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Final Palatial Knossos and Postpalatial Crete: a mortuary perspective on political dynamics

Laura Preston

Knossos has often been viewed, implicitly or explicitly, as the principal cultural nexus within Bronze Age Crete.¹ Such Knosso-centrism requires qualification, by paying greater attention both to diverse microregional trends across the island and to the potential role of other individual centres in the generation of large-scale cultural changes. However, it is clear that Knossos did play a significant role in the broader social and cultural dynamics of the island at certain times within the Bronze Age, and this paper explores one particular instance of this phenomenon, through the mortuary practices of the Final Palatial and early Postpalatial periods.

The nature and extent of Knossos's *economic* and *political* control within Final Palatial Crete (here classified as LM II–IIIA2 early²) are subjects that have received much attention in the past few decades, following the decipherment of the Knossian Linear B archives and the geographical mapping of their toponyms.³ The extent of the *cultural* impact of this centre on the wider island in this and the subsequent, Postpalatial, period is less clear, however. This is a subject that would reward further investigation, especially for its potential insights into the ideological legitimisation and reinforcement of the island's changing political structures. Knossian influence in Final Palatial Crete has often been noted with respect to certain innovative ceramic styles with high status associations (Popham 1967, 1980, 1988 [particularly 222, 225], 1994, 99–101) and, indeed, these ceramics comprise our principal resource for reconstructing the distribution of Cretan settlement activity in this period. Recently, Driessen and Schoep (1999) have linked the themes of ideology and political power more explicitly by suggesting that Knossos's control was partly maintained through the deployment of high status (martial) iconography, in combination with the further strategies of administrative control, gift exchange and coercive force.

Pursuing this interesting issue of ideological resources for power assertion and legitimisation on LM II–III Crete, the present paper explores the mortuary evidence for Knossian ideological initiative and influence in Final Palatial and Postpalatial Crete. It concentrates upon the introduction at Knossos of certain mortuary innovations in LM II and their subsequent impact within political and cultural developments on the island. The funerary sphere can, of course, provide only

one perspective on the role of Knossos within Late Bronze Age Crete, and it will be interesting — indeed necessary — to compare the patterns here with evidence from other social spheres. Yet, although partial, the burial perspective is important and relevant for two reasons. First, mortuary innovations comprise a significant proportion of the commonly cited range of changes to the cultural character of the island in the Final Palatial and Postpalatial periods. Second, as will be argued further below, the main motivation underlying these innovations was the potential of the tomb as an arena for status assertion, so that the study of the mortuary evidence can provide an important window onto the political, as well as the cultural, dynamics of Crete at this time.

Two main arguments will be presented which highlight the important role played by Knossos within Late Bronze Age Crete, both politically and culturally. The first is that the elite of Final Palatial Knossos was responsible for the initial introduction to Crete of the practice of tomb use as a forum for ostentatious display, an idea apparently inspired at least partly by con-

1 I should like to thank the organisers of the Conference for the invitation to present this paper. Special thanks go also to Todd Whitelaw, Cyprian Broodbank and Carl Knappett for comments on drafts of the text at various stages. This paper is based upon results derived from my doctoral research, which was funded by the AHRB. Since the submission of this article, new tomb evidence has been published for LM II–III Crete that it has not been possible to incorporate here. However, these new data do not alter the main patterns and interpretations presented here.

2 As advocated by Boardman (1963), Driessen (1990, 121), Popham (1970, 1981, 454, 1994) and Warren and Hankey (1989, 87–8), *contra* the LM IIIB dating of the destruction of the archives introduced by Palmer (1963a) and taken up by Bennet (1986, 1987, 84–5), Catling (1989, 7), Hallager (1977) and Niemeier (1982, 1983, 1985a, 1985b). The results of the mortuary analysis corroborate the earlier dating of the demise of the Knossian administration, as discussed below.

3 Regarding the organisation and economic concerns of the Linear B administration, the bibliography is extensive: see especially Bennet 1992; Halstead 1992; Hooker 1987; Killen 1985; Palmer 1963b; Ventris and Chadwick 1973; Weingarten 1990. On the geographical mapping of the Knossian administration, see Bennet 1985, 1986; Chadwick 1973; McArthur 1981; Wilson 1977.

temporary Mainland practices. The second, which in part follows on from this, is that Knossos was a principal model, and a more immediate source of inspiration than the Mainland, for the subsequent popularity and ideological significance of tomb use elsewhere on the island.

CHANGING PATTERNS OF TOMB DISTRIBUTION ACROSS CRETE

The arguments presented here are largely based upon the observation of a chronological sequence in the take-up of tomb use across Crete, as revealed by the published data. Within the time span with which we are dealing, the refinement of our ceramic dating allows us to chart developments in mortuary practices during what was a period of fairly rapid change in the political and cultural maps of Crete. We should begin, therefore, with an overview of the introduction and changing spatial distributions of the new tomb customs on the island.

In the Neopalatial period, formal burial (or at least, archaeologically *visible* formal burial) had been a comparatively rare phenomenon. It appears to have been most popular at Knossos,⁴ but nowhere on Crete do we have evidence for its systematic deployment for purposes of elite competitive display comparable with the ostentatious Shaft Graves and later the corbel-vaulted tombs of the contemporary Argolid.⁵ As is often noted, the Neopalatial cemetery of chamber tombs at Poros (the harbour town associated with Knossos) shows interesting indications of experimentation with ostentatious mortuary symbolism that owes much to contact with the Mainland, including burials with weapons and the use of wooden biers. However, as Dimopoulou (1999) has observed, these burials were sporadic exceptions within otherwise typical Knossian communal chamber tombs, and probably represent individuals well below the pinnacle of the Knossian elite.

This picture changed in LM II, however, with the appearance in the valley and harbour town of Knossos of new tombs, dedicated entirely to a few individuals who either aspired to, or already held, high status (we cannot ascertain which) at this palatial centre. The notably Mainland-derived inspiration of the innovative tomb types involved (chamber tombs, corbel-vaulted tombs and shaft graves) and the interments within them will be discussed below. What is more noteworthy at this point is the observation that their initial LM II use on Crete appears to have been confined to this centre alone, and it was only in LM IIIA2 that they were embraced on a significant scale across the rest of the island. In other words, the use of these innovative tomb customs appears to have been largely concentrated at Knossos during the Final Palatial period (and particularly LM II), while the rest of the Cretan population continued to dispose of its dead by other means — presumably according to traditional Neopalatial methods.

Before considering the implications of this pattern, the evidence should be considered in more detail.

LM II

For this phase, there is as yet no convincing evidence for the take-up elsewhere on Crete of the innovative tomb types being introduced at Knossos (cf. Preston 1999). Indeed, there is no fully published tomb of any type beyond Knossos that contains an intact individual assemblage securely datable to LM II by its ceramic vessels (the most reliable method of dating tomb use). The distribution of the handful of candidates for such a dating is shown in FIG. 9.1. Apart from those at Knossos, these are tombs from which definite or presumed LM II ceramics have been recovered, though either not in intact assemblages, or else in apparently intact but as yet unpublished assemblages. They are so few that they can be reviewed individually here. At Palaikastro, two burial caves produced one or two (unpublished) sherds dated by Dawkins to LM II (Dawkins 1906, 1–2 for the Plaka tomb, 2–8 for the Petsophas tomb).⁶ At Malia, a tomb of uncertain type at Pervolia produced some unpublished “small vessels” dated to LM II, in association with two chest larnakes (Platon 1954, 516). Two vessels from a rock fissure (*Charnier* 2) north of the Palace have been dated to LM II (Farnoux 1997, 142), while an Ephyraean goblet was retrieved from a nearby chamber tomb at Ayia Pelayia, among LM IIIA1–IIIB ceramics (Farnoux 1997, 140–1). Finally, a one-handled cup was found in a tomb of uncertain type at Psari Forada, among material ranging from MM II–III to LM III (Banou and Rethemiotakis 1997, 26–9, 53–4).

That some of this LM II material is from cave contexts is interesting, and it may indicate continuations of local Neopalatial burial practices that are otherwise

4 See Hood and Smyth 1981, 140, 148, 248–51, 257, 308, 323, 331, for the chamber tombs, receptacle burials and round tomb in the Knossos valley, and Löwe 1996, 454–7, and Dimopoulou 1994, 708–10, for the Poros cemetery of chamber tombs in the harbour town.

5 While the Temple Tomb surely had mortuary connections, there is no evidence that it actually functioned as a tomb for primary burial in the Neopalatial period, as opposed to hosting other types of ritual activity connected with the funerary sphere (Preston 1999, 136, n. 27). In such a role, it may have been comparable in function with the contemporary Building 4 at Archanes-Phourni (Sakellarakis and Sapouna-Sakellarakis 1997, 223–9) and the “Tomb of the Gold Objects” at Ayia Triada (Soles 1992, 120–5).

6 See also Niemeier’s suggestion of an LM II date for the strainer in this tomb (Bosanquet and Dawkins 1923, 77, fig. 61; Niemeier 1985a, 176, n. 1324). A second burial cave at Petsophas was also dated to LM II by Dawkins, but on the tenuous basis of the presence of re-used ashlar masonry in the architecture, rather than ceramic material (Dawkins 1905, 290–2).

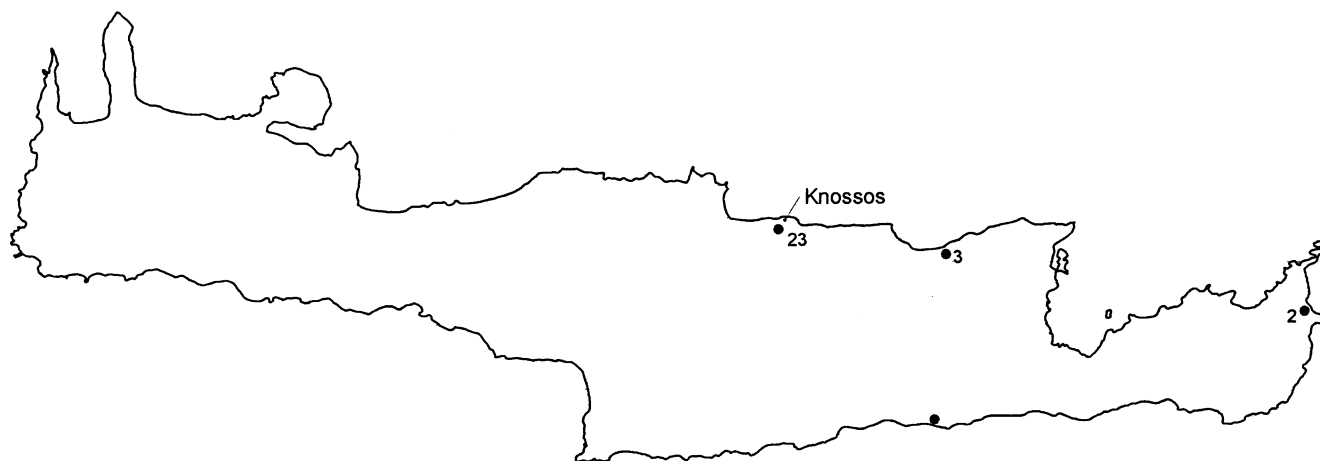


Fig. 9.1. Distribution of tombs with definite or possible LM II ceramic vessels.

Note: in FIGS. 9.1–9.4 numerals indicate the number of tombs represented by the dot. Where no numeral is shown, the dot represents one tomb.

invisible due to a lack of datable ceramics. However, none of the tombs listed above constitutes convincing evidence for tomb burial practices in this period, whether in traditional or innovative tomb types. Nor is there reason to suspect that the general absence of evidence beyond Knossos for the use of the new tomb forms in this phase is simply due to biases in the retrieved data. As will be argued below, the new mortuary practices were high status emblems introduced at Knossos explicitly for the purpose of competitive elite display. If such ostentatious burials had been similarly embraced by elites at other regional centres in LM II, one would expect them to be evident in the centres' associated cemeteries. Yet although cemeteries such as Archanes-Phourni, Armenoi,⁷ Kalyvia and Ayia Triada have produced LM IIIA₁–IIIB ceramics, no LM II material has yet been published from any of these mortuary locations. Nor is it feasible to argue that any LM II burials in these cemeteries are simply invisible due to a lack of diagnostic Knossian ceramic imports. We are gathering increasing evidence for the presence of LM II ceramics in the settlement contexts of regional centres across the island (Ayia Triada: La Rosa 1997; Archanes: Sakellarakis and Sapouna-Sakellarakis 1997, 148–50; Chania: B. P. Hallager 1990, 1997; Malia: Poursat 1990; Palaikastro: MacGillivray 1997), in sharp contrast with their absence from corresponding mortuary locales. Moreover, Ephyræan goblets, squat alabaster and jars and jugs decorated in the "Palace Style" were common elements within the Knossian LM II mortuary repertoire, and there is no reason to suspect that this would not have been the case elsewhere had the new tomb practices been introduced at such an early date.

LM IIIA₁

As with LM II, there is no fully published tomb beyond Knossos with an intact individual assemblage securely datable to LM IIIA₁ by its ceramic vessels,⁸ and it could be argued that in some, if not all, of the non-Knossian tombs marked in FIG. 9.2, the LM IIIA₁ ceramics concerned could have entered the tombs as components of LM IIIA₂ burials. However, a comparison of FIGS. 9.1 and 9.2 shows that there are significantly more tombs known across Crete with definite or probable LM IIIA₁ than LM II material. This higher frequency does increase the possibility that the use of the innovative tomb customs really did begin to disseminate beyond Knossos in this second phase, albeit on a restricted scale. Although this scenario cannot yet be demonstrated to be genuine, the absence of evidence is

7 Although the earliest use of the Armenoi corbel-vaulted tomb (T. 200) was dated to LM II by Godart and Tzedakis (1992, 90), Papadopoulou dated the earliest ceramics to LM IIIA₁ in her publication of the tomb material (1997).

8 Larnax decoration is not employed here as a means of dating tomb use, as the reliability of directly transposing onto these receptacles the stylistic dating criteria used for the different medium of ceramic vessels is not yet secure (Kanta 1980, 293). Thus tombs such as Tholos T. A and burial 5 of the Grave Enclosure at Archanes-Phourni, both dated to LM IIIA₁ by the excavators on the basis of larnax decoration (Sakellarakis and Sapouna-Sakellarakis 1997, 479–81), are not included in FIG. 9.2. Regarding the dating of the side-chamber burial in Tholos T. A, I follow Kanta's attribution of the ceramic vessels to LM IIIA₂ (Kanta 1980, 33; *contra*: Sakellarakis and Sapouna-Sakellarakis 1997, 168).

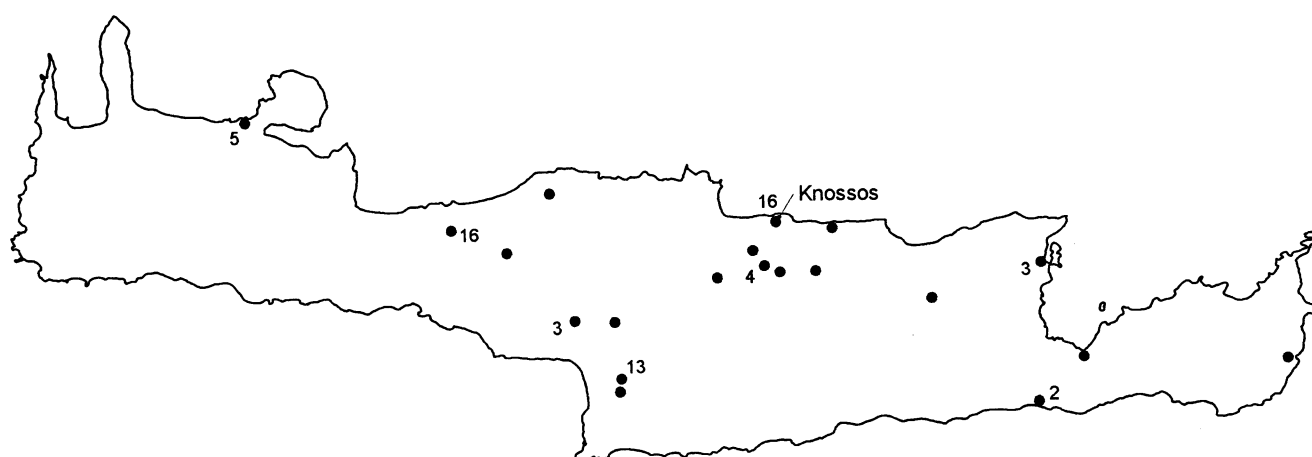


Fig. 9.4. Distribution of tombs with ceramic vessels dated to LM IIIA.

greatly different from the more numerous tombs that have been assigned to LM IIIA₁ and/or IIIA₂.

Despite Kanta's observation (1980, 1), which still holds today, that the mortuary evidence is our main source of information for the LM III period on Crete, the number of tombs so far known is surely only a small proportion of the original. Known tomb distributions are dictated to some extent by archaeological interest and human activity (agricultural or construction), and selective discovery means that the mortuary material so far known is surely not reliable for reconstructing relative regional densities of habitation or settlement distribution patterns. However, while the current evidence may not be reliable for reconstructing LBA settlement densities or distributions, there is reason to suggest that the *temporal* patterns revealed by the known tombs are representative. In each region of Crete, a consistent trend is seen of a virtual absence of LM II material, a sporadic occurrence of LM IIIA₁ material and an explosion in popularity of tomb use in LM IIIA₂, which continued into LM IIIB.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE CHRONOLOGICAL PATTERNING

Final Palatial Knossos

The chronological pattern of tomb dissemination set out above is significant on several levels. In order to understand this, we need first to consider the reasons that underlay the initial introduction at Knossos of the innovative tomb customs that were subsequently to be taken up across the island.

This introduction appears to have owed much in inspiration to the contemporary Mainland, in terms of the artefacts, practices and tomb types introduced (such as burials with weaponry, precious metal vessels and Mainland-derived ceramic types, and interments in chamber tombs, shaft graves and corbel-vaulted tombs).

However, they are more plausibly interpreted as mechanisms for status assertion within an unstable political climate than as the passive reflections of an intrusive Mainland-derived elite that they have usually been considered to be.⁹ The latter methodology of attempting to deduce the geographical origins of the burying population from cultural symbolism within the tomb context is unsatisfactory in both theoretical and empirical terms. It is based upon undemonstrated culture historical models concerning the ethnic composition of the Aegean in this period and also assumes, without considering alternatives, that burial customs were necessarily an ethnic emblem, as opposed to expressing other types of social identity. Moreover, the culture group model has a tendency to privilege external impulses in accounting for the spatial movement of ideas and symbolism, rather than considering the internal political, social and cultural contexts that motivated and facilitated their adoption in a new area.

Yet in the context of LM II Knossos, there is good reason to view the introduction of the innovative tomb customs from such an angle. The preceding LM I phase had ended in a period of crisis on Crete involving the destruction of most of the palace centres and the destabilisation of the elite ideological system that had supported and reinforced them. In response to this climate of political flux and ideological destabilisation, certain individuals, regardless of their origins, appear to have looked to and drawn upon innovative resources for the affirmation or improvement of their status. Thus in LM II, as Knossos was consolidating its Cretan hegemony, certain high status groups at this centre experimented with the idea of deploying ostentatious tomb use as a strategy for competition. This explanation for

9 See Preston 1999 for a detailed discussion of the LM II mortuary innovations at Knossos.

the introduction of such tomb use at Knossos is supported by the empirical evidence, since the elaborate tomb architecture and wealthy assemblages exhibit a significant degree of ostentation, as well as experimentation with high status symbolism from diverse sources. Thus, for example, in addition to the appearance of tomb types and artefacts of mainland inspiration, we also see the adaptation of high status symbolism from other sources, including recourse to indigenous Neopalatial motifs such as ashlar masonry and religious imagery (Preston 1999, 135–41).

In view of this context of political instability (and a degree of pre-existent familiarity with Mainland funerary customs, as attested by the Poros tombs), it is unsurprising that Knossos was a centre receptive to the idea of ostentatious tomb use in LM II. The limited nature of the take-up of the idea elsewhere on Final Palatial Crete could be explained in various ways. It may be that this practice of ostentatious tomb use was controlled by Knossos and guarded as the preserve of this centre in a symbolic expression of regional dominance. Following Bennet's observation that single internally imposed power bases on Crete have tended historically to be inherently unstable (Bennet 1990), the Final Palatial Knossian elite may well have felt the need to draw upon such ideological resources in asserting their dominant position.¹⁰ An alternative, or supplementary, reason may have been a lack of resources elsewhere on the island. Although the extent and nature of settlement activity at other centres on the island is unclear, it is likely that they were in a state of recovery from the previous destructions during the early part of the Final Palatial period at least. Thus local high status groups, at least initially, may have lacked the means to expend wealth on the construction of elaborate tombs and the sacrifice of valuable objects to the grave, as well as the incentive to do so, given their subordinate political position. A further possible factor causing the innovative customs to be received only gradually beyond Knossos may have been a reluctance to replace traditional mortuary practices, although LM IIIA1 appears to have seen certain individuals and groups at some centres experimenting with the new ideas.

These different explanations for the limited take-up of the new tomb practices beyond Final Palatial Knossos are interesting to consider. However, whether we are witnessing active monopolisation of a new ideological strategy, or whether Knossos was simply the only Final Palatial centre with such concerns or resources, the principal point being argued here is that Knossos stands out as a centre willing to innovate, with an elite that was responding actively to the changing political circumstances and the ideological ruptures that had marked the end of the Neopalatial era.

Postpalatial Crete

The second argument of this paper is that Knossos provided a principal impulse and inspiration for the dis-

semination of tomb use to the rest of the island, initially and to a minor degree in LM IIIA1 and later in the main horizon of LM IIIA2. The clear Mainland parallels for these tomb types often lead to theories of active Mainland intervention, or at least influence from Mainland contacts, to account for tomb use across Final Palatial and, in particular, Postpalatial Crete. However, recourse to direct Mainland influence in accounting for this phenomenon, while not implausible as one factor for certain areas of Crete (such as the far west part of the island), is not strictly necessary, for two reasons.

First, by LM IIIA2, tomb use was already an established element of the cultural environment of the island, by virtue of its prior introduction and development at Knossos and possibly its limited take-up elsewhere in LM IIIA1. By the point of its large-scale dissemination, therefore, the mortuary symbolism originally borrowed from the Mainland had been appropriated, probably adapted in its significance, and established as an integral element of elite identity at Knossos. Thus there is no reason to assume that the tomb types initially introduced by Knossos were considered to carry any peculiarly "Mainland" connotations in the eyes of the inhabitants of Crete by the Postpalatial period. Indeed, with only one apparent exception (the unique LM IIIA2 grave enclosure at Archanes-Phourni¹¹), none of the tomb types introduced to the wider island in either LM IIIA1 or the Postpalatial period need be traced directly to the Mainland. Corbel-vaulted and chamber tombs, pit caves and shaft graves all had more immediate precedents at Knossos.

The second reason for re-evaluating ideas of direct Mainland influence in this sphere is that, just as has been argued for the introduction of high status tomb use at LM II Knossos, one can see impulses internal to Crete motivating its large-scale dissemination across the island in LM IIIA2. According to the LM IIIA2 dating of the destruction of the Knossian archives advocated above, the spread of tomb use coincided closely with a changing and more regionalised political geography of the island and, it is suggested here, was intimately con-

¹⁰ The lack of monumental architecture in the Final Palatial second order centres (in contrast to LM IIIA2) could similarly be explained in terms of an active restriction of access to elite symbolism by Knossos. This argument would, incidentally, undermine previous doubts regarding the association of sites such as Phaistos and Malia with Linear B toponyms of second order sites, since ostentatious architecture would not constitute an appropriate criterion for the archaeological identification of the latter (LM II Phaistos: La Rosa 1985; Carinci 1989; Malia: Farnoux 1996, 1997, 147).

¹¹ Grave Circle A at Mycenae seems to be the closest parallel, and therefore the most probable source of inspiration so far, for the overall layout of this tomb group, if not for the form of the individual graves within it. See Kallitsaki 1997.

nected with this development. As a direct result of the withdrawal of Knossian influence over the territory of much of central and western Crete, a political devolution appears to have occurred, wherein resurgent elites at other centres were given an opportunity to redefine their status at local, and perhaps broader regional, levels. To this end, they probably deployed a variety of strategies, one of which was ostentatious tomb use.¹² In this, they were following a precedent set by Knossos, whose tombs certain members of the regional elites had probably seen in person.

The potential of this mortuary symbolism for status competition or consolidation, as demonstrated by Knossos, was clearly recognised and it was rapidly exploited right across the island (including, interestingly enough, far eastern Crete, which had probably not been under Knossian control [Bennet 1987]). While it appears to have been utilised by a broader cross-section of the population than before, its principal function as a tool for the consolidation of status within local hierarchies remained consistent. In terms of architectural and assemblage ostentation, particularly outstanding LM IIIA2 sites were the cemeteries of Archanes-Phourni (Sakellarakis and Sapouna-Sakellarakis 1997), Armenoi (Löwe 1996. 808–1026; Blackman 1998, 122) and Kalyvia (Savignoni 1904) and the corbel-vaulted tomb at Fylaki in the Rethymno area (Löwe 1996. 1162).

This dissemination did involve experimentation and the adaptation of borrowed ideas, perhaps, in some cases, to conform with local traditions or, in others, because of a desire for individuality. The practice of secondary manipulation of the dead at Archanes-Phourni is a possible example of adaptation to accommodate local traditions,¹³ and the well-known Ayia Triada limestone larnax of experimentation with mortuary iconography as a forum for high status display (Long 1974). These innovations and adaptations are intriguing to study in their own right, not least because of the window they provide onto the political and cultural landscape of Crete in this period. Yet even they had an antecedent in Final Palatial Knossos, in the horizon of experimentation described above as accompanying the initial introduction of new tomb customs in LM II.

CONCLUSIONS

From this brief overview of the mortuary evidence, Final Palatial Knossos emerges as a cultural innovator and as an important role model for the rest of the island even after its political demise in early LM IIIA2. Its pre-eminent political position on the island in LM II–IIIA2, and possibly also its longer history as a cultural innovator on the island, contributed to making it the principal channel through which these mortuary ideas were introduced to the island. The process was by no means inevitable. Rather, it was the result of decisions made by high status groups throughout the period —

first by elite individuals at LM II Knossos, and subsequently by people at other centres across the island, perhaps in emulation of Knossos in LM IIIA1, but principally in response to a renewed situation of political instability (or freedom) on the island in LM IIIA2. Thus, just as a Knossian elite actively drew upon Mainland ideas in LM II, so regional elites then began to draw upon these ideas for their own purposes, and Knossos moved from being a cultural innovator to being a cultural inspiration.

The extent to which this picture is complemented, supplemented or modified by developments in other social, political and cultural spheres of Final Palatial and Postpalatial Crete would be interesting to consider. The present study, though limited to mortuary practices alone, has attempted to move beyond the issue of simply mapping the changing political structures of Crete in the post-Neopalatial phases, to explore ways in which ideological strategies may have participated actively in the power dynamics that lie behind these shifts.

12 Another was the revival of the Neopalatial strategy of architectural ostentation in the settlement context (cf. n. 9). This is attested at Archanes (Sakellarakis and Sapouna-Sakellarakis 1997, 150), Ayia Triada (La Rosa 1985, 52, 1993, 617–20, 1997; Cucuzza 1997), Kommos (Shaw and Shaw 1996, 346, 373, 1997, 433), Chania (E. Hallager 1997, 178) and Malia (Driessen and Farnoux 1994; Farnoux 1997, 147; Pelon 1997).

13 Evidence for the processing and re-deposition of removed primary interments at the Phourni cemetery is securely attested in the Grave Enclosure and Tholos T. B. Within the former, all seven of the pits were revisited following primary burial and the interments removed *in toto*. The skull fragments and teeth in the fill of pit 2 provide evidence that primary interments had indeed taken place, while the fact that parts (if not all) of the assemblages were left *in situ* suggests that these removals were not an indirect result of looting activities (Sakellarakis and Sapouna-Sakellarakis 1997, 189–93). T. B., on the other hand, has evidence for the secondary relocation of bodies, as a chest larnax containing the disarticulated remains of at least 19 individuals was recovered from a sealed cavity within the structure (Sakellarakis and Sapouna-Sakellarakis 1974, 258–61). While the excavators have dated this sealed context to LM IB, the fact that no larnax of this form has been found in any securely datable context on Crete that is pre-LM IIIA2 makes this unlikely. Further possible cases of secondary manipulation are in the “Cenotaph” chamber tomb near the Phourni cemetery (where no trace of a body was found inside the larnax [Sakellarakis 1965]), and perhaps Tholos T. A. In the main chamber of this tomb, no human remains are mentioned in the report as having been recovered, but the chamber pit was found to contain fragments of a broken larnax. The excavators comment on the fact that the chamber was completely empty of finds, suggesting that the assemblage was probably removed when the chamber and artefacts were still relatively intact — that is, in “Minoan times” (Sakellarakis and Sapouna-Sakellarakis 1997, 164, although they see this removal as the act of robbers).

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