

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-66032-8 - Images of Woman and Child from the Bronze Age: Reconsidering Fertility, Maternity, and Gender in the Ancient World

Stephanie Lynn Budin

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

---

### Images of Woman and Child from the Bronze Age

This book is a study of the woman-and-child motif – known as the kourotrophos – as it appeared in the Bronze Age eastern Mediterranean. Stephanie Lynn Budin argues that, contrary to many current beliefs, the image was not a universal symbol of maternity or a depiction of a mother goddess. In most of the ancient world, kourotrophic iconography was relatively rare in comparison to other images of women and served a number of different symbolic functions, ranging from honoring the king of Egypt to adding strength to magical spells to depicting scenes of daily life. This work provides an in-depth examination of ancient kourotrophoi and engages with a variety of debates that they have spawned, including their role in the rise of patriarchy and what they say about ancient constructions of gender.

Stephanie Lynn Budin teaches at Rutgers University, Camden. She is the author of *The Myth of Sacred Prostitution in Antiquity* (Cambridge University Press, 2008) and numerous articles on ancient religion and iconography.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-66032-8 - Images of Woman and Child from the Bronze Age: Reconsidering Fertility, Maternity,  
and Gender in the Ancient World

Stephanie Lynn Budin

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

---



Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-66032-8 - Images of Woman and Child from the Bronze Age: Reconsidering Fertility, Maternity,  
and Gender in the Ancient World

Stephanie Lynn Budin

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

IMAGES OF WOMAN AND  
CHILD FROM THE BRONZE AGE

*Reconsidering Fertility,  
Maternity, and Gender in the  
Ancient World*

STEPHANIE LYNN BUDIN

*Rutgers University, Camden*



CAMBRIDGE  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-66032-8 - Images of Woman and Child from the Bronze Age: Reconsidering Fertility, Maternity, and Gender in the Ancient World

Stephanie Lynn Budin

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

**CAMBRIDGE**  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

32 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10013-2473, USA

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning, and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)

Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9781107660328](http://www.cambridge.org/9781107660328)

© Stephanie Lynn Budin 2011

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2011

Reprinted 2012

First paperback edition 2014

Printed in the United States of America

*A catalog record for this publication is available from the British Library.*

*Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication data*

Budin, Stephanie Lynn, 1969–

Images of woman and child from the Bronze age : reconsidering fertility, maternity, and gender in the ancient world / Stephanie Lynn Budin.

p. cm

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-0-521-19304-7 (hardback)

1. Bronze age – Mediterranean Region. 2. Art, Prehistoric – Mediterranean Region.

3. Sculpture, Prehistoric – Mediterranean Region. 4. Figurines, Prehistoric – Mediterranean Region. 5. Mother goddesses – Mediterranean Region. 6. Mother and child in art.

7. Mediterranean Region – Antiquities. I. Title.

GN778.25.B83 2011

930.1'5 – dc22 2010044866

ISBN 978-0-521-19304-7 Hardback

ISBN 978-1-107-66032-8 Paperback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party Internet Web sites referred to in this publication and does not guarantee that any content on such Web sites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-66032-8 - Images of Woman and Child from the Bronze Age: Reconsidering Fertility, Maternity,  
and Gender in the Ancient World

Stephanie Lynn Budin

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## Contents

<i>List of Illustrations</i>	<i>page</i> vii
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	ix
<b>1 Introduction – Kourotrophic Iconography in the Ancient Near East and Mediterranean: Origins and Meanings</b>	<b>1</b>
Theorizing the Kourotrophos: Where Sex Meets Gender	4
Dealing with Figurines	25
A Few Words on the Term “Kourotrophos”	29
Inverse	32
<b>2 Egypt</b>	<b>35</b>
Egyptian Decorum	36
The Divine Wet Nurse	38
Parents and Nurses and Tutors	89
Potency Figurines	117
Ostraca and Wall Paintings: Die Wochenlaube	135
Flasks	142
Straddling the Gender Divide: Male Kourotrophoi	147
<b>3 The Levant and Anatolia</b>	<b>149</b>
The Levant	149
Anatolia	173

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-66032-8 - Images of Woman and Child from the Bronze Age: Reconsidering Fertility, Maternity,  
and Gender in the Ancient World

Stephanie Lynn Budin

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

vi

**Contents**

<b>4 Mesopotamia and Iran</b>	184
Mesopotamia	184
Iran	214
<b>5 Cyprus</b>	221
Maternity in the Cypriot Iconographic Record	221
The Bronze Age Kourotrophi of Cyprus	229
<b>6 The Aegean</b>	269
Minoan Crete	269
Mycenaean Greece	299
<b>7 Conclusions</b>	326
Rare, Uncommon, Atypical	327
The Ambiguity of Status	329
The Matter of Gender	333
Summary	346
<i>Bibliography</i>	349
<i>Index</i>	379

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-66032-8 - Images of Woman and Child from the Bronze Age: Reconsidering Fertility, Maternity,  
and Gender in the Ancient World

Stephanie Lynn Budin

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## List of Illustrations

Frontispiece: Limestone Shard. British Museum 15973. Drawing by Paul C. Butler.

1. Sahure and Nekhbet	<i>page</i> 43
2. Queen Ahmes and the Infant Hatshepsut at Deir el-Bahri	65
3. Seti and Mut, from the Seti Temple at Abydos	79
4. Ivory Figurine	91
5. Barge Scene	93
6. Ankhnes-Meryre II	95
7. Sobeknakht	99
8. Senenmut and Neferure	109
9. Akhnaten and Family (Altar)	115
10. Type Six Potency Figurine	119
11. Ostrakon	137
12. Flask	143
13. Byblos Bronze	153
14. Ugarit Ivory Panel	155
15. Beth Shean Figurine	163
16. Revadim Plaque	167
17. Lead from Alishar	175
18. Bronze from Horoztepe	179
19. Gold Pendant from the Schimmel Collection	181
20. Uqnitum Seal	186
21. Zamena Seal	187

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-66032-8 - Images of Woman and Child from the Bronze Age: Reconsidering Fertility, Maternity,  
and Gender in the Ancient World

Stephanie Lynn Budin

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

viii

**List of Illustrations**

22. Akkadian Seal, Boehmer 555	189
23. Akkadian Seal, Boehmer 558	190
24. Akkadian Seal, Boehmer 557	191
25. Ninhursag Plaque	201
26. Babylonian Plaque: Nude	207
27. Babylonian Plaque: Clothed	209
28. Archaic Iranian Plaque	215
29. Iranian Plaque	218
30. Iranian Bronze Figurine	219
31. Cypriot Plank Figurine	231
32. Kourotrophos from Alaminos	231
33. Kourotrophos from Alambra	233
34. Cypriot Trough Scene	235
35. Cypriot "Hermaphrodite"	241
36. Vounous Bowl	253
37. Bird-Faced Kourotrophos	263
38. Monastiraki Plaque	271
39. Ivory Triad from Mycenae	285
40. Mavrospelio "Kourotrophos"	289
41. Mycenaean Phi Kourotrophos	303
42. Mycenaean Tau Kourotrophos	304
43. Mycenaean Psi Kourotrophos	305
44. Aidonia Kourotrophos	307
45. Voula Enthroned Kourotrophos	313



Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-66032-8 - Images of Woman and Child from the Bronze Age: Reconsidering Fertility, Maternity, and Gender in the Ancient World

Stephanie Lynn Budin

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## Acknowledgments

I cannot thank enough all of the people who offered time, patience, and constructive criticism while I was writing this book. I must begin offering oblations to the Brooklyn Museum for quick and kind responses by Edward Bleiberg and Ruth Janson to requests for information and photographs, to its library for allowing me to borrow R. Unger's 1957 dissertation in spite of the fact that it is the only known copy on the North American continent.

Several scholars kept me from making a total idiot of myself while trying to cover huge swaths of the ancient world in one book, and were extremely helpful with bibliography. Heartfelt thanks go out to Julia Assante, Kelly Barnard, Elizabeth Beck, Marilyn Kelly-Buccellati, Christine Morris, Gay Robins, Catherine Roehrig, Jeremy Rutter, Gabor Toth, Melissa Vettors, Jennifer Webb, Jennifer Houser Wegner, Steve Wiggins, and John Younger.

Many thanks, as ever, go to the interlibrary loan librarians at Robeson Library at Rutgers University, Camden.

As I was completing this book, Mary Beard wrote a post on her blog "A Don's Life" complaining about how difficult it can be to get images to illustrate history books. She was guilty of understatement, as though suggesting that the Pacific Ocean can get damp in the rain. Several people helped me to get the images I needed for this book (several also hindered to the best of their ability; Beard certainly got that part right . . .). I thank those helpful individuals who allowed scholarship to

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-66032-8 - Images of Woman and Child from the Bronze Age: Reconsidering Fertility, Maternity,  
and Gender in the Ancient World

Stephanie Lynn Budin

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

---

x

## Acknowledgments

go forward: Yael Barschak, Helen Berry, Maria Hadjicosti, Dominique Hoornaert, Thomas Kiely (an amazing Cypriot scholar in his own right), Stan Kurowski, Alessandro Pezzati (Archchancellor of Archivists), Rosa Proskynitopoulou, and Tricia Smith at Art Resource. I thank the British Museum as an institution for offering such easy access to images of their collections.

I thank Beatrice Rehl at Cambridge University Press for believing in this book even when it was in the stream-of-consciousness phase. I thank William H. Stoddard for all his help editing and being far more adept with the English language than I am.

I most of all thank my husband Paul C. Butler for support, patience, and a LOT of artwork (see above, Mary Beard . . . ).