency of transformation. The gender connotations of specific shells or the emblematic value of wild fauna teeth as symbols and transmitters of power are widespread cross-culturally, although they should not be uncritically projected back to the Neolithic material. Even more compelling is the interpretation of pendants and beads made of human teeth –special, less 'wild' taxa–, of which there is a unique example from Dispilio.

Several **individual properties** of the raw materials were probably considered together for the manufacture of ornaments; hardness, gloss, transparency, luminosity, and color appear as particularly important. A plethora of ethnographic examples highlight the many possible symbolisms of such material properties; for instance, the associations of the color red with blood or of the white with purity and/or death. Such values have been proposed –albeit not always convincingly– for Neolithic ornaments as well.

The choice and supply of the raw material as much as the subsequent **stages of the manufacture** (**chaînes opératoires**) of an ornament were not merely technical procedures. Many of the manufacturing methods follow rules already known from other industries, such as grinding, knapping or drilling, while other times workmanship is more ornament-specific, as in the case of shell

annulets and beads. In either case, the crafting of objects directly associated with one's body and central to one's persona and interface with others, must have been imbued with meanings relating to individual and social identity.

The creation of new 'typologies' determined primarily by technique, as was the case with ornaments others than those already 'pre-formed' by nature, also carried the potential for interpretative classifications by both the producers and the users. Such taxonomies would likely differ among communities and/or individuals, even among people within the same group, and could additionally change over time.

Simple pendants of geometric form, shell or stone annulets of inner diameter ranging from small to large, might be perceived and interpreted in different ways according to their various placements on the human body. For example, a bracelet worn on the right wrist might signal something completely different when worn on the left or when hung on the neck as a pendant. Such possibilities are illustrated by an anthropomorphic bone pendant from Dispilio, which was initially manufactured to be worn in a horizontal position by means of stringing holes; later on, these perforations were destroyed but the object continued to be used, aligned in a different direction and thus possibly constituting a completely 'new' ornament with its own 'meaning'.

The number of ornaments which seem, at least to us, to incorporate human or animal characteristics is small in comparison to the simple beads and pendants that make up the majority of the ornament *corpora* in most excavated Greek sites. Frogs, bears, women giving birth, isolated parts of the body such as phalluses and legs, represent an heterogeneous iconographic repertoire that does not seem bound by specific rules, if any; perhaps each one of these elements belong to its own category or categories.

The limited quantity of ornaments with human or animal semblances could be partly explained in terms of the special skills needed for their production; indeed, most of them are quite sophisticated in comparison to other types. Another possibility is that such rarer, 'figurative ornaments' had more restricted and/or regulated uses as 'special' personal belongings or as tokens and symbols reserved for specific individuals; or even, the possibility that certain social rules imposed to these ornaments a regime of common use by all the members of the group. Nevertheless, the lack of the archaeological research should not be overlooked, since similar ornaments made from other, perishable, materials may have co-existed, some of which would mimic a prototype.

The frequently documented attempt of replacing raw materials either not easily accessible or no longer available by handier resources could not be the only reason for the manufacture of ornaments imitating other artifacts or natural forms by a process of **skeuomorphism**. For example, bracelets were transformed into pendants shaped like animal teeth, while other pendants replicated tools; in a reverse process, tools were 'recycled' into items of adornment, as was the case with a flint arrowhead made of too soft a stone to be operational as such.

The detailed study of the surface is a potential mine of information about the **modes of use** of the beads and pendants, the position of the annulets on the body of the wearers or the identification of ornaments that formed elements sawn on clothing articles. For some other types, however, including the so-called 'earrings', 'nails', and 'pins', the modes of wearing can only be hypothesized by resorting to indirect evidence, that is, the possible depiction of such ornaments on human figurines of clay.

Information that can be drawn from burial contexts -ornaments as offerings or directly connected to the bodies of the deceased- is very important but unfortunately scarce for Neolithic

Greece. Even in the few documented cases, there is not adequate material to reconstruct, for example, burial 'costumes' such as those from burial sites in prehistoric Europe and the Balkans. Nevertheless, we may reasonably assume that patterns of inclusion or exclusion according to gender, age or social status found material expression in habits of personal adornment –be it in the world of the living or the dead. Anthropological and ethnographic studies provide a wealth of comparanda on the subject.

In the case of Neolithic ornaments from Greece, social and symbolic distinctions have been proposed especially for those items worn directly on the body (to be differentiated from those attached on attire), particularly the annulets/bracelets, the inner diameter of which exhibits enough variation in size to suggest **age-specific associations**; the small annulets worn by children, the larger ones by older persons. It is also possible to identify certain artefacts that their form was progressively adjusted to the biological development of the wearers' body. For example, a small (initially 'infantile') shell bracelet from Dispilio had been turned into a pendant through the opening of a suspension hole.

Alongside this view of ornaments as 'personal' possessions associated with the bodies of specific individuals, particular bodies, one might also consider the entire 'costume' or 'dress' as 'insignium' of a community, of a larger group of neolithic 'bodies'. Attractive as this hypothesis is, it lacks enough supporting evidence such as, for example, ornament types that are exclusively present in one archaeological site. One such possible assemblage has been recorded at Dispilio, where a rather large group of small-diameter rings made of red deer antler is exclusively found in levels dating to one chronological phase of the settlement's life, while deer antler finger-rings of this type do not exist in other contemporary sites in the Aegean region. It is far from clear, however, whether these unique objects played a role as distinctive elements of communal identity at Dispilio.

Of particular interest are the clues to the possible function of these rings, which were revealed by examining the morphology and surface wear of the artefacts. It seems that they were used as protection for the fingers during archery; they were thus a necessary part of a hunting toolkit and at the same time held ornamental value. This **hybrid** type of **ornaments/tools** calls for reconsideration of the traditional view of adornment as non-practical or non-economical, and at the same time challenges the archaeological dichotomies between function and form in material culture. In addition, the practice of transforming tools, such as stone axes or bone spatulas, into ornaments by means of a simple –yet conscious and not at all fortuitous– suspension hole, brings to the fore the biographical approach to material culture; in other words, the essential obligation of the researcher to reconstruct the life cycles of non-static and continuously active objects.

Much has been said about ornaments as distinctive elements of ethnic group identity, especially with regard to the so-called 'earrings', 'studs' and/or 'belt-buckles', which are present almost exclusively during the early phases of the Neolithic throughout Greece. According to an often-held but difficult to prove view, these items were the cultural 'insignia' of certain groups from Anatolia and reached the Aegean as part of the 'neolithic package'. Instead, it would be more fruitful to think of different, not mutually exclusive ways, in which ornamentation can signal and diversify one group form another; specific dress modes, ephemeral color decorations or body transformations –elements that are rarely visible in the archaeological record– could be deployed to this effect. Moving on to the later phases of the Greek Neolithic, the existence of an **ornament 'koine'** is indicated by the wide distribution of ornaments that are typologically similar but made of different raw materials; the aforementioned 'ring-idol' pendants are a prime example of this tendency to

repeat a morphological pattern across material media.

As for the bangles/annulets made from the marine shell *Spondylus gaederopus*, they constituted an almost 'commercial' product in circulation across Late Neolithic of Europe and the Balkans, while many of the production centers have been affirmed in the Aegean region. It would be quite simplistic to regard these ornaments as a passing 'vogue', an ephemeral fashion, since their presence extends over a period of more than two millennia.

We are on firmer grounds regarding evidence for the intense use of the *Spondylus* bangles, which suggests that they were objects fundamental to everyday life. In addition, many were repaired and/or processed after they were worn or damaged: some broken annulets were refitted by grinding their fractured edges and opening perforations for the re-connection of their fragmented parts; others were turned into pendants. In some cases, we can discern the almost agonizing attempts to repair these 'valuable' pieces. What these **repair** and **alteration practices** point to is not only the economic, social or symbolic value of these ornaments that continue their 'life' after their first destruction; but also, their **multi-temporal status**, as these artefacts may have been connected to many manufacturers / repairers / users, passing through generations as **heirlooms**.

Multi-temporality may be acknowledged as much in simple beads and pendants as in more sophisticated and technically demanding ornaments. The special morphology or raw material of the latter could even cause commotions inside a community, resulting in restricted circulation or withdrawal of these coveted artefacts. Of course, the concealment of ornaments as an important asset is not the only explanation for the practice of **'hoarding'**. Accumulations of Neolithic ornaments and other valuables are well-known in the Balkans, and some examples are documented in Greece as well:

strands of beads (necklaces) carefully placed inside ceramic vessels,

assemblages of *Spondylus gaederopus* annulets and 'buttons' at the key-site of Dimini in Thessaly, which (according to one hypothesis) were deliberately destroyed in order to control their production,

or a group of marble annulet fragments from Dispilio, all found together in one place; traces of recycle and alteration on most of them indicate the operation of a 'repair workshop'.

The above assemblages are significant in their intra-site context. On an **inter-site scale**, we observe interesting similarities among the ornament *corpora* from neighboring settlements or regions, to the point of identical pieces occasionally present at different contemporary sites –especially across the Aegean islands. Two examples illustrate this commonality. First, the Late Neolithic 'ring-idols' made of metal mostly come from caves; perhaps there was a shared need to conceal individual ornaments (of special value?). Another type predominantly found in caves, the phallus-shaped pendants, may have embodied symbolisms especially associated with grottoes and cavernous environments.

However, the dominant image that has been recorded by the excavation research and publication is that of ornaments found alongside with other products of ecotechnical activities –other (tangible) aspects of sustenance and craft– in a Neolithic settlement. The careful analysis of in-

ter-and intra-site typologies and distributions promises rewarding insights into the social context of Neolithic adornment; provided that there is sufficient documentation of context –for instance, association of ornaments with excavated 'households' – and focused collecting of data for the purposes of comparative and statistical analyses.

In reality, the uneven quality of the archaeological record on ornaments blurs any desirable 'big picture' of the production and use of personal ornaments in Neolithic Greece. Whether filling variables in a database or identifying distributions on a chart assists in this effort, is of course a matter of the research queries put on each case; questions that can be approached by revisiting older data with the benefit of current analytical methods and experimental reproductions while new material has been forthcoming in a massive scale from the systematic and meticulous excavations of recent years in Greece.

The direct testimonies revealed by excavation, although ambiguous (visible yet blurred), place the practices of personal adornment in the everyday life of Neolithic communities, as an integral part in the production and reproduction of social mechanisms. From the choice and processing of the raw material to the use and wear by one or more persons, to the destruction, repair, recycling or deposition, ornaments were not only visible. As artefacts physically linked to the human body (at least according to our understanding), ornaments were also entangled in other sensory areas: pendants absorbed the body odors and fragrances of those who wore them; necklaces were 'heard' as their components jingled with the rhythmic body movements; bracelets may have felt too tight and cumbersome on the wrists, even if made from an 'exotic' and precious seashell fished in faraway seas.

The book is structured in 9 chapters:

Chapter 1, Anthropologies and Archeologies of Personal Adornment, reviews research on the practices of personal adornment cross-culturally.

Chapter 2, *Personal Adornment in Neolithic Greece: History of Research*, gives an overview of the archaeological data on jewelry during the Paleolithic, Mesolithic, and Neolithic periods in Greece, followed by a presentation of the main aspects of the research. A critical evaluation of the available archaeological literature highlights the problems attached to the characteristics of the Greek Neolithic period, as well as the key points that have been addressed by scholars concerning adornment; for example, the focus of the investigation either on specific ornament types, such as those deemed to be material culture elements of Anatolian origin, or on particular raw materials, such as the marine shell *Spondylus qaederopus* and metal.

Chapter 3, Personal Adornment in Neolithic Greece: Production & Function, consists of a detailed presentation of the characteristics regarding the manufacture and use of ornaments in Neolithic Greece. The critical evaluation of the methodological approaches of the study of ornaments in Greece and the classification schemes is followed by the presentation of their technological and typological characteristics regarding the raw material procurement, the *chaînes opératoires*, as well as their chronological and geographical distribution.

Chapter 4, Personal Adornment in Neolithic Dispilio, consists the detailed analysis of the cor-

pus of jewelry found at the lakeside settlement near Kastoria, in northwestern Greece. This Middle-Late Neolithic assemblage is characterized by a significant variety in terms of typology and quantity. The presentation of the information obtained by the study of architecture and material culture of the Neolithic site is followed by the demonstration of the elements of production and use of each ornament type (shell and bone annulets and rings, beads, pendants, 'belt-buckles', 'pins'). Apart from the analysis of their chronological and spatial distribution, emphasis is given into particular ornament types, such as the antler finger-rings or the *Spondylus* shell 'belt-buckles' (both unique types in the Neolithic of Greece), the intensive production of fired steatite beads or the annulets made of marble originating from the Cycladic islands. Furthermore, the analysis of this *corpus* enables the discussion of issues, such as the acts of hoarding, repairing, and recycling, the practices of skeuomorphism and imitation in ornament production, the recognition of hybridity and multitemporality or other possible symbolic connotations, as well as the relation of the ornaments with the human body.

Chapter 5, *Discussion: Potentials and Restrictions of Interpretation*, is a synthesis of the hermeneutical approaches concerning the production and function of personal ornaments in Neolithic Greece, emanating from the choice of raw material and the technological process, the use and wear by one (or more) bodies, to their destruction, repair, recycling, deposition or distribution. These, aforementioned in the previous chapters, technological, typological and distributional characteristics are summarized, while a sensorial and biographical approach in the study of personal ornaments is suggested, on the occasion of the discussion of the rare case of the use of human teeth as 'personal' ornaments from the Neolithic site of Dispilio.

Chapter 6, *Personal Ornaments from Neolithic Greece*, is the outcome of the attempt to systematically collect and process the available data regarding the presence of jewelry in Neolithic Greece. The *corpora* of ornaments in this catalogue, consist of more than 27000 artefacts, including beads, annulets, rings, pendants, 'belt-buckles', 'earrings', 'buttons' and 'pins' from more than a hundred sites in Greece, dating from the Early Neolithic to the Late/Final Neolithic periods. For each site the relevant excavation data, chronology, and documentation of the ornament assemblages were recorded, in order to tabulate quantitative and qualitative features of the artefacts, regarding their contextual, morphological and technological characteristics.

Chapter 7, Catalogue of Personal Ornaments from Neolithic Dispilio, is an abridged version of the electronic database of the Neolithic ornaments excavated at the lakeside settlement of Dispilio, Kastoria. The catalogue contains all the information regarding the contextual, morphological, and technological properties of every bead, pendant, bracelet and 'belt-buckle' from the Middle-Late Neolithic phases at the site; each catalogue entry in accompanied by photographic illustration.

Chapter 8, Personal Ornaments from Neolithic Anatolia, the Balkans ⊕ Europe, gathers together ornament assemblages from various prehistoric sites, most of which are referred to in the main text of the book.

Chapter 9, Spondylus gaederopus / Glycymeris sp. in Anatolia, the Balkans ⊕ Europe, is focused on the circulation of ornaments manufactured from the Mediterranean species Spondylus and Glycymeris. After an outline of the history of research, the data on the raw material procurement, process, and 'consumption' of these artefacts, there followed a detailed catalogue of all sites known so far, dating from the Early Neolithic to the Bronze Age.