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Spatial and Social Discontinuities in Burial Practice and the Privatisation of Mortuary Space in Bronze Age Cyprus

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Abstract

This paper looks at spatial and social discontinuities in burial practice and in the intensity with which burial places became contested spaces in Bronze Age Cyprus. Early and Middle Bronze Age cemeteries are typically viewed as communal landscapes associated with ancestral claims to place and community, a process that involved varied levels of social negotiation and posturing linked at some sites with ritual and material culture elaboration and the likely use of some tombs as mortuary shrines. In the Late Bronze Age there was a shift, in some settlements, to intramural burial. This 'privatisation' of mortuary space has been linked with the rise of more rigid political and economic structures and the development of an 'urban mindset'. The public/private dichotomy across the Middle to Late Bronze Age transition, however, appears to have been overstated. While earlier, relatively fluid associations did give way to more structured relationships, likely reducing the need for community-wide strategies of affiliation, this did not happen evenly across the island and at many settlements it did not happen at all. The boundary between intra- and extramural burial, furthermore, was never absolute and the inclusive egalitarian village cemetery may never have been a reality, with the dead perhaps always viewed as belonging to lineage groups rather than to a wider ancestral community. Variations in the place value of burial are visible throughout the Bronze Age and the apparent shift to intramural burial is likely to have been determined by historically contingent circumstances rather than changes in ideology or emerging notions of privacy or hierarchy.

Keywords: Bronze Age Cyprus, cemeteries, mortuary practices, place value, privatisation, social hierarchy

Introduction

This paper looks at spatial and social discontinuities in burial practice as well as the extent to which burial places became contested spaces in Bronze Age Cyprus (see Figure 1 for site locations and Table 1 for Bronze Age Cypriot chronology). When I initially set out to write a paper on this topic, the line of argument seemed clear. In the Early Bronze Age (EBA) or Early Cypriot (EC) and Middle Bronze Age (MBA) or Middle Cypriot (MC) periods, cemeteries were communal landscapes associated with ancestral claims to place and community; they involved varied levels of social negotiation and posturing and this was linked at some sites with ritual and material culture elaboration and the likely use of some tombs as mortuary shrines. With the move during the Late Bronze Age (LBA) or Late Cypriot (LC) period to intramural burial, the focus shifted from community to family and burial became, at least for elites, a more exclusive affair. This

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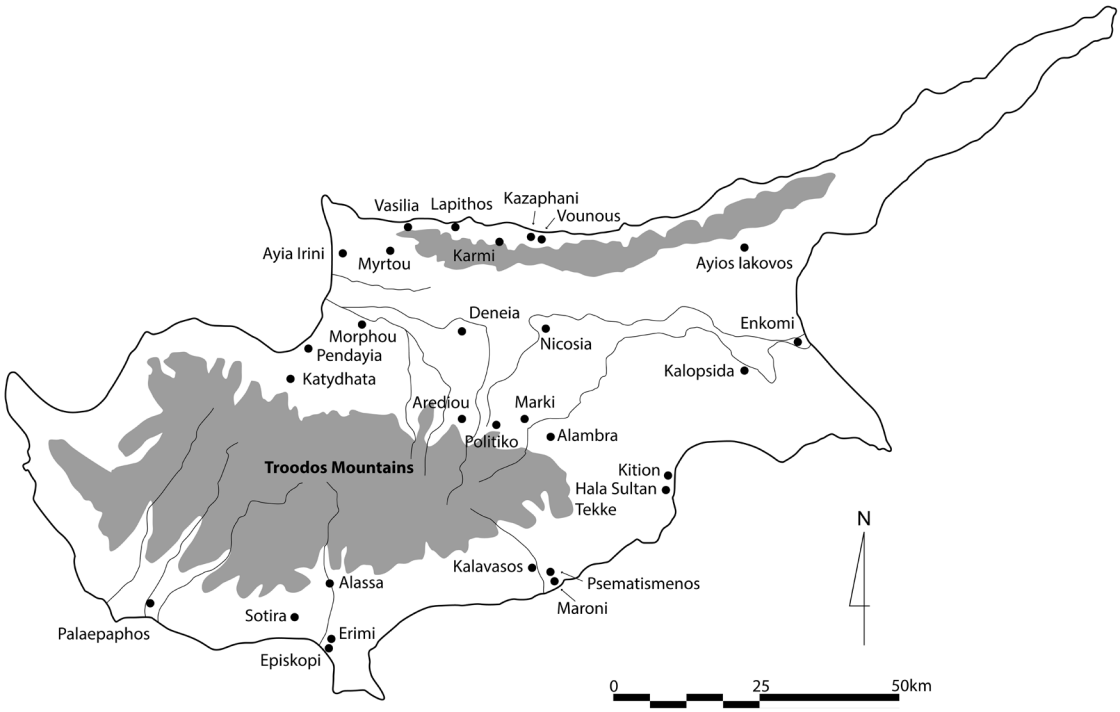

Figure 1. Map of Cyprus, showing main sites mentioned in the text.

'privatisation' of mortuary space, I considered, might be seen to reflect the rise of more rigid political and economic structures, the emergence of religious specialists and the development of an 'urban mindset' (Manning *et al.* 2014: 5), during which social action and ritual performance became increasingly subservient to the political economy and the needs of aspiring elites.

While in broad outline this trajectory holds true, a more considered study shows the story to be far from straightforward. At all stages of the Bronze Age, burial ritual was tied to identity, authority and legitimacy (see Janes 2014 for a similar argument in relation to early Iron Age Cyprus), and earlier relatively fluid and dynamic associations did give way over time to more structured, non-negotiable relationships, reducing the need for community-wide strategies of affiliation and investment in public/inclusive mortuary ritual. This did not, however, happen evenly across the island and at many (even most) settlements it did not happen at all. Similarly, the public/private dichotomy—the perception of extramural burials (or cemeteries) as communal and inclusive and intramural burials as private and exclusive spaces—now appears overly simplistic; and the shift in some settlements to intramural burial is likely to have been determined by historically contingent circumstances rather than shifts in ideology or emerging notions of privacy or hierarchy. This in turn calls into question whether such diverse and contingent processes can serve more broadly to illuminate the transition from egalitarian to wealth-based, hierarchical and politically centralised societies (on the problems of applying a similar evolutionary trajectory in Bronze Age Crete, see Catapoti 2014: 525-28).

Mortuary Landscapes

We may assume that burial places and burial grounds were chosen in accordance with certain rules of topography and cosmology. The

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Table 1. Chronological schema for Bronze age Cyprus (see Manning 2013).

Period	*Approximate dates Cal BC*
Philia Early Cypriot (Philia EC)	2400/2350–2250
Early Cypriot I–II (EC I–II)	2250–2150
Early Cypriot III (EC III)	2150–1950
Middle Cypriot I (MC I)	1950–1850
Middle Cypriot II (MC II)	1850–1750/1700
Middle Cypriot III (MC III)	1750/1700–1680/1650
Late Cypriot I (LC I)	1680/1650–1450
Late Cypriot II (LC II)	1340/1325–1200

former are obvious enough: both pit graves and chamber tombs could only be dug where suitable bedrock was available, and most are located on natural inclines, scarps or plateaux. The latter are more difficult if not impossible to observe and are rarely, if ever, considered. Spaces, however, are not necessarily (perhaps never) passive, and may themselves attract and determine human action. Thus natural or non-material factors may also have played a significant role in the choice of burial location (see various papers in Harmanşah 2014). Space is also shaped by social action, transforming in the process to 'place' (Chapman 2000: 183-84; Ashmore 2002: 1176). Cemeteries, further, are heightened and persistent places, visited at repeated points of crisis and transition, and sites of deliberate, structured deposition that define transgenerational relationships. Such loci have particularly complex place biographies.

Cemeteries also involve ongoing collaboration and negotiation between individuals, groups and communities. Canuto and Yaeger's (2000: 6) characterisation of community as 'the conjunction of people, place, and premise' is a useful means of examining the relationship between the interactions that occur in such spaces and the sense of shared identity that both fosters and is fostered by these interactions. Equally, Chapman's (2000: 146) discussion of the formation of personhood through group membership—expressed spatially within funerary practice as the burial location and socially as those with whom a person is buried—gives rise to the recognition of discrete social-spatial groupings within the mortuary domain. Tombs contain one or more sets of burials, and cemeteries contain sets of tombs within a larger corporate landscape. We may, then, envisage three (or four) nested scales within the socio-spatial grouping of the ancestors, comprising individual tombs (sets of bodies), sets of tombs and the cemetery or sets of cemeteries. At the broadest level this may be viewed as an indication of successful group formation and maintenance (a conjunction of people, place and premise); at the micro-scale a more complex picture emerges of multiple socio-spatial groupings and of cemetery formation as rife with potentially competitive decisions and dispositions (Ashmore 2002: 1176; see also Cuozzo 2014).

Cemetery Location: Contingent and Cumulative Place Value

With some exceptions (see below), burial in extramural cemeteries located outside the village boundaries was the norm in EBA and MBA Cyprus (Keswani 2004: 37-83). Cemeteries literally impress upon (or into) the landscape the permanence and stability of the associated settlement and its inhabitants. The Cypriot mortuary record, particularly on the north coast, shows a marked preference for the continued

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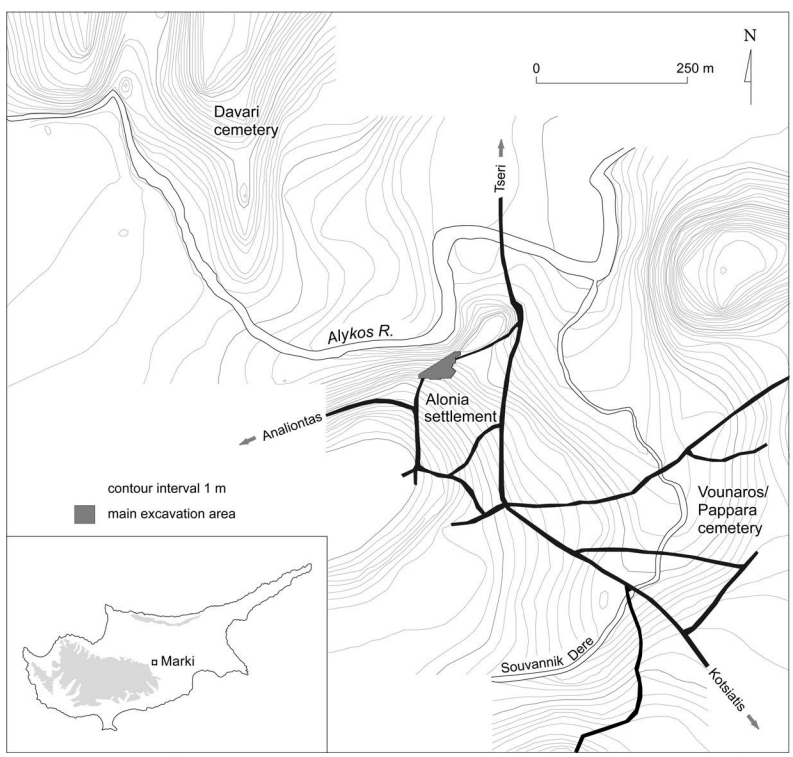
use of existing chambers over the construction of new tombs or burial grounds (Webb and Frankel 2010). This longevity, sometimes over two or three hundred years, is matched by the repeated in-place rebuilding of houses, as seen in the long-lasting compounds within the excavated area of the settlement at Marki *Alonia* (Frankel and Webb 2012). Both suggest a significant concern with the social and material reproduction of space and place.

Cemeteries also frequently serve as territorial markers or operate more actively in strategies of territory formation, while tomb construction may be a legitimising act, laying claim to place and to the anteriority and posteriority of rights to settlement and land (see e.g. McAnany 1998; Buikstra and Charles 1999). In Cyprus, this may have been particularly important, as Keswani (2004: 81) has suggested, following the introduction of plough agriculture and increases in settlement size in the EBA. There is, however, little accurate information on the spatial relationship between cemeteries and their parent settlements, which in many cases have not been located; where settlements have been identified, the picture becomes more complex and diverse.

The EC and MC settlement at Marki *Alonia* in the central lowlands, for example, was associated with five burial grounds, each located within view of *Alonia* (Frankel and Webb 1996: 11-15, fig. 2.2; Sneddon 2002: 9-12). The earliest burials (dating to the initial, Philia phase of the EC) were located on the upper and possibly also the middle sector of *Davari* hill (see Sneddon 2002: 98-99) and probably at *Vounaros/Pappara* (Figure 2a), and EC I–II burials on the lower slopes of *Davari* and on a small knoll west of *Davari* (Figure 2b). In EC III, MC I and MC II, five cemeteries were in use but the *Kappara* ground may also have been associated with a MC settlement upstream, and there is evidence also for MC activity on the plateau above *Vounaros/Pappara* (Frankel and Webb 1996: 6-7, 15, sites 7, 15, fig. 2.1) (Figure 2c). This suggests

a



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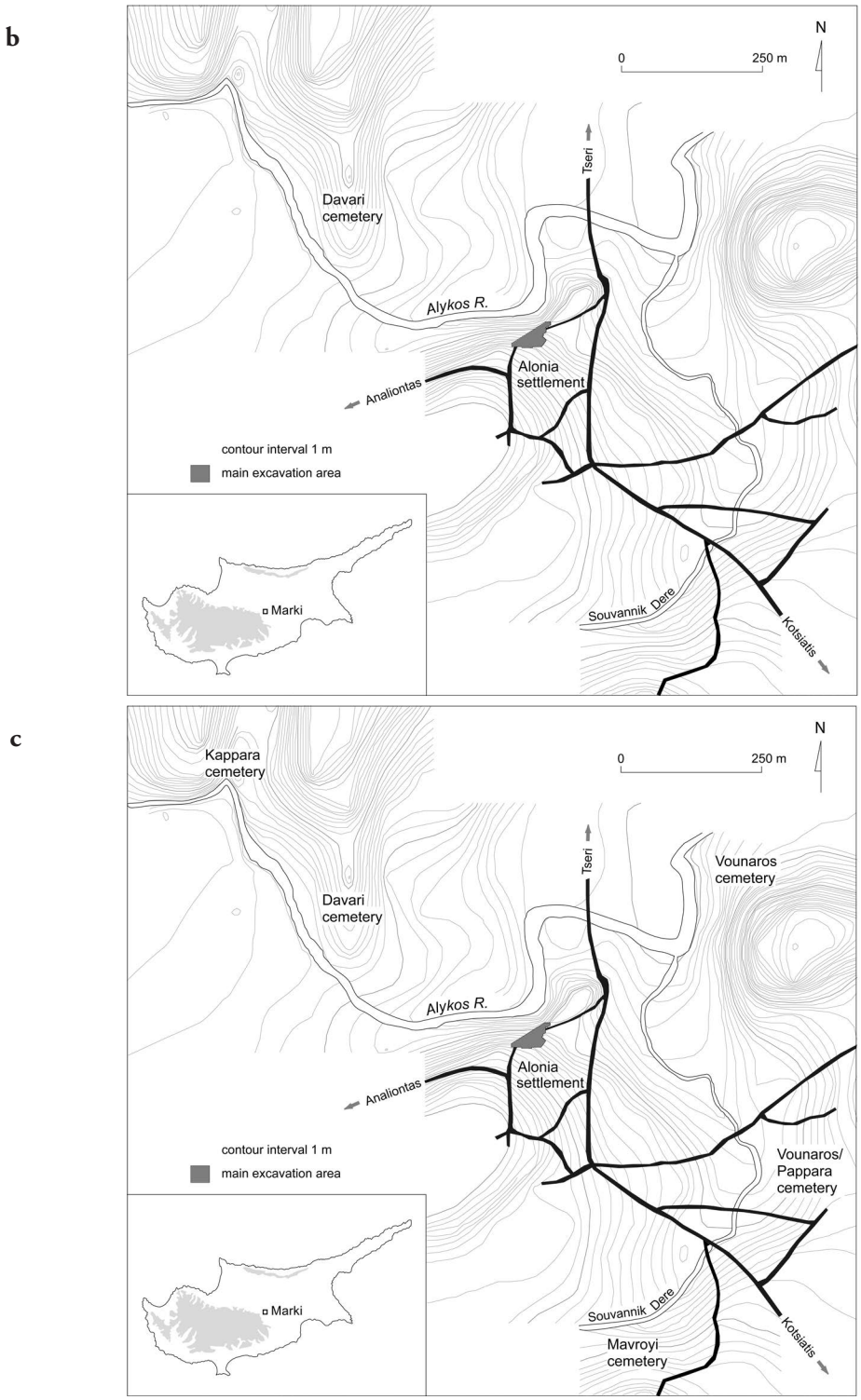

Figure 2. Settlement and cemeteries at Marki: (a) the Philia EC period; (b) the EC I–II period; (c) the EC III–MC II periods.

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a complex and evolving set of cemetery/settlement/activity area associations. At Sotira *Kaminoudhia* in the south of the island, conversely, it appears that only one cemetery, located 100 m northeast of the settlement, was in use from the Philia EC to EC III (Swiny and Herscher 2003: 103-104, fig. 1.3).

A different scenario has been proposed for the Vasilikos Valley (Figure 3). Here numerous prehistoric Bronze Age sites have been identified through surface survey, but virtually the only known tombs are those within the modern village of Kalavasos. This general lack of cemetery sites has led Todd (2013: 91) to suggest that the area of the modern village served as the burial place for much of the surrounding population, its significance perhaps deriving from its geographically limited area and its visibility and strategic importance to those living to both north and south. The relationship between the Kalavasos village tombs and nearby sites, however, will remain unclear until the latter are excavated. While the situation in this narrow valley may have been determined by local factors, Todd's proposal is at odds with the results of other survey projects, which have typically identified fewer settlements than cemeteries across the island (Catling 1962; Merrillees 1973: 46, 48; Georgiou 2007).

Things were certainly different, however, at the site of Alambra in the MBA. Excavation and survey at Alambra have revealed a deaggregated pattern of settlement characterised by 10 or more discrete areas of habitation, with burials in their immediate proximity, separated by fields, ravines and hill slopes (Sneddon 2015) (Figure 4). Sneddon has proposed that this configuration reflects a mixture of topographical constraints, the emergence of specialised activity areas and the organisational difficulties experienced by settlements with expanding populations. He also suggests, more specifically, that attempts by some kin groups to achieve greater influence within their communities resulted in the segregation of particular clusters of compounds and their associated burial grounds. Such a configuration may be transitional between the aggregated villages at Marki, Sotira and elsewhere and the pre-urban sites with built zones separated by open areas that emerged during LC IA at sites such as Enkomi, Morphou *Toumba tou Skourou*, Maroni, Palaepaphos and perhaps elsewhere (see below).

Cemeteries accumulate place value over time. This process is rarely visible in detail and not at all in the case of prehistoric Bronze Age Cyprus, where no complete, undisturbed cemetery has been excavated. Did cemeteries begin as non-contiguous 'private' or household tomb groups and gradually nucleate or infill, or did they advance across the landscape from a single starting point? The limited data available suggest a range of processes. At Nicosia *Ayia Paraskevi*, Georgiou (2013: 88) has proposed that Cemetery B during its earliest phase (EC II) consisted of dispersed clusters of tombs that should perhaps be viewed as small, separate but neighbouring cemeteries. EC III–MC II tombs at the same site, however, were found in all excavated areas, suggesting a gradual infilling of space between the earlier clusters.

At Deneia *Kafkalla* tombs with circular shafts, which are for the most part early in date, were dug into less-well-consolidated soils on the southern slopes below the limestone capping, while tombs with square, rectangular and oblong *dromoi* were cut into solid rock on the top of the plateau, extending progressively into unutilised space to the northwest (Frankel and Webb 2007: fig. 3.19) (Figure 5). This chronological development from south to northwest is confirmed by the discovery in the western sector of 22 unfinished tombs that represent the final phase of tomb cutting in MC III (Frankel and Webb 2007: 23-28, text figs 3.28-3.41, fig. 3.33).

Other circumstances in which the place value of burial is likely to have been particularly important include cases of population movement or aggregation. This is most evident at Deneia, where over 1000 opened (i.e. looted) tomb shafts are visible over six hectares (Frankel

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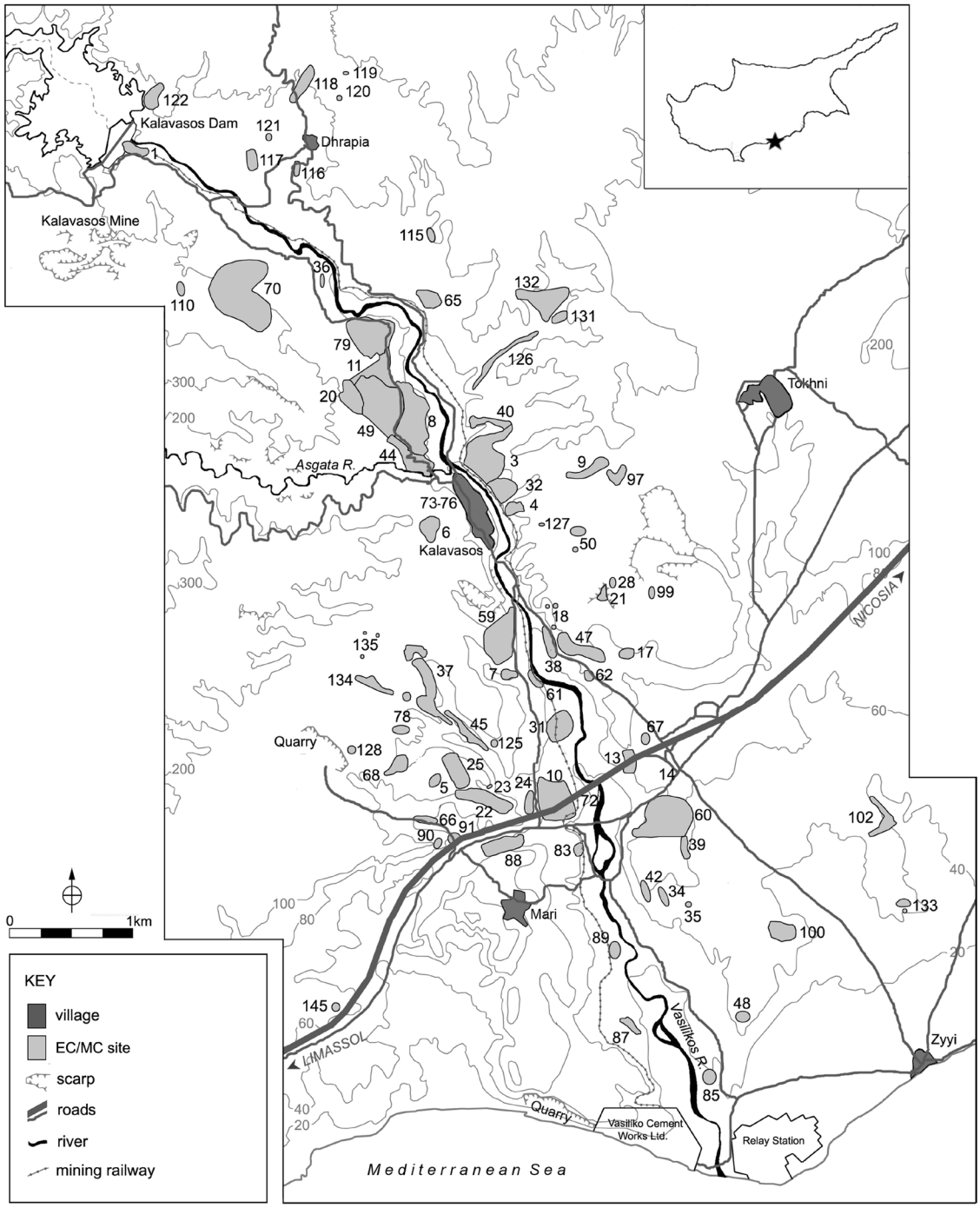

Figure 3. EC and MC sites identified by survey in the Vasilikos Valley (reproduced with permission from Todd 2013: fig. 12).

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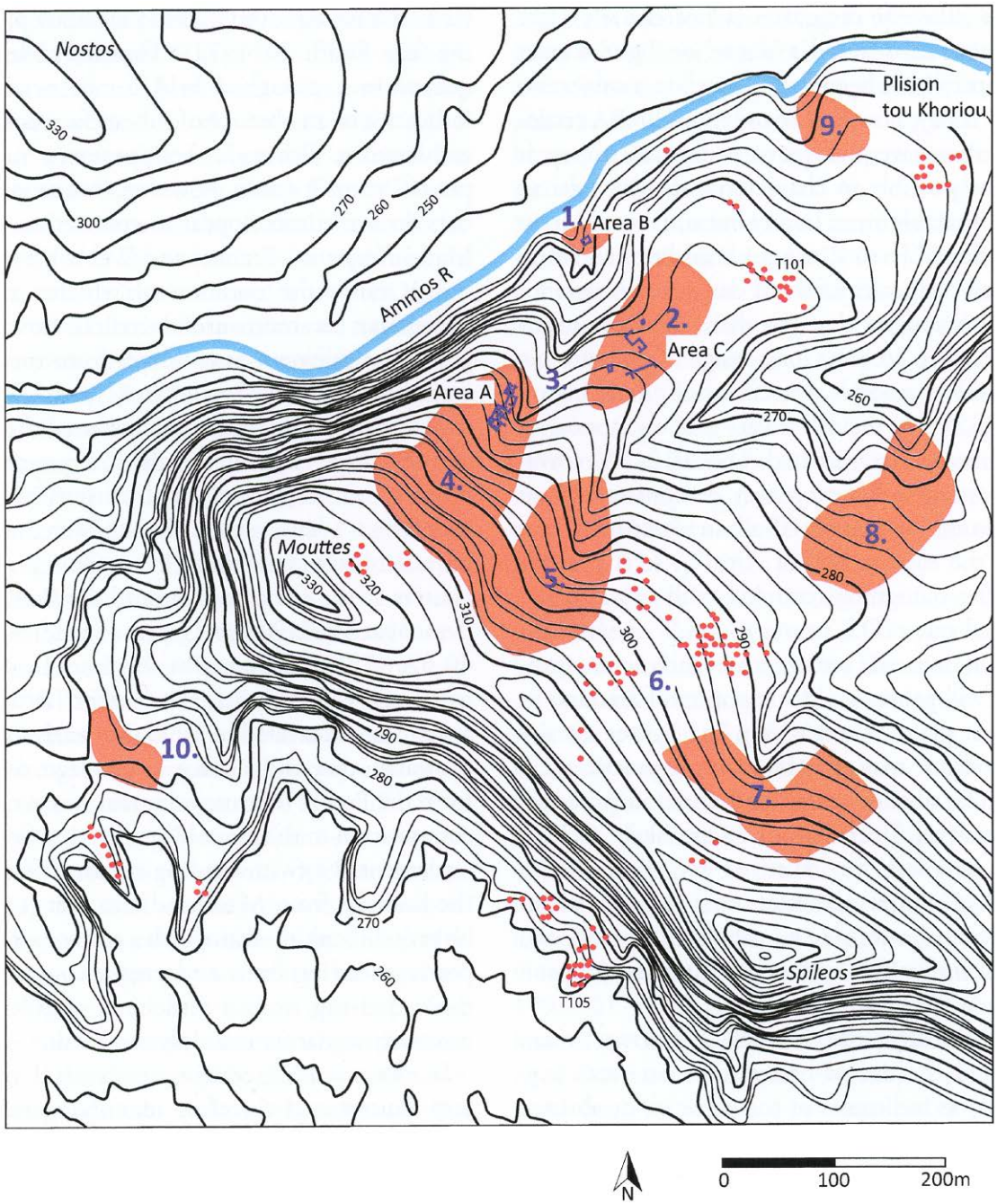

Figure 4. Hypothesised configuration of EC and MC settlement and burial areas at Alamba *Mouttes* (reproduced with permission from Sneddon 2015: fig. 13).

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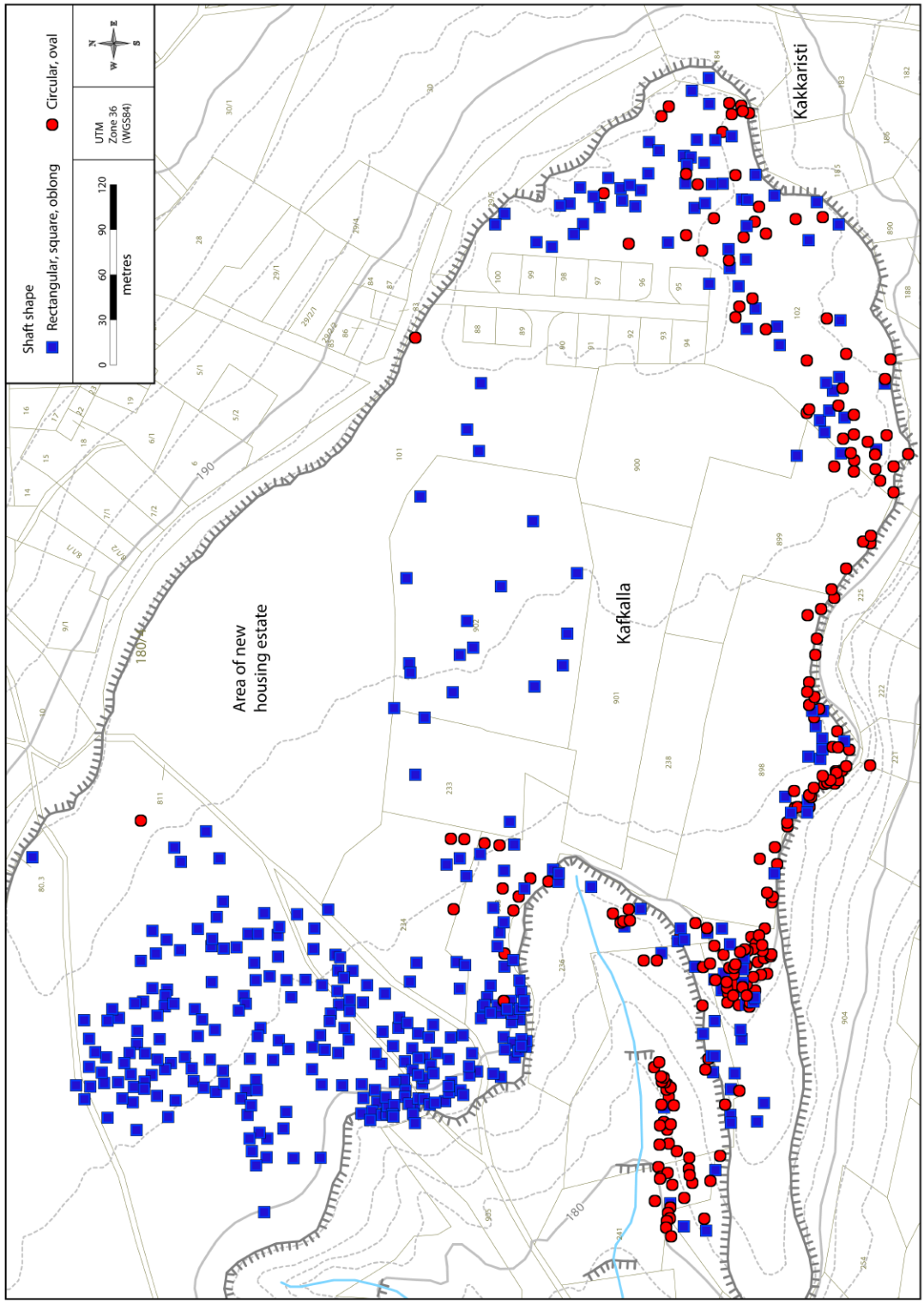

Figure 5. Distribution of round and rectilinear tomb shafts in the cemetery at Deneia *Kafkalla* (Frankel and Webb 2007: fig. 3.19).

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and Webb 2007). At least 764 of these tombs were cut in the MC period. While estimates of numbers of burials per tomb are possible in only a few cases, the available data and the size of tomb chambers suggest significantly higher numbers than those recorded elsewhere (Frankel and Webb 2007: 150, table 8.2). Indeed, the number of adult burials attributable to the 300-year-long MC period is estimated at between 9000 and 20,000 (Frankel and Webb 2007: 152-54). This sudden increase in the intensity of burial activity at Deneia can only be the result of an influx of people and rapid settlement growth. In this context, the assertion of intergenerational rights through the construction and long-term use of large, well-made tombs may have been a significant element in the negotiation of social space, literally creating a 'genealogy of place' with each successive interment (McAnany 1995: 100). This remarkable time/place concentration of tomb construction was accompanied by the development of emblemic (corporate) ceramic styles (Weissner 1983: 257-58) and appears to have led to a strong sense of place value at Deneia (Webb 2010).

This brief survey suggests that EC–MC settlement/cemetery configurations were more diverse than often assumed. While extramural cemeteries were the norm, multiple smaller burial grounds apparently associated with household clusters are evident at Alambra, and multi-settlement cemeteries may have existed in some regions. Considerable diversity in the relative topography of settlements and cemeteries is also evident: some settlements located on hilltops have tombs cut into the slopes below (e.g. Erimi, Psematismenos, Episkopi) whilst others on gently sloping or more open terrain located their cemeteries on surrounding ridges, scarps and plateaux (e.g. Marki, Deneia, Nicosia *Ayia Paraskevi*). The cumulative place value of cemeteries and the degree to which they represent a corporate crafting of community identity are also likely to reflect particular site histories.

Cemeteries as Enculturated Spaces: Inclusive or Exclusive?

Cemeteries comprise one or more episodes of deposition in discrete facilities that form multiple socio-spatial groupings within the larger whole. While it is tempting to see cemeteries as public spaces and burials as occasions of communal consumption, every tomb chamber is a private space, with a single entrance that was tightly sealed between burial events. Where multiple burials are evident, we cannot be certain of the relationship between those buried, but it is likely that tombs 'belonged' to family or wider kin-related groups with notions of ownership and privacy probably protected by taboos against intervention or encroachment by outsiders. This is, again, particularly evident at Deneia, where every burial facility is comprised of a single *dromos* opening into a single chamber, with the exception of an area of the *Kafkalla* plateau where tomb diggers took advantage of a complex of natural caverns extending over 50 m in each direction (Frankel and Webb 2007: 34, 151, text fig. 3.60). Here there may have been no clear-cut division between burial areas underground, but the presence of ten *dromoi* suggests that 'private' tomb entrances remained of paramount importance (Figure 6).

The existence of multiple cemeteries at Marki and many other EC and MC sites, including Lapithos, *Ayia Paraskevi*, Erimi, Psematismenos and Kition (Georgiou 2007: 215-18; 281-82, 324-27; 2013; Georgiou *et al.* 2011: 5, 357; Bombardieri 2017), also clearly indicates that not all members of a settlement were interred in a single communal ground. This in turn suggests corporate ownership or control of burial grounds and exclusionary notions around rights to burial in particular locations. This also appears to be indicated by the occasional intramural disposal of bodies. Within the excavated area at Marki *Alonia*, in addition to an infant pithos burial, two adults were placed in shallow pits within abandoned buildings and the partial

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remains of another six individuals were found on abandonment surfaces (Frankel and Webb 2006: 283-85) (Figure 7). Additional fragments of human bone may derive from burials disturbed by later construction (Frankel and Webb 2006: 283). These do not appear to have been temporary interments (Keswani 2004: 40) but suggest rather that some individuals were permanently excluded from extramural burial. At Sotira, the remains of a young woman found on the floor of Unit 22 and those of another in Unit 44 have been identified as belonging to earthquake victims, but isolated body parts from Units 6 and 16 may represent a similar phenomenon (Swiny 2003: 22, 27, 51; 2008: 45-47).

The fact that five of the Marki intramural burials are those of infants and children, two of women and only one certainly an adult male (along with one adult of uncertain sex), coupled with an under-representation of infants and

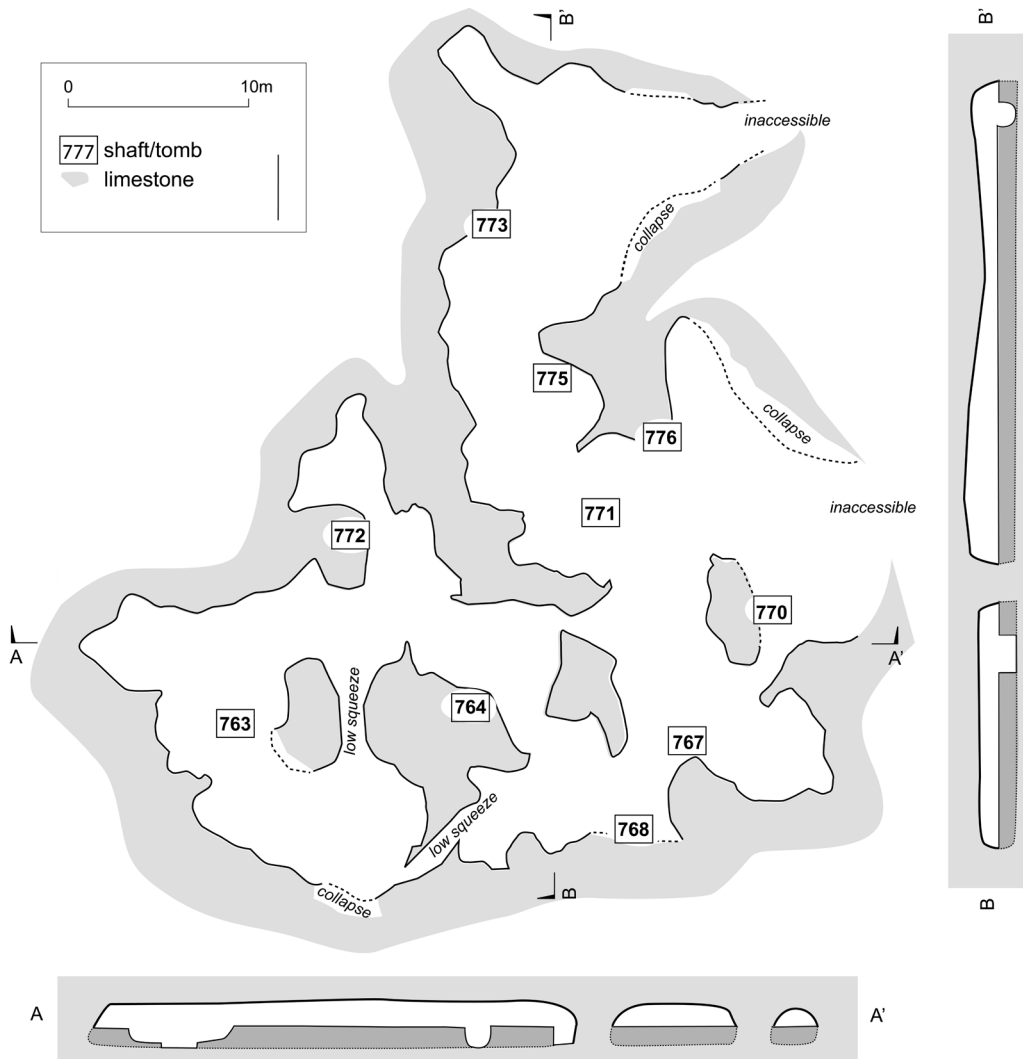

Figure 6. A tomb complex at Deneia *Kafkalla* showing the location of entry shafts (*dromoi*) which open into a large underground cavern (Frankel and Webb 2007: fig. 3.60).

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Figure 7. An intramural MBA burial at Marki *Alonia* (Frankel and Webb 2006: fig. 10.1).

children and, to a lesser extent, of women in the EC and MC cemetery record (Keswani 2004: 30, 40-41, 52), suggests that age and gender were significant factors in determining burial status and location. While the reported incidence of infant burial in cemeteries is undoubtedly skewed by poor preservation and recovery (see Georgiou *et al.* 2011: 353-54), intramural disposal may have been relatively common for very young children. In the case of adults, social status, possibly linked to gender, is likely to have played a role. Deceased adults placed in abandoned buildings with few or no grave goods may have been viewed as excised from the ancestral community (for similar anomalous mortuary practices, see Murphy 2008). Whatever the reasons for intramural burial, it is clear that cemeteries were not whole community landscapes and that decisions about burial location were governed by notions of exclusion as well as inclusion.

Cemeteries as Contested Spaces

Cemeteries provide a spatially extensive backdrop for individual funerals that may enhance or conceal the differential performance of mortuary rituals. Baxevani (1997: 67) has proposed that EBA Cypriot cemeteries were marked by standardisation and uniformity, suggesting that social and economic inequalities were minimal or that burial programmes intentionally masked inequalities in order to foster social cohesion and community identity. But this was not the case everywhere. It is now clear that some cemeteries on the island were highly contested landscapes (see also Keswani 2004; 2005; Knapp 2013: 311-22). The degree to which they were arenas of social power, however, varied significantly between sites and regions, with far greater levels of social capital invested in the mortuary domain on the north coast (Webb and Frankel 2010; 2013; Webb 2014; 2016a; 2016b; 2018).

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The Philia EC cemetery (or cemeteries) at Vasilia on the seaward slopes of the northern, Kyrenia range stretches for over 1.5 km (Hennessy *et al.* 1988: 25). Stewart cleared four remarkable chamber tombs here in 1955 (Hennessy *et al.* 1988: 25-44, figs 32-40). They are unusually well-cut, having large buttressed chambers and long plaster-lined or stone-paved *dromoi* with transverse stone walls that impede access to the burials in the chamber. While all but one had been thoroughly looted, the finds from the less disturbed tomb suggest that their contents were as impressive as their architecture. A considerable number of small chamber tombs and simple pit graves were also identified at Vasilia (Swiny, cited in Hennessy *et al.* 1988: 25; Swiny 1997: 182). Philia cemeteries in the Ovgos Valley and at Nicosia *Ayia Paraskevi*, Marki and Sotira are also comprised of pit graves and small chamber tombs (Webb and Frankel 1999: 8-13). These differences in grave type may be attributed to differences in status and wealth, with the monumental chamber tombs at Vasilia—which also show an unparalleled concern with privacy and security—standing at the extreme (wealth) end of the spectrum.

Tomb forms in the EC I–II period continue to show complexity and elaboration on the north coast and a relative 'simplicity' and uniformity in the centre and south of the island. On the north coast chamber tombs were sealed with large stone slabs and blocking walls. Carved pillars, door jambs and other features in some *dromoi* suggest that these areas were the scene of ongoing activities (Webb and Frankel 2010: 187-91, table 2, figs 2-6). In contrast, EC I–II tombs in the centre and south are small chamber or pit graves without internal features (Keswani 2004: 193, table 4.3; Georgiou *et al.* 2011: fig. 9.6; Webb and Frankel 2013: 68-70, figs 7, 9). On the north coast, human remains were removed from tomb chambers, allowing multiple reuses (Webb *et al.* 2009: 239-40; Webb and Frankel 2010: 194), while at Psematismenos and elsewhere in the south most tombs were single-use facilities. Here, too, miniature chambers were prepared for sub-adults, although children were also buried in full-size chambers, while on the north coast, at *Vounous*, sub-adults represent only 6% of the mortuary population (Keswani 2004: 30, 52). These differences are likely to be related to concepts of individual status and notions of personhood, perhaps contrasting an emphasis on acquired adult rank on the north coast with social equivalence and inclusion in the south.

Toward the end of the EC period, an increased emphasis on sub-group identity is visible in north coast cemeteries (Webb and Frankel 2010: 205-206). At Lapithos, in particular, the construction of larger, more complex tombs in MC I–II suggests an attempt to capitalise on ancestral lineage and fix emerging intracommunity differences in wealth and status. Individual tombs were now increasingly distinctive, with investments in chamber size and stability and the introduction of burial niches and 'cupboards', the latter possibly for infants, allowing more prolonged tomb use and marking out some families as extended intergenerational units. Burial assemblages also show elaboration and redundancy. By the end of MC II, a conceptual shift from tombs as houses of the ancestors to houses of ancestral wealth is visible at Lapithos, suggesting that material resources were now directly implicated in the control of exchange commodities and internal and external networks (Webb and Frankel 2015: 135-37; Webb 2016a: 64-65). This is likely to have been accompanied by a shift in the nature of funerary ceremonies from relatively broadly based expressions of identity to more restricted lineage-based events.

In sum, the socially constructed environment of burial architecture and mortuary ritual was highly contested on the north coast throughout the prehistoric Bronze Age. Elsewhere in the EC period, communities placed less emphasis on mortuary display, and funerary ceremonial does not appear to have served as a major vehicle for

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claiming prestige. In the MC period, practices performed in connection with death and burial on the north coast spread across the island but the ongoing struggle for control of the mortuary domain remained most intense in the north, and particularly at Lapithos. Neither cemeteries nor the ancestral dead represented undifferentiated communities; ongoing links between the living and the dead were no doubt determined by levels of sub-group exclusivity and rivalry in the associated settlements, either making public differences in rank and status or promoting an ethic of cooperation and mutual dependence. While we are only beginning to understand the diversity of social practice across the island, at Lapithos a narrowing of 'community', a shift toward more exclusionary groups and a changing understanding of identity, relatedness and place are indicated. At the same time, the use of multiple burial grounds, variant treatment related to age and gender, and intramural interment show that cemeteries were never wholly inclusive spaces and that burial location and status were always linked with specific roles and identities.

Cemeteries as Sacred Landscapes

Burial is among the most evident forms of symbolic behaviour in prehistoric Bronze Age Cyprus (Keswani 2012a; Webb 2014). It is important, however, to distinguish between mortuary ritual and ancestor cults, where the former refers to rite-of-passage ceremonies associated with death and burial and the latter to rituals that provide ongoing access to the dead and assume the continuing involvement of the dead in the affairs of the living (Barrett 1988; Morris 1991, following Gluckman 1937; Buikstra and Charles 1999: 204; Charles and Buikstra 2002: 18). While burial was afforded to most if not all members of a community, not all burials were sites of continued ritual action. The latter are likely to have included the burial places of founding ancestors or individuals of higher social status, as well as mortuary shrines. Thus, while cemeteries may be viewed as sacred landscapes, the use of which provided a context for the reproduction of value and meaning, not all burials, tombs or cemeteries were of equal or enduring ritual significance. This is particularly evident in the EBA and MBA, when ancestralising practices differed significantly across the island, following a similar trajectory to that outlined in the previous section.

On the north coast, and particularly at *Vounous* in EC I–II, burial was a key arena for ritualised practice as well as for the creation of social prestige. Here, and to a lesser extent at Karmi and Lapithos, behaviours and beliefs associated with death, burial and the ancestors gave rise to a complex iconography and sets of symbolic artefacts, including ritual vessels, individualised drinking cups and modelled items (Webb and Frankel 2010; 2013: 64-68; Webb 2016b). As with other practices related to death and burial, including feasting, this involved a focus on individualised social action, with a shift toward more corporate entities by late EC III. For much of this period distinctions of rank in the centre and south were, on the contrary, defined by a limited number of material goods and apparently linked to the lifespan of individuals; there is little evidence for ritual action in the mortuary domain beyond the rites associated with burial itself (Webb and Frankel 2013: 68-70).

Particular architectural concepts and notions of dedicated ritual space also appear to have been associated with north coast cemeteries. This is especially evident in the case of Karmi *Palealona* Tomb 6 (Webb *et al.* 2009: 128-34). A shallow buttress in the chamber is carved with a pilaster topped by a pair of horns, while in the *dromos* an anthropomorphic, probably female figure, carved in relief, is flanked by rectangular panels; on the façade above the chamber entrance, three carved pilasters are topped with V-shaped incisions, possibly intended as schematic representations of horned animal heads

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(Figure 8). This tomb may have served as a mortuary shrine, perhaps during burial events in the surrounding tombs, and possibly as the tomb of a founding ancestor (Webb *et al*. 2009: 242-45; Webb and Frankel 2010: 191-94). Other carved tombs at Karmi, *Vounous* and Lapithos suggest similar qualitative differences in the use of some tombs and link mortuary ritual with the elaboration of physical space occupied by the ancestors. A similar phenomenon has been suggested by Georgiou (2013: 88) for Tomb 50 at Nicosia *Ayia Paraskevi*, which occupied a central position in Cemetery B and produced a remarkable array of models, figurines and vessels, suggesting elaborate rituals perhaps marking the burial of a prominent member of the community. In all cases these tombs appear to have been the site of heightened or/and ongoing ritual activity.

A link between ancestor cults and descent or property transmission is well established in the ethnographic literature (e.g. Buikstra and Charles 1999: 204-205 with refs). While much of the evidence from *Vounous* in EC I–II and Deneia in MC I–II may reflect intense competition in the mortuary domain rather than ancestral cult practices, Karmi *Palealona* Tomb 6 suggests that this and perhaps other north coast cemeteries had dedicated ritual spaces or mortuary shrines that hosted the activities of formal ancestral cults. The evident manipulation of skeletal remains and grave goods in the larger and more elaborate MC tombs at Lapithos is also suggestive of activities other than routine burial and may reflect ancestralising practices linked to emerging notions of lineage unity and property transmission (see Webb

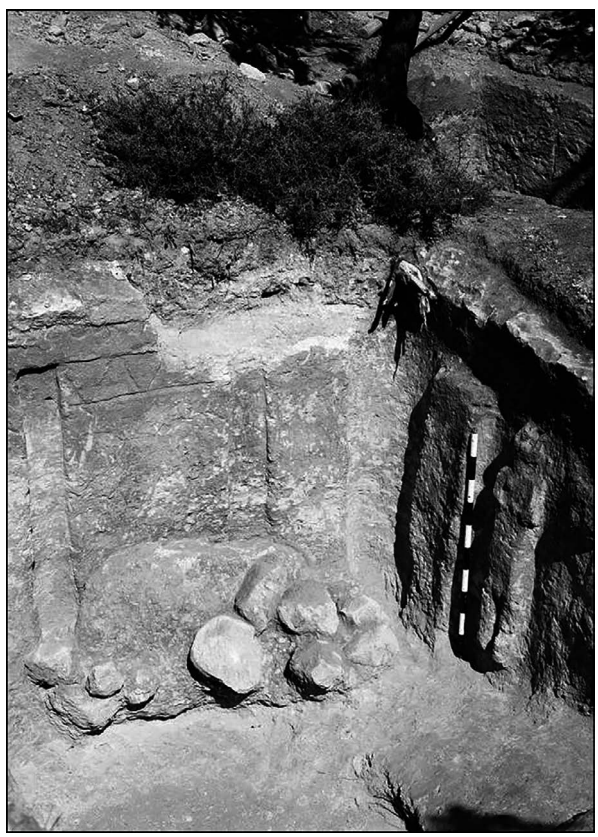

Figure 8. *Dromos* of Karmi *Palealona* Tomb 6, showing anthropomorphic figure in relief and carved façade above chamber entrance (Webb *et al*. 2009: fig. 3.42).

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2017). Whatever the case, while access to the supernatural, control of ritual knowledge and burial rites are likely to have been important within all communities, they appear to have had widely varying impacts on material culture and practice prior to the LC period.

Inside and Out: The Spatial Dimensions of Late Cypriot Burial

In the LC period, extramural cemeteries persisted at most localities and in particular at those that were not in close proximity to major towns (Keswani 2004: 86-88). Some of these were older cemeteries that continued to be utilised (e.g. Deneia, Ayios Iakovos *Melia*, Politiko *Ayios Iraklidhios*, Nicosia *Ayia Paraskevi*, Katydhata, Arpera). In some cases, however, notably at Deneia *Kafkalla*, this was limited to the expedient reuse of existing tombs (Frankel and Webb 2007: 145-46). Others were established in MC III or LC I at sites such as Ayia Irini *Paleokastro*, Myrtou *Stephania*, Kazaphani *Ayios Andronikos*, Pendayia *Mandres*, Milia *Vikla Trachonas*, Angastina *Vounos* and Akhera *Chiftlik Paradisi*. Keswani (2004: 86) refers to these as 'rural' (as opposed to urban) cemeteries, though this hardly seems appropriate for the elaborate tombs at Ayia Irini. Elsewhere, most notably at a number of new coastal settlements, intramural burials have been identified from their foundation in late MC III or LC IA. At Enkomi, where this phenomenon is most extensively documented, hundreds of LC tombs were located within the settlement (Dalton 2007: figs 1-3). Others, however, were dug into the escarpment along the eastern edge of the site, suggesting a less than complete separation between intramural and extramural burial.

Some years ago, Merrillees (1973: 50-51) proposed that the introduction of intramural burial at some sites in LC I was a 'visible and presumably intentional change in town planning' which suggested that '[t]he people of the Late Cypriot period… had fewer inhibitions than their predecessors and considerably more urban initiative'. More recently, Keswani (1996: 221-22, 236; 2004: 87; 2007: 517-26; see also Crewe 2007: 152) has suggested that this form of mortuary practice, which is relatively rare worldwide (Lillios 2014: 558), was related to the heterogeneous origin of the settlers of 'frontier towns' like Enkomi and Morphou *Toumba tou Skourou*, who lacked the sense of corporate identity associated with extramural cemeteries and therefore established burial grounds close to their houses and workshops—and apart from those of unrelated groups within the same community. If Keswani is correct, the shift to intramural burial was not initially associated with social or ideological changes but related instead to historically contingent factors. In what follows, the evidence from the earlier levels of occupation at Enkomi is examined in light of these suggestions.

Enkomi is the only site with a well-documented mortuary record spanning the entire LC period. Unfortunately, the very earliest period (Level A) is not well represented. In Area I an empty chamber tomb (Tomb 15) was located 7 m northeast of a small Level A deposit and a second tomb (Tomb 3) 24 m to the east in Area II (Figure 9a). There were no architectural remains contemporary with the two tombs in their immediate neighbourhood and Dikaios (1969: 153) assumed that they were located in open areas near dwellings.

In Level IA in Area I, a two-storey domestic building was constructed in a large depression in the bedrock. It was surrounded by tombs: Tombs 2, 12 and 13 and a small pit grave (Tomb 20) were cut into the higher bedrock to the north, with Tombs 10 and 11 to the south and Tomb 5 within the depression in Court B (Figure 9b). Following its destruction, the building was rebuilt for Level IB, at which time Tomb 14 was added within the depression to the west and several infants were interred inside the building. Dikaios (1969: 420-21) suggested that Tombs 5 and 14 were used by the inhabitants of the excavated building, while Tombs 2, 12 and 13 to the north and 10 and 11 to the

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south were located in 'spacious squares between various groups of dwellings' and used by the residents of buildings beyond Area I. Level IB ended in a severe destruction. The building was left in ruins and a new, partly excavated structure was erected in the depression to the northwest in Level IIA. Tombs 2, 10, 11 and 12 continued in use while Tombs 13, 14, 20 and Tomb 5 in the depression were built over or discontinued, and Tombs 6, 18 and 19 were cut in higher rock adjoining the new building on the northeast (Figure 9c). To the south a new chamber (Tomb 7) was added to Tomb 11.

In Level IIB, a much larger (public?) building was erected over the ruined Level I structure. Tombs 2, 12, 7+11 and 10 continued in use and a new chamber (Tomb 1) was cut through the back of Tomb 10 (Figure 9d). Tomb 19 (under the new building) and Tombs 6 and 18, however, were 'sealed'. Following the destruction of

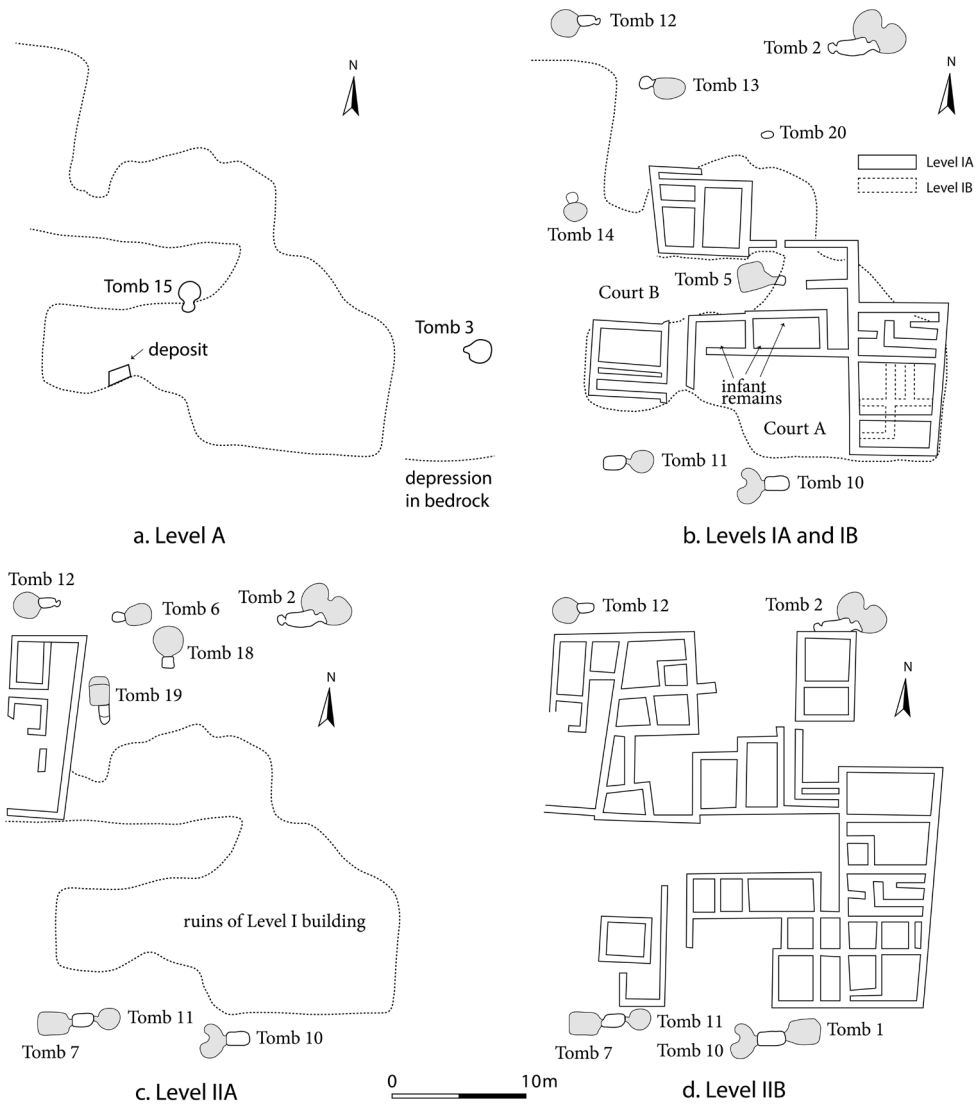

Figure 9. Enkomi Area I tombs. Levels A, IA and IB, IIA and IIB (after Dikaios 1969: pls 266, 269, 270, 272).

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the Level IIB building, the remains were levelled for the erection of the Level IIIA Ashlar Building and all tombs in use in Level IIB were sealed and discontinued. Tomb 18, which had been out of use since Level IIA, was broken into, emptied and filled with stones. Area I was now entirely occupied by the Ashlar Building and any associated tombs lie beyond the excavated area.

Similarly, Area III, some 100 m north of Area I, produced a length of pre-Fortress wall and one tomb (Tomb 17) belonging to Level A (Figure 10a). This tomb was broken into and almost completely emptied before the construction of the Level IA Fortress (Dikaios 1969: 403). The Fortress, a massive structure also built in a depression in the bedrock, was associated with three chamber tombs (Figure 10b). Tombs 16 and 21 were cut in the upper level of the rock adjoining the southeast entrance, Tomb 16 on the axis of the entrance and Tomb 22 within

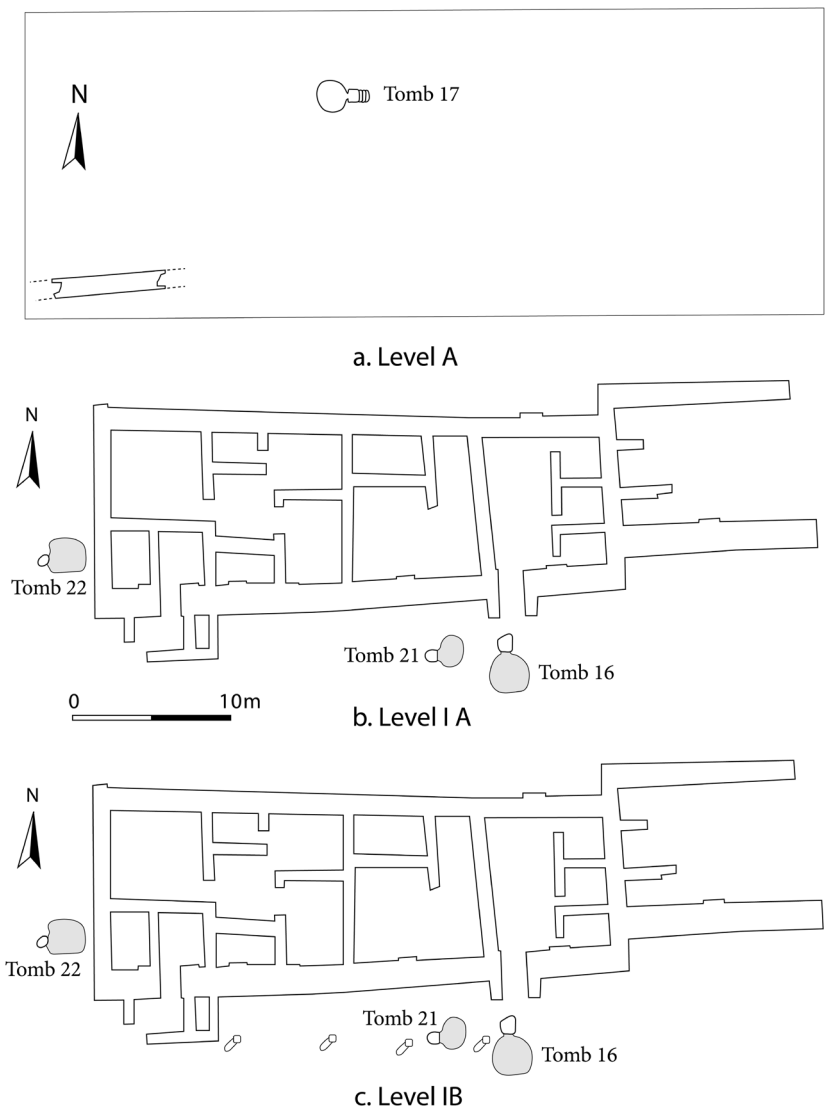

Figure 10. Enkomi Area III tombs. Levels A, IA and IB (after Dikaios 1969: pls 242, 244, 246).

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the depression near the west wall. Following an episode of destruction, the Fortress was repaired and used for industrial as well as residential purposes in Level IB. A stoa was erected along the south facade, encompassing Tombs 21 and 16 which, along with Tomb 22, may have continued in use (Figure 10c). This building was also destroyed and a new building erected over its ruins. Both Tombs 16 and 21 were emptied at this time. No graves were located here in Level IIA or IIB but tombs visible in exposed bedrock to the south may have been cut at this time.

The settlement at Enkomi thus appears to have been comprised initially of discrete occupation areas separated by open spaces in which tombs were located, a pattern likely paralleled at Maroni which also has a long history from LC I (Crewe 2007: 86; Manning *et al.* 2014). While the relationships are far from clear, the dispersed location of the tombs in Level A at Enkomi and the proximity of Tomb 17 to architectural remains in Area III suggest that the earliest burials at the site were not confined to a single cemetery, and that there was some sort of an association between tombs and settlement structures. Notably, eight of the 11 Level I tombs excavated by Dikaios were cut into the higher rock, two in the depressions and one into the slope of the depression, showing a marked preference for higher ground and possibly referencing the earlier location of burial grounds on plateau tops and hill slopes. While connecting the domains of the living and the dead in a new way, they were not located in constructed space and (with the exception of several infants) were not sub-floor burials, elsewhere used to argue for the existence of house societies (Adams and King 2011: 6). The early residents of Enkomi lived beside the ancestors, not on top of them, maintaining both horizontal and vertical distance.

The tombs excavated by Dikaios are also relatively small and only Tombs 2, 10, 11 and 12 show longevity of use (from Level IA to IIB) (Dikaios 1969: 347, 388-95, 397). Keswani (2004: 114) suggests that placement next to buildings placed limitations on size but this cannot apply to the initial phases of settlement. Where not disturbed in antiquity or looted in recent times, it is also clear that the Level I burials were not particularly wealthy. Tombs dated exclusively to LC I contained few prestige or imported goods (Keswani 2004: 231, table 5.9a; Crewe 2007: 82). Similarly, the use and disuse of tombs appears to be related to instability of occupation and the exigencies of building programmes rather than to the actions of competing elites. Tombs buried under debris or new buildings were not reused and none of the tombs excavated by Dikaios appears to have been intended to house large numbers of burials into the future—instead, additional chambers were added *ad hoc*.

It is also unclear whether the early burials at Enkomi represent bounded residential clusters or 'sectional graveyards', as suggested by Dikaios (1969: 424), or wider kinship or neighbourhood groups, effectively forming small cemeteries in unoccupied parts of the settlement. While located close to domestic structures, the extent to which they 'belonged' to individual households or associated activity areas (i.e, the extent to which they may be defined as 'residential' burials—McAnany 2011) is unclear. Nor should we necessarily read the evidence as involving a decrease in the visibility of death. Dalton (2007: 163) notes that many tombs associated with the city's LC IIC roads were in use in LC I and suggests that the LC IIC reorganisation of the city may have been based around pre-existing thoroughfares or open spaces, providing 'support for the early use of this public form of mortuary practice'. Where others have seen intramural burial at Enkomi as exclusionary, Dalton suggests that burial in open space was intended to accentuate the public aspects of mortuary ritual.

The approximately 180 tombs and other mortuary features excavated at Enkomi include nine built tombs. While precise dating is difficult, all appear to have been constructed in LC IIB or early IIC (Crewe 2009: 28, 31). Unlike

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the chamber tombs, the built tombs appear to have underlain house floors (Crewe 2009: 28) or to have been constructed in open space and enclosed within courtyards during subsequent phases of use (Johnstone 1971: 114). They are therefore truly residential burials, located in private space and associated with specific household units. Tomb 66, the only one found intact, was fitted with lamps on either side of the doorway, suggesting use of the tomb between burials, possibly for ritual feasting (Crewe 2009: 30-31). While the built tombs are among the wealthiest at Enkomi, there is no correlation between tomb type and specific areas of the site or between tomb type and wealth (Keswani 2004: 114, 127; Dalton 2007). This has been seen as indicating a considerable degree of competition, diversity and fluctuation in the ascendancy of elite groups at this site, consistent with the evidence for the periodic destruction and relocation of administrative and residential complexes (Keswani 2004: 127; Crewe 2007: 87; see also Keswani 2007; 2012b).

In short, the shift from a communal or public burial focus to closed, private burial involving restricted access and participation appears to have been one that developed selectively and over time at Enkomi. The social power resulting from the appropriation of space and place (and the past) in the form of 'private' tombs may have been fully recognised by some household groups by LC II but the evidence does not present a conclusive case for exclusionary forms of burial in LC I. Burial at Enkomi, furthermore, was never exclusively intramural and only rarely truly residential. Tombs located at the edge of the town, on the escarpment to the east and on the plateau above, were in use from LC I until the abandonment of the settlement (Dalton 2007: figs 1-3); and most tombs, including all chamber tombs, were located in open spaces and not accessed from within buildings. Recent excavations at Hala Sultan Tekke on the south coast, similarly, have shown that burials in specifically reserved cemetery areas occurred simultaneously with 'intramural' burials from at least LC IB (Fischer and Bürge 2017).

Discussion

A number of observations emerge from the above. First, it is clear that the introduction of intramural burial at some sites in LC I was neither an abrupt nor a complete break with previous mortuary practice (notably extramural burial) or the result of an 'intentional change in town planning' by people with 'urban initiative' (Merrillees 1973: 50-51). Even the use of the term 'intramural' may be inappropriate. Although LC I burials at Enkomi, Morphou *Toumba tou Skourou* and Maroni were located near domestic and industrial structures, these were widely dispersed and separated by open spaces, forming only a loosely connected settlement structure. Whether associated with residential units or wider groups, the dispersed burials at Enkomi maintain symbolic and spatial distance between the living and the dead and continue the concept of demarcated burial areas with links to an ancestral community (now reduced in scale and extracted from the communal ground). There is little to suggest that these early tombs at Enkomi served as a means of status display or as sites of ritual performances beyond those associated with burial. Burial location nevertheless suggests the dominance of household or neighbourhood entities as economic/social units in contrast to the wider, overlapping social networks represented in the extramural cemeteries of earlier and contemporary settlements. This is best understood, following Keswani, as a result of initial foundation by unrelated groups with the resulting contradictions in social structure resolved by the creation of new configurations and spaces of social action.

Attempts to understand the evolution of LC 'urban' settlements have been 'largely top-down and generalising' (Manning *et al.* 2014: 7). Significant changes certainly occurred between LC I and LC IIC, which is generally regarded as

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the first wider urban period on the island. These changes, including the construction of tombs in built spaces, were likely deeply implicated in the process of becoming urban. Indeed, the spatial association of tombs and houses in LC I may have promoted new forms of sociality in residential contexts (Adams and King 2011); and the presence of culturally and ancestrally disparate groups at Enkomi and elsewhere may have given rise to a social order characterised by corporate political dynamics in which some tombs came to be used as a focus for factional rivalry. Combined with a competitive ideology of prestige goods accumulation and architectural elaboration, evident by LC IIB if not earlier, localised burial enabled new ways of place-making that emphasised the ancestors with reference to private residences and perhaps also to private or neighbourhood cult places. Some tombs may now also have been the sites of funerary rituals linked to ancestralising practices (McAnany 2011: 139-40).

This, however, was an evolutionary process. Intramural burial, where it does occur in the LC, was an outcome of specific formation processes and neither necessary nor sufficient to a pre-urban 'mindset'. As new forms and scales of social relatedness became embedded in new spatial configurations at Enkomi and elsewhere, however, intramural burial appears to have become associated with 'being urban' (Fisher 2009) and was adopted by urban foundations subsequently established elsewhere, including Alassa, Kalavasos and Kition (see also Keswani 1996: 236). Even at Enkomi, however, the boundary between intra- and extramural burial was blurred and residential burial (i.e. burial in interior domestic space) was reserved for a small group of elites. Furthermore, in the absence of excavated settlements associated with the so-called 'rural cemeteries' (with the exception of a small area of Myrtou *Pigadhes*), we cannot be certain that some level of intramural burial was not also practiced more broadly. Recent excavations, moreover, suggest that this was the case at inland Arediou (Steel and Thomas 2008: 241-44), further blurring the perceived boundaries between rural and urban 'mindsets'.

Conclusion

Space and place are negotiated, narrated and re-narrated by different people in different ways and particular discourses used to mark 'insider' status are part of the construction of individual and collective identity (Shields 1991). The need for 'insider' or specific site histories is abundantly clear in the case of Bronze Age Cyprus, where mortuary behaviour is marked by historically contingent and contextual variability. While the spatial parameters of extramural burial were similar across the island in the EBA and MBA, the intensity with which mortuary practices were used to promote claims to authority and place was decidedly different in different regions and between sites within the same region. Similarly, in the LBA burial location and mortuary ritual appears to have differed within and between proto-urban and urban centres and between 'urban' and 'rural' settlements. In all periods, however, there were alternative treatments, and extramural versus intramural burial is only part of the story. Ancestralising practices are evident in north coast cemeteries in the EBA and MBA and the mortuary domain may have been the primary arena for communal ritual. Yet it is only in the developed urban centres of the LBA that strategies of elite place making involved the full political appropriation of particular burial locales.

As suggested at the beginning of this paper, increased stability and internal cohesion in emerging LC urban centres may have led over time to a decrease in the need for strategies of community affiliation and a reduced investment in public/inclusive mortuary performances. Factionalism at Enkomi, Maroni and elsewhere may also have resulted in a greater focus on lineal identity and more restricted levels of participation. Either or both may be responsible for a

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decrease in the ritual significance of the funerary domain, and an increasing localisation and privatisation of mortuary facilities and their incorporation within residential units or restricted neighbourhood networks (on the decline in mortuary expenditure and the abbreviation of burial ritual in the LC period, see Keswani 2004: 118, 140-46). Ultimately, dedicated cult buildings and other monumental complexes, designed largely around the provision of communal space, replaced the funerary realm as the primary arena for public ritual; by LC IIC both burial and ritual appear to have been fully embedded into elite economic strategies (Webb 1999; Fisher 2009; 2014a; 2014b; 2014c; Knapp 2009; Janes 2014: 576). This is likely to have been accompanied, as Keswani (2004: 157) has suggested, by elite appropriation of the supernatural capabilities that had formerly been ascribed to the ancestors, and a relocation of ritual from external cemeteries to intramural spaces occupied, embellished and controlled by elites (residences, tombs and temples). In rural areas, however, extramural burial continued alongside domestic ritual and cult sites that operated more inclusively and maintained a traditional focus on agriculture and animal husbandry (Webb 2014: 628, 630).

The public/private dichotomy across the MC/LC transition, however, has been overstated. While the geographical distance between settlements and cemeteries in the LBA may have been less than in the EC and MC periods (Merrillees 1973: 50-51), the ancestors remained in view. The intramural tombs of LC I were not located in interior or constructed spaces and the degree to which they represent an attempt to keep the dead apart from other members of the community is unclear at both Enkomi and *Toumba tou Skourou*. Only in LC II can a case be made for the long-term importance of residential burial. This may be associated with the ancestralising practices that surround this type of interment, in which a subset of house members was stored, guarded and managed as part of the inalienable wealth of the residential group (McAnany 2011; see also Laneri 2011). In-house burials, however, were never the norm at Enkomi and most people were interred in open spaces or in the cemetery on the eastern escarpment. Outside the major towns, extramural cemeteries remained as important as in the past (Keswani 2004: 140).

The boundary between intra- and extramural burial, furthermore, was never absolute. Infants and adults were disposed of in the settlement at Marki (and no doubt elsewhere) during the EBA and MBA, and the inclusive egalitarian village cemetery may never have been a reality. Many, if not most, settlements were associated with multiple burial grounds, suggesting that burial location was always linked with sub-group affiliation. Even within cemeteries, burial topography is likely to have been compartmentalised, with rows or sets of graves representing household or kin groups. The dead may always have been viewed as belonging primarily to lineage groups rather than to a wider ancestral community and variations in the place value of burial are visible across the island throughout the Bronze Age.

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