

Power Relations in Minoan Palatial Towns: An Analysis of Neopalatial Knossos and Malia

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Abstract

The palatial towns of Knossos and Malia offer good comparable evidence for an investigation into how we can reconstruct prehistoric urban power relations. The author builds upon recent work on heterarchies and factional competition, but argues that, in the case of Neopalatial Crete, it is better to retain the term 'hierarchy' and introduce a more sophisticated approach to power relations than that offered by the traditional hierarchical model. This approach emphasises the need to contextualise the palaces in their urban setting in order to understand the interdependent relationship between various elites and non-elites. Furthermore, it undertakes multi-data analyses, since the correlations among formal distribution patterns inform us more about social strategies than any individual distribution pattern alone. The article concludes that not only were there different kinds of tiers and urban groups at each site, but also that the relationships between these groups were dissimilar.

Introduction

This article focuses on the Neopalatial period of Crete (c. 1700–1450 BC), the 'Golden Age' of the Minoan palaces. The standardised architecture of Minoan palaces (four wings surrounding a Central Court, which is roughly oriented north-south, with an additional West Court) has traditionally invited comparison between palaces, with an emphasis on similarities rather than differences (e.g. Hägg and Marinatos 1987). Attention has recently been paid to placing the palaces in their regional contexts (e.g. see various papers in Branigan 2001b), and road networks have been studied at the site level (e.g. Müller 1991b; Warren 1994; Driessen in press). Here I build on this work by analysing systematically the distribution of elite features and functions in two palatial sites, in order to see what light this can shed on the power relations. As Branigan (2001a: 28) has noted, notwithstanding cer-

tain exceptions (e.g. Chrysoulaki and Platon 1987), this is a surprisingly neglected area.

Since Evans' publication of *The Palace of Minos* (1921–35), the palatial site at Knossos has been the traditional type-site against which other Minoan sites are compared, with a stress on similarities rather than differences (Jones 1997: 49; Lloyd 1990: 54; Hitchcock 2000: 28). This is clearly demonstrated in discussions of Malia (e.g. Pelon 1980: 142–43; Van Effenterre 1980: 360). Evans encouraged the blurring between the terms 'Knossian' and 'Minoan' by publishing Knossos in a format that became a synthesis of everything that was known about the Minoans at the time.

This article undertakes a close comparison of the two palatial sites in order to establish how universal certain specifically 'Knossian' features are. Malia has been selected for comparison with Knossos because comparable areas of their towns have been excavated and published—although more urban buildings,

admittedly, have been excavated at Knossos, while Malia is far less elaborate than Knossos, having been described as of 'conservative and rural character' (Pelon *et al.* 1992: 175). I shall examine why this was the case, and whether the differences in the social strategies enacted at both sites were ones of degree or of kind. I argue that the power relations in palatial sites can only be understood if the palaces are set in their urban context. There are thus several main objectives: (1) to compare the Palaces at Knossos and Malia; (2) to compare the towns at Knossos and Malia; (3) to analyse the relationship between Palace and town at Knossos; (4) to analyse the relationship between Palace and town at Malia; and, finally, (5) to examine the overall similarities and differences between the elite social strategies performed at Knossos and Malia.

Brumfiel (1994: 5) correctly argued that the local and the regional scales are interlinked, and highlights the insights to be gained from analysing how they interplay. However, Day and Relaki (2002: 225) noted the importance of clarifying the scale at which one is approaching data and applying models. It is with this in mind that the focus here is on intra-site relations. This article, therefore, concentrates on the 'how' of urban relations in Neopalatial Knossos and Malia. In order to tackle the question of 'why' these relations differed to such an extent, it is necessary to place the sites in their regional context (for an attempt to do so, see Adams 2004b). Furthermore, how the various agents moved through the town and used the palace as a matrix for the urban landscape is beyond the scope of this paper, and is addressed elsewhere (Adams *in press*).

Models of Social Structure and the Nature of Power Relations

The traditional interpretation of Minoan palaces begins, as usual, with Evans, who perceived them as the residences of rulers

upon whom the inhabitants of other buildings were dependent (e.g. Evans 1935: 215, on the High Priest's House). This model has recently been reassessed (e.g. Schoep 2002b; Hamilakis 1997–98; 2002), in line with more general shifts in anthropological and archaeological thought (e.g. Patterson and Gailey 1987; Brumfiel and Fox 1994; Ehrenreich *et al.* 1995; Scarborough *et al.* 2003b). The two most evident concepts that have been introduced to challenge the long-standing hierarchical model are 'heterarchy' and 'factions' (or factional competition), which are not interchangeable terms (Day and Relaki 2002: 227). Brumfiel has taken great care not to confuse the two: her review of the concept of factional competition does not mention heterarchy (1994), whereas her appraisal of the heterarchical model does not refer to factions (1995). The heterarchical model seeks to place greater emphasis on the interplay between horizontal and vertical social divisions than has hitherto been the case, whereas the concept of factions refers to a particular form of identity that exists regardless of other social divisions, and whose members are united by competing with other factions.

Heterarchy

First, the introduction of a heterarchical, as opposed to a hierarchical, model initially leads to the assumption that one must interpret social structure in terms of either one or the other. For example, Keswani (1996) tends to associate the towns of her Cypriot case study with *either* hierarchy *or* heterarchy. In fact, they are not mutually exclusive, and proponents of the heterarchical approach appreciate that hierarchical divisions may exist alongside the vertical boundaries (e.g. Crumley 1995a: 3–4; Schoep 2002b; Scarborough *et al.* 2003a: xiv). Different kinds of heterarchy are admitted with an emphasis on the flexibility of both the term and the power relations within it (e.g. Brumfiel 1995:125–26; White 1995: 104;

Zagarell 1995: 87; Crumley 1995b: 31), but hierarchy is still perceived to be a static concept consisting only of top-down relations.

While there are certain merits to the heterarchical approach, the wisdom of its application to Neopalatial Crete is more debatable. In the case of Bronze Age Cyprus, the lack of clearly central buildings (such as a Minoan palace) lends weight to the application of a model based on heterarchy, or one that rejects the traditional notion of pyramidal hierarchies (Keswani 1996). In the case of Protopalatial Malia, the presence of the enigmatic structure Quartier Mu strengthens the hypothesis that the socio-political organisation consisted of a complex interweaving of hierarchy and heterarchy (Schoep 2002b). However, no other building appears to merit direct comparison with the Palace there in the Neopalatial period. I believe that, in this case, a more sophisticated understanding of how variably hierarchies operate is a more effective way of re-interpreting Neopalatial social structure, rather than introducing a new term that plays down horizontal social divisions. To deny the inhabitants of the Palaces of Knossos and Malia a distinct socio-political position in the urban context is pushing political correctness to its limits, mirroring the ideals (but not the reality) of today's 'democratic', western world. Furthermore, there is often the suggestion that the heterarchical model is more sympathetic to agency and the interdependency of human relations (which, in my opinion, is not necessarily the case). The term hierarchy is here retained in reference to Neopalatial Crete, facilitating exploration of how hierarchies can be as dynamic as any other form of social structure.

Factions and Factional Competition

The concept of factional competition offers insights into the dynamics of societies, including stratified ones (Brumfiel and Fox 1994; see Hamilakis 2002, for its application in Minoan

studies). The term 'faction' is slightly more personal than 'resistance' or 'heterarchy', as 'elite' is less abstract than 'class', 'dominance' or 'hierarchy'. Kinship and clans have long been recognised in anthropological archaeology, but the term faction has become closely associated with the notion of competition (and, as such, has certain similarities with Renfrew and Cherry's [1986] regional-scale peer-polity interaction model). Elements of competition can be discerned in the Minoan world, although not always along the lines of factionalism. However, it is argued below that such a model is relevant for the second-tier elite at Malia.

Elites and Elitism

The term 'elite' is used throughout this article, and thus requires clarification here. Chase and Chase (1992) make the distinction between the elite who run the society's institutions, and the distribution of culturally elitist architecture, artefacts and symbols. The former is frustratingly difficult to reconstruct from archaeology alone, and Neopalatial Crete is no exception to this. A problem with 'elites' is that it is often part of their nature to make themselves exempt from close scrutiny by others (Shore 2002: 10-11). For Neopalatial Crete, the jury is still out concerning whether the 'central authority' comprised an individual or a group (Bennett 1961-62; Niemeier 1988; Koehl 1995; Davis 1995). This article focuses, of necessity, on the distribution of elite features, although it is understood that this need not correlate directly with the distribution of power. For example, aspiration to social status and power should not be confused with their articulation.

In Minoan scholarship, a similar confusion may be discerned between the use of the term 'palatial' with reference to the elite organisational group, and 'palatial' in terms of the manifestations of elitism. Elite features may be concentrated in the palaces, but they are

certainly not monopolised by them, and it is important that, in an over-enthusiastic reaction to traditional views, this is not confused with the fragmentation of political power. The slippage between the terms 'palatial' and 'elite' occurs on many levels.

Power Relations

I intend to offer a more nuanced interpretation of Neopalatial Knossos and Malia by exploring the power relations that existed within these sites. 'Power must be analysed as something which circulates, or rather as something which only functions in the form of a chain. It is never localised here or there, never in anybody's hands, never appropriated as a commodity or piece of wealth' (Foucault 1980: 98). In the Classical world, Ma (1999) has explored most effectively the advantages of taking a sophisticated approach to power relations. He makes the distinction between traditional notions of power (as possession or conquest) and more sophisticated approaches (as interaction, 'battlefield' or knowledge) (Ma 1999: 107). Power *relations*, certainly, should be emphasised: one of the best manifestations of the interdependency of power is that of the patron-client relationship (e.g. Wallace-Hadrill 1989). Rather than carve up power more liberally across a wider sector of the population than the traditional hierarchy model allows, the concept of power itself should perhaps be reconsidered. Complexes, institutions, individuals and social groups do not 'have' power intrinsically; rather, it is created, aspired to and negotiated through relations with others. The emphasis on relations highlights the importance of contextualising archaeological evidence—in this case, the (inhabitants of the) palaces in their urban setting.

Appreciating the interdependency of power relations is not to argue that power is necessarily fluid, and it is the case that people are socially and culturally positioned to an extent

that places limits on how they may behave: Bourdieu's *habitus* demonstrates how the agent practices in a social world conditioned by past practices (Bourdieu 1977; Jenkins 1992; Swartz 1997). Again, power relations may be dynamic, and the temporal changes to be seen at Knossos and Malia during the Neopalatial period would suggest that this is indeed the case; but this is not to say that they were *fluid*.

In summary, while the attempt to challenge the assumption of 'a hierarchical relation of dependence' is to be welcomed (Hamilakis 2002: 183), the alternative need not be heterarchy or factionalism. It is the notion of power itself that needs to be examined and qualified. This article starts with the premise that a degree of interdependency existed between the elites and the non-elites, and focuses on establishing the nature of this interdependency, and how it changed within the Neopalatial period.

Defining Palaces

The label 'palace' implies that the building was inhabited by a dynastic monarchy, which was headed by a (usually) male individual. This term is now recognised to be a product of early twentieth-century assumptions, the influence of Near Eastern archaeology on Minoan studies during this time, and the impact of the decipherment of Linear B (Hitchcock 2000: 46-47; Schoep 2002b: 102-103). To be added to this list is the influence of Homer and the figure of 'King Minos' in Greek mythology (Pelon 2002: 111). Recent discussions of the palaces have emphasised the Central Court's role in defining a 'palace', and it has been suggested that these structures be re-named 'Court Compounds' (Driessen 2002; Schoep 2002a). The suggestion that the term should be replaced by 'regional center' (Rehak and Younger 1998: 102), however, fails to distinguish between the palace itself and the palatial site as a whole. The term 'palace' is

retained here; our understanding of a structure does not increase by changing its name, and it is essential that an awareness of our historiographical heritage, which is not *always* wrong, be maintained.

There are four main ways in which Minoan palaces have been distinguished from other buildings: by their functions, size, degree of architectural elaboration and their architectural form. First, in the case of functions, they have been interpreted as redistribution centres because of the substantial storage space for agricultural goods and evidence for administration (Knappett and Schoep 2000: 365). They have also been described as the centres of production or craft specialisation (e.g. Branigan 1983). Finally, they are generally considered to be ritual and political foci in the urban and regional context (e.g. Platon 1983). Since previous research has tended not to place the Neopalatial palaces in their urban context, it is unclear how useful the criterion of 'functions' is; one cannot assume a monopoly of functions from the apparent presence or concentration of them. For example, the west magazines of palaces are generally interpreted as storage space for agricultural produce, which in turn suggests some form of redistribution. This is supported by the lack of space for agricultural storage in the second-tier buildings at Knossos, but the case is different at Malia.

Second and third, size and architectural elaboration are also used as criteria to distinguish palaces from other buildings. The palaces are clearly the largest buildings found on Neopalatial Crete both in general and within their respective settlements: the Palace at Knossos is c. 13,000 sq m and that at Malia c. 9,000 sq m. They also tend to be the most architecturally elaborate buildings in their settlements, although the Malian (mostly mud-brick) example highlights that this criterion is not clear-cut. Fourth, apart from their size, the most distinctive feature of the

palaces is their architectural form (described above). Similarities in (architectural) form, of course, do not dictate that there were also similarities in function and structural organisation.

Methodology

I shall present the site distributions of various features (for analyses of individual buildings, see Adams 2003). The relationship between activity areas and artefacts (formal patterns) and activity systems (structural patterns), or, in other words, the relationship between the spatial and the social, is central to our understanding of urbanism. On the one hand, it cannot be assumed that a wide distribution of elite artefacts and administrative evidence reflects a fragmented social structure—this assumption occurs when there is a confusion between the various uses of the term 'elite' as discussed above. On the other hand, the apparent *centralisation* of certain features and activities need not demonstrate the *monopolisation* of such elements.

I shall plot the distribution of architectural elaboration, elite artefacts and features, ceremonial practices (covering both 'religious' and 'non-religious' rites: Adams 2004a: 30), administrative data (the undeciphered Linear A) and economic activities (especially the storage of agricultural goods and evidence relating to craft production) throughout the two sites during the Neopalatial period. In terms of architectural elaboration, I have taken into consideration aspects such as size (Whitelaw 2001a; 2001b), the presence of ashlar masonry and gypsum (Shaw 1971), the presence (and quality) of frescoes (Cameron 1974; Immerwahr 1990; Hood 2000a; 2000b) and formalised elite features (see McEnroe [1982] for the adoption of similar criteria). Architectural 'elite features' discussed include Minoan Halls with pier-and-door partitions (Driessen 1982; 1989–1990; Preziosi 1983; Marinatos and Hägg

1986; Graham 1987; Nordfelt 1987; Palyvou 1987; Hitchcock 2000), Lustral Basins (Platon 1967; Alexiou 1972; Graham 1977; 1987; Gesell 1985; Hitchcock 2000; see also Marinatos [1984: 73-84] for the frescoed example at Akrotiri) and Pillar Crypts (Evans 1928: 406-8; Gesell 1985; Graham 1987. It is often difficult to distinguish these from storerooms: Begg 1975; Christakis 1999).

It is so problematic to distinguish between ritual artefacts and prestige goods that it may be the case that such a demarcation is false in the Minoan world. Certain stone vessels were used ritually, such as libation tables, while chalices could be perceived as prestige artefacts, although it has been claimed that their function was 'clearly ritual' (Warren 1969: 36). It is essential to consider the context of the artefact examined—nearly 200 conical cups were found in a Pillar Crypt of Hogarth's House B, inverted and covering the remains of vegetable matter (Evans 1928: 548; Gesell 1985: 98). These cups are normally regarded as cheap and dispensable, but in this context they served a ritual purpose. The distinction between ritual and prestige is tentatively maintained in this paper, with the acknowledgement that this must remain flexible. More attention will be paid to architectural ceremonial features than artefacts, since the latter have been examined elsewhere (Adams 2004a: 34-8).

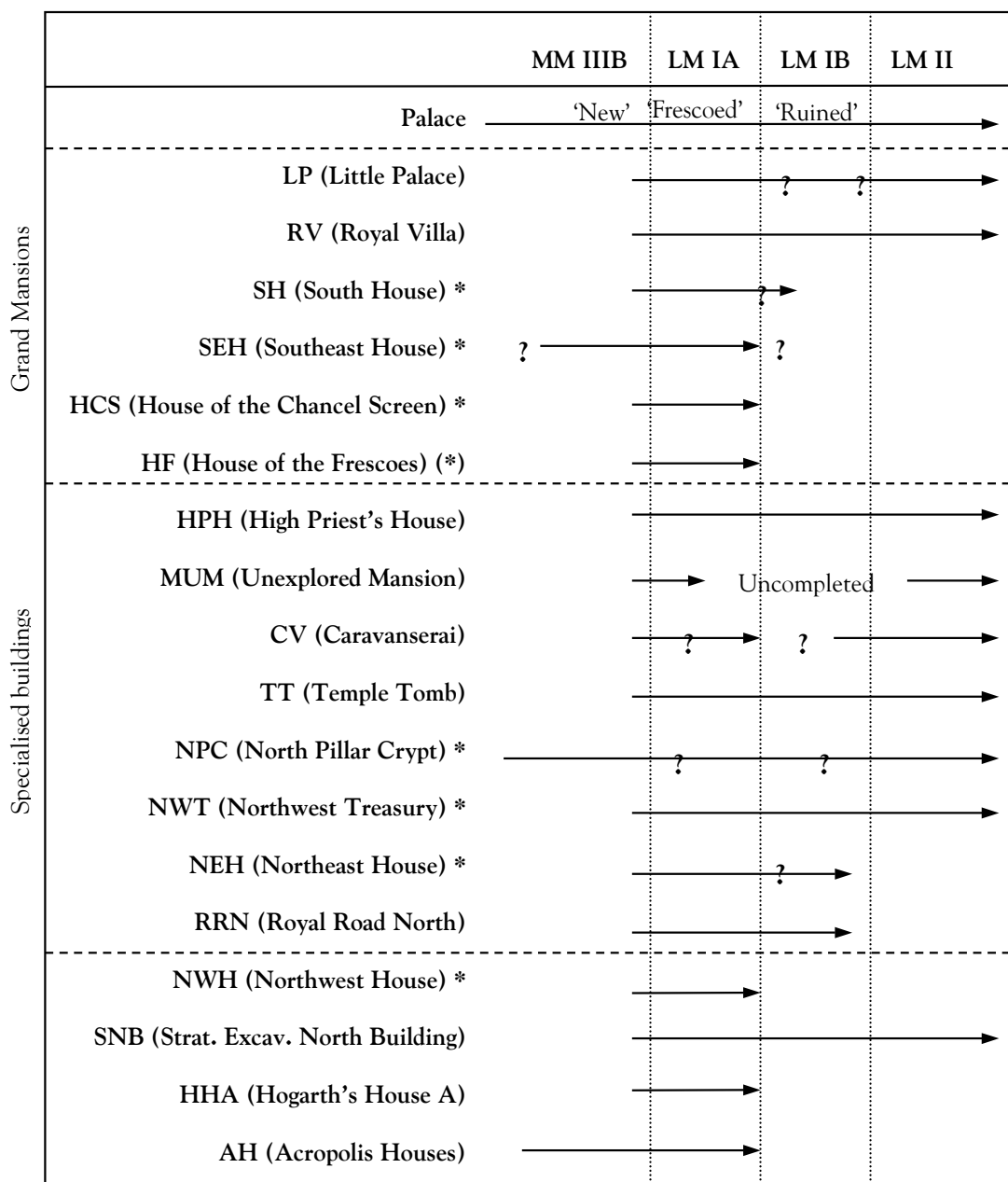
It is important to extract from the data not just the distribution *patterns* of particular types of data, but also the *correlations* among these patterns. The relational method advocated above in terms of power is mirrored by the methodological need to examine the relationships between as wide a selection of data as possible, rather than to focus on just one in isolation. Certain problems need to be recognised with incorporating many different types of data, particularly since the tempos of chronological change may not be contemporary (see Driessen and Macdonald [1997]

for the importance of distinguishing between the phases within the Neopalatial period, but see Warren [2001] for criticisms concerning how they view these changes). Changes in ceramic styles may not coincide with deposits created by architectural destructions, and the pace of change in ceramic styles and those of other moveable artefacts will generally differ. Chronological change is taken into account in this paper, although the data from both Knossos and Malia pose certain problems in this regard. An outline of these limitations is given in the following section.

The Chronological Framework

Knossos

Figure 1 depicts 'time-lines' for each of the main Knossian buildings discussed. The ceramic phases of the Neopalatial period comprise Middle Minoan (MM) IIIB, Late Minoan (LM) IA and LM IB. In terms of the Palace, Macdonald (2002: 35-36) has labelled these phases 'New', 'Frescoed' and 'Ruined' Palace. MM IIIB (or MM III/LM IA: see Mountjoy [2003: 1] on the South House) witnessed the 'Great Restoration', during which most of the Neopalatial buildings at Knossos were constructed. The point at which they were destroyed or fell out of use is much less uniform, and whether the LM IB Palace was fully used is a debated topic. While it is the case that little evidence for LM IB occupation has been found in the Palace, some scholars feel that this does not necessarily indicate that it was 'ruined' (e.g. Niemeier 1994: 85; Peter Warren, pers. comm.). On the one hand, the lack of evidence for architectural modifications as well as artefacts does suggest that its use had diminished (Macdonald 1990: 88; 2002: 53). On the other hand, the LM IB 'dump' in the area of the South House may be the remains of occupation in the Palace, discarded during the LM II-III reorganisation (Mountjoy 2003; Hatzaki in press).



* Marks a building located close to the Palace

Figure 1. Time-lines and abbreviations used for Neopalatial buildings at Knossos.

The 'grand mansions' located near the Palace (the South House, the Southeast House and the House of the Chancel Screen) were not rebuilt after the LM IA earthquake, suggesting that the area became taboo, although the buildings close to the North Wing of the Palace continued in use (for example the Northwest Treasury). The later occupation of certain buildings, such as the Palace, Little Palace and the Royal Villa, has skewed our understanding of their Neopalatial use.

Malia

The time-lines of Malian buildings are set out in Figure 2. In the original excavation publications, the data are listed under headings of (Protopalatial) 'première époque' and

(Neopalatial and later) 'seconde époque', which renders it difficult to establish sub-phases within the Neopalatial period. Van Effenterre (1980: 41-42) has divided the ceramic material into three Neopalatial styles: i) linear and spiral, ii) floral and iii) marine, which matches the Knossian ceramic styles well (but see Pelon [1982: 81] for criticisms of this comparison). However, MM III is not clearly distinguished from LM IA in the Palace or Quartier Epsilon (Poursat 1988: 67) and it has been suggested that the distinction between LM IA and LM IB should be blurred at Malia (Deshayes and Dessenne 1959: 152). Full use of the Palace in LM IB is unclear, but LM IB ceramic types have been recovered from it. The Palace ceased functioning at the

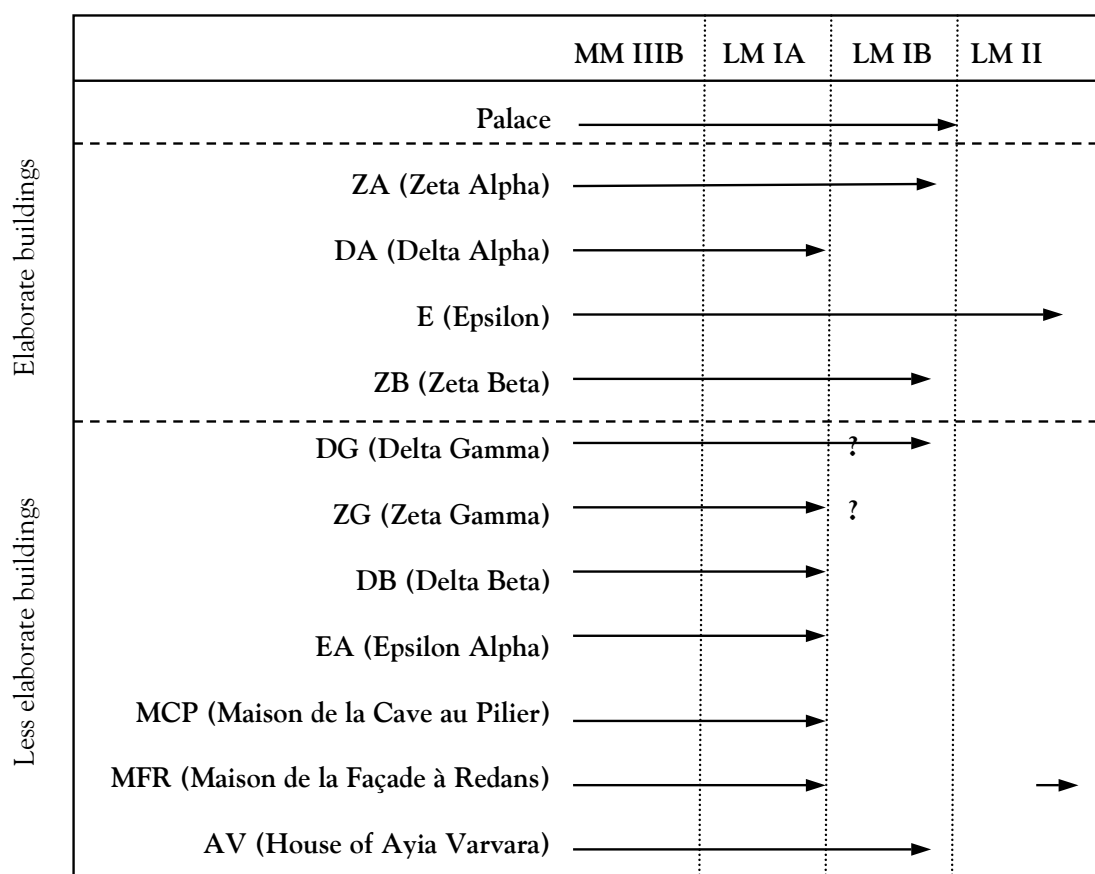


Figure 2. Time-lines and abbreviations used for Neopalatial buildings at Malia.

end of LM IB (Darcque and van de Moortel 2001). There appears to be a further problem in distinguishing between LM IB and LM II (see Poursat 1988: 67, 76, on whether the end of the Neopalatial period fell in the LM IB or LM II phase). However, Poursat concludes that the buildings fell out of use at the end of LM IB, with the exception of Epsilon.

This brief overview demonstrates that the chronological problems at Malia are at least as complex as those at Knossos, and these difficulties are heightened when we attempt to establish contemporaneity between the two sites. It is nonetheless essential to gain as fine a picture as possible in order to understand the dynamism of the period.

The Palace at Knossos

Architectural Elaboration

The size of the Palace at Knossos has been noted above. Not only is a high degree of architectural elaboration employed in the building, but the technological skill necessary for the complexity of the design and the number of storeys in the Palace is also extremely impressive. However, this complexity resulted in the need for heavy reinforcement during excavation, a situation of which Evans took advantage to conduct substantial reconstructions (Graham 1987; Farnoux 1996; Papadopoulos 1997; Hitchcock and Koudounaris 2002).

The fresco programme from the Palace is unique. The presence of bull iconography on frescoes is mainly restricted to the Palace, and it has been argued that the bull was the symbol of power for the 'sovereign' at Knossos (Hallager and Hallager 1995), although the specific association with a sovereign is not demonstrated. The Sacred Grove and Dance Fresco and the Grandstand Fresco depict large gatherings, and they have shed light on how the Central and West Courts were used (Hägg 1985; Marinatos 1987; Davis 1987).

Ceremonial Evidence (Figures 3 and 4)

The formalised nature of most of the halls (in particular the 'Minoan Hall') justifies a discussion of them under this heading. The Palace has the largest number of halls of any building at Knossos, with eight still visible and seven more reconstructed on upper floors (Graham 1979; but see Begg 1987, for the suggestion that these were not halls). Seven of the visible halls are Minoan Halls. The distribution of halls is fairly widespread throughout the Palace, with concentrations in the West and East Wings. Broadly speaking, they form four groups: Entrance Halls (North Pillar Hall, Northwest Minoan Hall, South Propylaeum); Upper Halls accessed from outside the Palace (west side of the West Wing through the Northwest Entrance: Evans 1928: 590); Upper Halls accessed from inside the Palace (Tricolumnar Hall, Northeast Hall, East Hall); and unique forms, namely the Throne Room complex and the Domestic Quarter complex. The latter's label and interpretation is partly based on the 'privacy' obtained by the remoteness from the two main monumental Entrances at the North and West of the Palace (Driessen 1982: 56; 2002: 5). However, these Halls would have been fairly accessible by the East Bastion and the Southeast Entrance (Adams in press).

Three Lustral Basins have been found in the Palace, but they date from different ceramic phases. The (early) Northwest and Southeast Lustral Basins may have been the loci of cleansing rites before entering the Palace, but the one set in the Throne Room complex lies at some distance from any entrance. The two pillared rooms in the Central Shrine area, the Northwest Pillar Crypt and the Southwest Pillar Crypt were probably used ceremonially in the Neopalatial period. These rooms were located at various distances from the entrances. The Palace has by far the widest variety of cultic areas in the town, including the Central and West Courts. However,

there are areas of the Palace where there does not appear to be evidence for cultic use and artefacts (such as the badly eroded northeast part).

The wealth of material from the Knossian Palace is particularly impressive given the fact that it was in use after the Neopalatial period. There are three main deposits of prestige and ritual artefacts, two in the West Wing (the Temple Repositories [including the famous Snake Goddesses] and the Stone Vase Deposit) and one in the East Wing (the Treasury of the Shrine). These contained a mixture of cultic and prestige artefacts, insofar as a distinction can be made. For example, the East Wing deposit contained miniature gold-plated bronze double axes, gold-plated bronze curls, fragments of ivory figurines, a faience bull's head and a rock-crystal bowl, among other items (Evans 1930: 397-435; Gesell 1985: 92). Overall, prestige artefacts were generally more widely distributed throughout the east side of the West Wing, whereas they originate mainly from a single (MM III) deposit in the East Wing. In contrast, (LM IB) marine style pottery has only been found in the East Wing, as strays in later deposits (Mountjoy 1984: 170-71).

Literacy and Administration (Figure 5)

At Knossos, Linear A tablets have only been found in the Palace, and they all date to the earlier part of the Neopalatial period. The tablet from the Temple Repositories was found with other administrative features in a 'tertiary context' (Schoep 1995: 32-34), whereas the tablets in the southeast of the Palace are not associated with other administrative material. Linear A used for administrative purposes has been found only in the Palace, with the exception of the nodule from the Northeast House mentioned by Schoep (1995: 33-34). Boskamp (1996) has also identified Linear A marks on many of the pithoi from the West Magazines, probably some kind of identifica-

tion marker. Most sealings found in the Palace date to the last destruction (Popham and Gill 1995 note 'earlier deposits', without specifying which phase: compare Gill 1965; 2002). There is a notable concentration of the later examples in the East Wing around the Domestic Quarter, but we cannot project this back to the Neopalatial period.

The Economy (Figure 6)

The overall amount of space for agricultural storage in the Palace is substantial, with the three largest areas being the West Magazines, the Northeastern Magazines and the Royal Magazines (Christakis 1999). Begg (1975: 20) questions whether the Neopalatial magazines were intended to store pithoi, but the later evidence has confused the picture too much for comment. There is a close correlation between such storage areas and halls—for example, the Halls above the West Magazines and the Northeast Hall near the Northeast Magazines. The main exceptions to this are the entrance halls and the Domestic Quarter. A few scattered tools indicate that some production or maintenance activities took place in the Palace, but no Neopalatial workshops have been identified here. However, the number of (unique) prestige goods found in the Palace is very impressive (see above), especially considering the post-Neopalatial use of the building.

Discussion

First, let us examine the East Wing. While the monumental Grand Staircase would offer a formal entrance to the 'Domestic Quarter', the more informal Entrances on the East and Southeast sides demonstrate that it is not in fact isolated, which was the main reason for allocating a residential function to it. The East Wing of the Palace may well contain residential areas, but these could also have served as reception areas; these interpretations are not mutually exclusive, especially given the number of

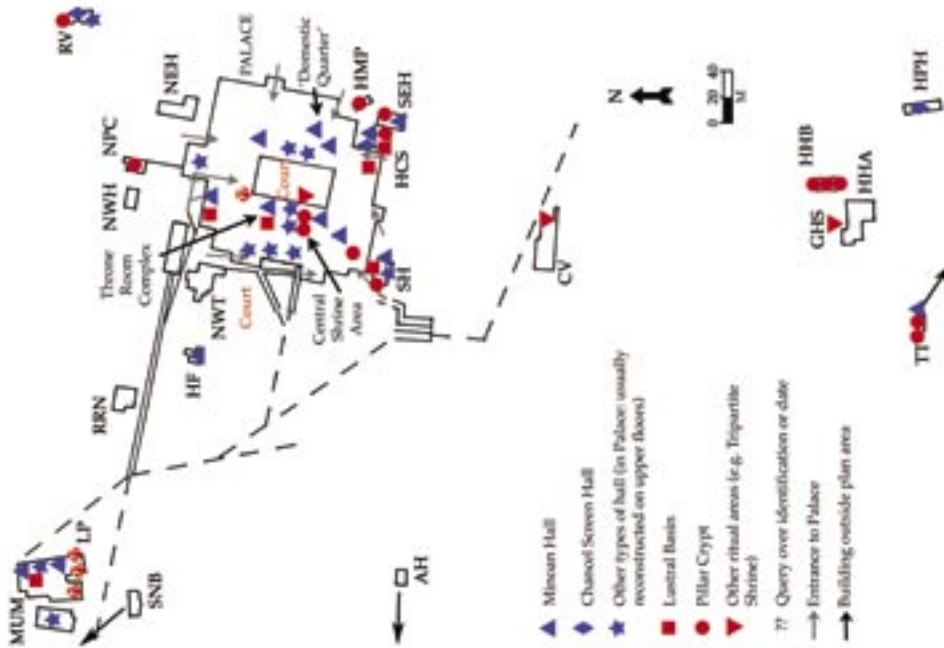


Figure 3. Formalised architectural ceremonial units at Knossos. (Plan after Hood and Smyth 1981 and Warren 1994.)



Figure 4. Concentrations of ritual and prestige artefacts at Knossos. (Plan after Hood and Smyth 1981 and Warren 1994.)

Further abbreviations used in Figures: HHB (Hogarth's House B); GHS (Gypsades House Shrine); HMP (House of the Monolithic Pillars)



Figure 5. Linear A at Knossos. (Plan after Hood and Smyth 1981 and Warren 1994.)



Figure 6. Economic activities at Knossos. (Plan after Hood and Smyth 1981 and Warren 1994.)





Figure 9. Linear A at Malia. (Plan after Van Effenterre 1980.)

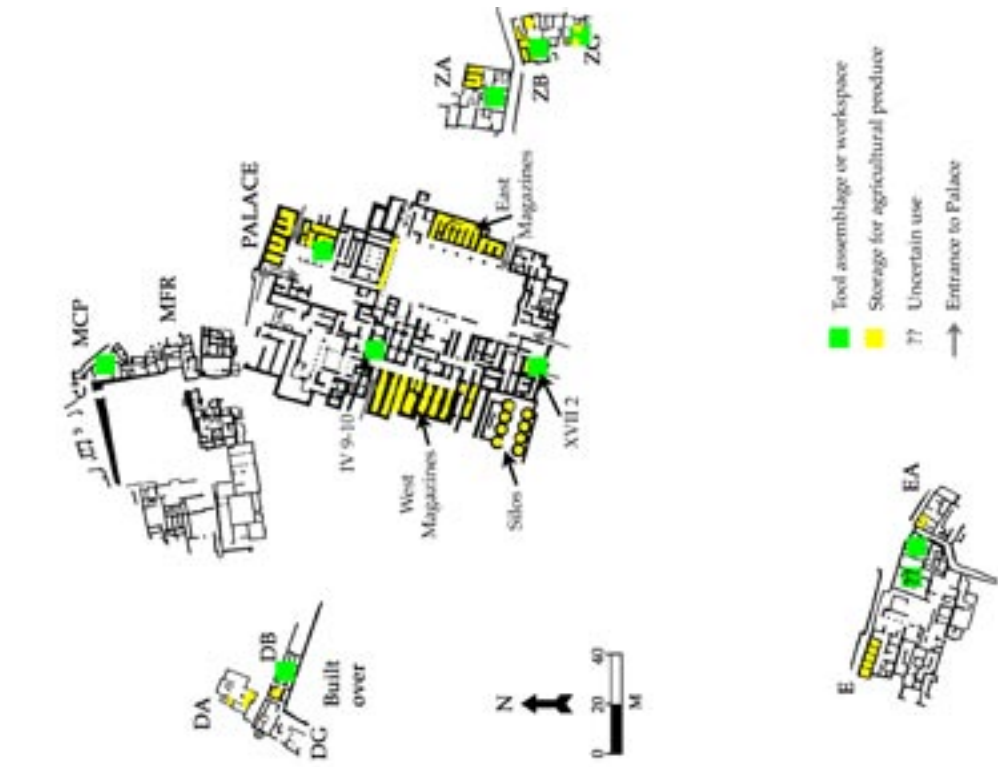


Figure 10. Economic activities at Malia. (Plan after Van Effenterre 1980.)

storeys in this area (see also Hitchcock 2000: 169). Fewer ritual and prestige artefacts have been recovered from this area than from the West Wing, but two Linear A tablets were found in the southeast area of the Palace. The East Wing therefore provides the ideal setting for the routine, administrative convergence of palatial and urban elites, and indeed visitors from further afield (Adams in press).

In contrast, the cramped area on the east side of the West Wing (which became more restricted during the course of the Neopalatial period: Panagiotaki 1999; Macdonald 2002: 39-41) would have been more suitable for highly selective and elite ceremonies, possibly witnessed by a larger number of people from the Central Court. Both architecture and artefacts support this notion, and it is an area that cannot be entered directly from outside the Palace. In contrast, the west side of the West Wing is ideally suited for feasting, with the combination of halls and storage space. A larger group than would normally enter the Palace could have been entertained here (via the Northwest Entrance), without having access to the rest of the Palace.

In summary, the indications that the Palace was designed and constructed as a coherent entity should not blind us to the myriad uses of the building, and to the fact that outsiders may have had access to specific areas only (Adams in press). There is a clear concentration of ceremonial areas, administration, space for agricultural storage and the consumption of prestige goods in the building. It remains to be seen how these are distributed throughout the town.

The Palace at Malia

Architectural Elaboration

The construction of the Palace at Malia is not as impressive as that at Knossos, and it has been noted that 75% of the walls were constructed with rubble and mud-brick, and

floor paving did not tend to be employed (Pelon 1980: 6). Furthermore, reconstructions of the building indicate just two or three storeys throughout. The use of gypsum is very rare at Malia, or not used at all (Shaw 1971: 23, n.4). Evidence for wall painting has been found in the building, particularly in area VII, but it is non-figurative. There is no 'fresco programme' as at Knossos.

Ceremonial Evidence (Figures 7 and 8)

The Minoan Hall in the northwest area of the building is somewhat isolated from both the Central Court and the entrances to the Palace. A Lustral Basin was located close to it. Halls have been reconstructed above the West Magazines, which could have been accessed from the West Entrance. The 'Banquet Hall' to the north of the Central Court was so called because storage and service areas appear to be located around it (Graham 1961; Van Effenterre 1980: 343-47). The clearest example of a Pillar Crypt at Malia comes from the West Wing of the Palace (VII 4). This Pillar Crypt is aligned with a 'baetyl' discovered in the Central Court (Warren 1990: 203), but is unusual in that it has two pillars. Of other ceremonial areas in the Palace, XVIII is particularly interesting, since it is only accessible from outside the Palace. This is comparable to the Neopalatial West Bench Sanctuary Complex at Phaistos (Gesell 1985: 127-28). Area XVIII was in use during the earlier part of the Neopalatial period. Isolated prestige artefacts (in particular, stone vases) are found throughout the Palace, rather than in concentrated deposits. One notable example is the stone triton found just to the northeast of the Palace (Baurain and Darcque 1983).

Literacy and Administration (Figure 9)

At Malia, the only evidence for literacy comes from the Palace, apart from a sherd with a hieroglyphic sign on it from the Maison de la Façade à Redans. All of the exam-

ples from the Palace date to the earlier part of the Neopalatial period, including the Hieroglyphic Deposit from III 8 in the 'Residential Quarter' (this area was converted into a possible but unlikely Pillar Crypt). The deposit contained five Linear A tablets, and a further one was discovered under the stairs close to the Banquet Hall (Schoep 1995: 34-6). No non-administrative, or ritual/ideological, uses of Linear A have been recovered from the Palace or from the rest of the town. This category is therefore not discussed in the section below on the Malian town.

The Economy (Figure 10)

The main storage areas in the Palace were the North Magazines, the West Magazines and the silos. The Palace at Malia differs from Knossos and Phaistos, in that the silos date to the Neopalatial period, rather than to the Protopalatial one. Strasser (1997) has argued that the Protopalatial *koulouras* at Knossos and Phaistos were not in fact used as silos, but Halstead (1997) has effectively pointed out the shortcomings of this argument. If they were filled, Van Effenterre (1980: 335) has calculated that the Malian silos would have provided the annual ration for more than 1000 people. The East Magazines were also used for the storage of solid foodstuffs (Driessen and Macdonald 1997: 185; Pelon 2002: 118). As at Knossos, there is a close correlation between halls and the storage of agricultural produce, most notably in the west side of the West Wing, and possibly the Banquet Hall. In general, areas used for storage have not yielded cultic evidence. As well as a scatter of tools, there appear to be two workshops of luxury goods in the Palace at Malia, one for ivory (IV 9-10) and one for stone vases (XVII 2). Either the production of these artefacts as well as the consumption of them was deemed prestigious by the palatial elite at Malia, or they lacked the organisational ability to set up workshops outside the complex.

Discussion

The East Wing of the Palace functioned solely as a storage area, whereas the West Wing had a multi-functional role. The east half of the West Wing comprises small ritual spaces. The west half comprises halls and storage areas, which could have been accessed directly from outside via the West Entrance, and a similar arrangement can be seen in the Northeastern area and Entrance. The north-western section of the Palace was somewhat isolated from other areas, including the West Magazines directly to the south of it. From the ground floor plan, one would have to move to the Central Court and re-enter the building in order reach the northwestern 'Domestic Quarter'. Certain aspects of the palatial complex were accessible from outside the Palace, such as the silos and the ritual area XVIII in the South Wing. There is therefore evidence for ceremonial areas, administration, space for agricultural storage and the consumption of prestige goods in the building. The following section will examine how the Palace at Malia compares with that at Knossos.

Comparison between the Palaces

Despite the functional differences between the Palaces at Knossos and Malia, the category of 'palace' still holds good. The similarities between the West Wings at the two Palaces are as striking as those of the Central Courts themselves. Preziosi (1983) and Palyvou (2002) have pointed out the square form created by the juxtaposition of the Central Court and the West Wing. The West Wings have a split function, with halls and storage to the west, and confined ritual spaces to the east. Furthermore, there are formal similarities between the Throne Room at Knossos and the Residential Area at Malia, although the former faces onto the Central Court. The Pillar Crypt area at Malia is comparable to the Central Shrine in the Palace at Knossos. Finally, ceremonial and

(early) archival evidence are juxtaposed in the West Wing of both Palaces. These similarities contrast substantially with the East Wing of both buildings: the Palace at Knossos provides an elaborate residential/reception area, while that at Malia was used for storage. The different layout and functions of the East Wings of the Palaces largely account for the difference in size between the two buildings.

A comparison of architectural elaboration reveals that the palatial elite at Knossos invested much more energy and care in the construction and iconography of its Palace than that at Malia (and 'had' more to invest). While both shared the same cultural form maintained from the Protopalatial period, the degree of conspicuous consumption differed considerably. The number and range of ceremonial areas at Knossos was also greater, which suggests not only a higher intensity of ritual practice, but also the potential for wider diversity and complexity in them. While both have yielded a large number and wide range of prestige goods, these are more spectacular at Knossos and it has produced large, concentrated deposits of them, whereas they tend to be isolated finds at Malia. Both have substantial space for agricultural produce, but production of luxury goods occurred in the Malian Palace, which was a practice that the Knossian palatial elite appears to have eschewed, delegating it to workshops outside the Palace.

The Town at Knossos

The urban landscape of Knossos is known not only by studies of individual buildings (e.g. Evans 1928; Hatzaki 1996; Mountjoy 2003), but also through the valuable survey conducted by Hood and Smyth (1981) and further work by Whitelaw (2001a). It should be noted, however, that in Minoan Crete 'no single site has yet been excavated in its entirety, excepting Neopalatial Psira' (Rehak and Younger 1998: 106). Around 20 struc-

tures at the site are known well enough for discussion.

It is first necessary to provide some justification for the clearly loaded term 'grand mansion' employed in this article. The problematic term 'villa' has been reassessed recently (Hägg 1997; Rehak and Younger 1998: 104-106), and 'grand mansion' is certainly not intended to replace it. The group of 'grand mansions' comprises buildings that are standardised in terms of size, features and functions (Little Palace, South House, Southeast House, House of the Chancel Screen, Royal Villa and possibly the House of the Frescoes). A term was required for this specific group of Knossian buildings, and, while acknowledging it is loaded, they are 'grand' and there is no reason to think that they are not residential. The criteria for this categorisation are similar to that of McEnroe (1979; 1982) and Driessen (1989-90). However, I have considered how the buildings may (or may not) form categories from a site perspective, rather than an island-wide overview.

The specialised buildings comprise in most cases poorly understood structures, which have often been given misleadingly specific titles (Caravanserai, Temple Tomb, High Priest's House and Minoan Unexplored Mansion). If not necessarily mono-functional, their form and apparent functions so often appear unique that the enigmatic term 'specialised buildings' will be followed in this analysis. The final group comprises simple buildings, such as the Acropolis Houses.

Size and Architectural Elaboration

In terms of size (Figure 11), the buildings (with known floor areas) fall into three main groups, with the exceptions of the Palace and the Little Palace (c. 1395 sq m; see Whitelaw 2001b, for the floor areas of Minoan houses). The first group includes buildings with a range of 300-450 sq m (the Northeast House, the Minoan Unexplored Mansion, the Northwest

Treasury and the Temple Tomb); the second 220-245 sq m (the Royal Villa, the House of the Chancel Screen, the South House, the Southeast House and Hogarth's House A); and finally buildings with an area of less than 145 sq m (the House of the Frescoes, the North Pillar Crypt, the House of the Monolithic Pillars and the Acropolis House). The grand mansions fall into the medium group of 220-245 sq m, but there are exceptions—notably, the Little Palace and the House of the Frescoes, which are the only grand mansions located to the west of the Palace, whereas the standardised ones hug the Palace on the south side and to the northeast.

The grand mansions and specialised buildings have evidence for architectural elaboration, such as ashlar masonry and frescoes. Gypsum was also used for the construction of many buildings at the site, including the grand mansions and the Caravanserai (Shaw 1971: 21-23). Some of the poorer buildings, such as Hogarth's House A, have painted stucco, and its presence indicates aspirations to status. Elaborate frescoes, such as the Par-

tridge Fresco from the Caravanserai, indicate higher aspirations still. The stack from the House of the Frescoes was not *in situ* on the walls; the house was probably being renovated when it was destroyed. These depictions are of high quality, with Linear A markings. The Royal Road North Building has yielded the only other bull fresco at Knossos other than the Palace; that a 'special relationship' existed between the two buildings is discussed below.

Ceremonial Evidence (Figures 3 and 4)

There is some variety both in terms of the form and location of the halls found in mansions, as in the Palace. Many of the grand mansions have more than one, and the Little Palace has three juxtaposed. A set architectural ceremonial assemblage, comprising Minoan Hall, Lustral Basin and/or Pillar Crypt, matches the overall standardised size of these grand mansions. A comparison of the location of Minoan Halls varies greatly, from being entrance halls and thoroughfares (e.g. South House and Temple Tomb) to isolated (e.g. House of the

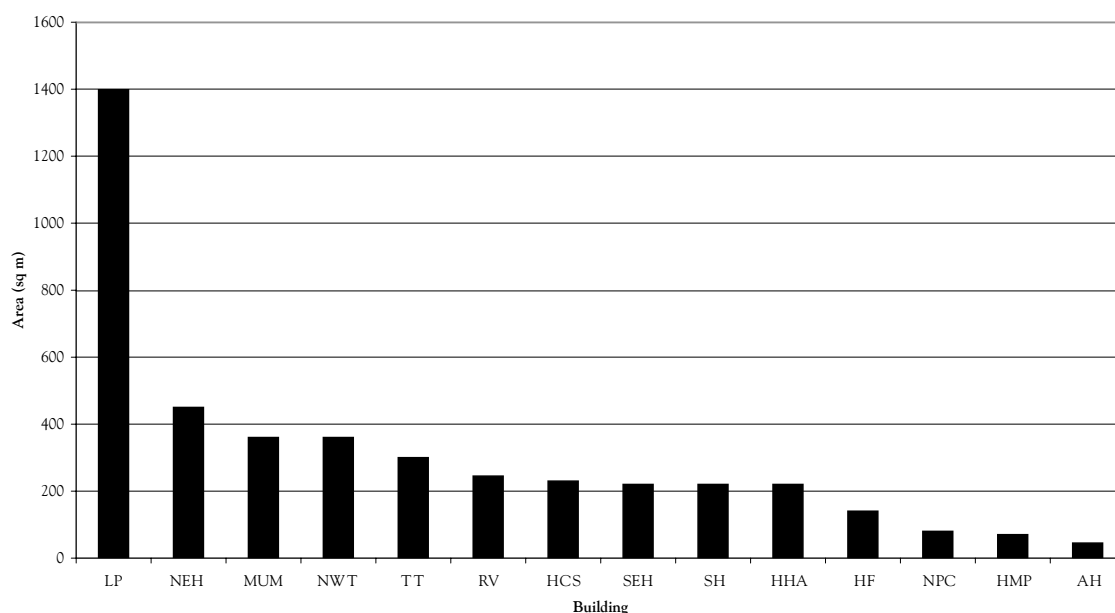


Figure 11. The sizes of non-palatial buildings at Knossos.

Frescoes and the Southeast House). Such variety suggests that the form comprised a multi-functional architectural fashion rather than being mono-functional. No ritual artefacts were found in any of these Minoan Halls. The Chancel Screen Hall is a particular type of hall, which has so far only been found in the House of the Chancel Screen, the Royal Villa and the High Priest's House. It differs from the standard Minoan Hall in that it has a central niche in the back wall of the inner chamber, which would have served as a ceremonial focal point (Gesell 1985: 20-21). The artefacts found in the High Priest's House, such as an altar, indicate ritual use (Evans 1935: 202-15; Gesell 1985: 95-96).

Three Lustral Basins have been uncovered within urban structures (the South House, the House of the Chancel Screen and the Little Palace). All of these were closely associated with a Minoan Hall, and none of them was located particularly close to the main entrance. Pillar Crypts have been excavated in the Royal Villa, the South House, the Southeast House, the Temple Tomb and Hogarth's House B. The Southeast and Southwest Pillar Crypts in the Little Palace were probably also Pillar Crypts, despite Hatzaki's doubt (1996: 36-37), as was the example in the House of the Chancel Screen. All non-palatial mansions with Lustral Basins, therefore, appear to have had Pillar Crypts.

The Pillar Crypts in the South House and the Royal Villa have evidence for upper rooms following the same plan as the lower floor. Moreover, in the Royal Villa, the South House and the Little Palace (Southeast Pillar Crypts), the area around the Pillar Crypt included its own separate staircase to the upper floor. In the former two examples, size alone would not necessitate the need for a second staircase, and they were clearly designed to serve the Pillar Crypts only. It appears that access to the Pillar Crypts, and between the floors, was carefully restricted. In contrast, the

east part of the Southeast House is heavily eroded, but it is possible that access to this Pillar Crypt was direct from outside. Again, we see variation in location, which could indicate variation in use.

The grand mansions with this elite, architectural assemblage have not, in general, revealed any other ritual areas or deposits. Inhabitants of buildings who had not taken up this assemblage tended to perform idiosyncratic and less formalised ritual practices. For example, the Stratigraphical Museum North Building has evidence for LM IB child sacrifice and/or cannibalism (Wall *et al.* 1986), and the inverted conical cups from Hogarth's House B have already been mentioned. Ritual artefacts are widely distributed throughout the site, which indicates widespread ritual or ceremonial practice, even if a well-defined space was not allocated for it. The entire site is notable for the high quality of its prestige goods, the most common being stone vases. The assemblage of silver vessels from the South House indicates that rich deposits were not confined to the Palace, and several other bronze hoards have been found at the site (Evans 1928: 623-33; Georgiou 1979).

Literacy and Administration (Figure 5)

Very little administrative evidence has been found in the town (see above), but the use of Linear A for non-administrative purposes (such as inscriptions on libation tables or stucco) is more widespread. For example, the House of the Frescoes has yielded an inscribed libation table and Linear A markings on its frescoes (Evans 1928: 438-42; Cameron 1968; Godart and Olivier 1982). However, the fact remains that most Knossian buildings have produced no evidence whatsoever of literacy on the part of their inhabitants.

The Economy (Figure 6)

Of the grand mansions, the Royal Villa, the Southeast House and the House of the

Frescoes appear to have no storage areas for agricultural produce (Christakis 1999). Storage space in the South House and the House of the Chancel Screen is minimal, but it was potentially greater in the Little Palace. This suggests that, despite the grandeur of these buildings, they had limited self-sufficiency (see also McEnroe 1979: 75-76; 1982: 14). In contrast, some of the 'specialised buildings' (most notably the Caravanserai and the Northeast House) tended to have substantial space set aside for agricultural produce, although others had none (e.g. the Hogarth's House B and the Royal Road North Building). The simpler buildings (such as the Acropolis Houses and Hogarth's House A) have produced some pithoi.

In terms of production, the South House is the only grand mansion that has evidence of this kind: a tool-kit of bronze instruments. This indicates the ability to produce and repair artefacts, even if this was not performed in this space. Most of the evidence for production comes from buildings that do not possess the elite architectural assemblage (of Minoan Hall, Lustral Basin and/or Pillar Crypt). The Royal Road North Building has yielded much evidence for ivory and stone working. In summary, there are buildings with much ceremonial evidence and no production data (such as the grand mansions), and there are deposits of tools in buildings that have no ritual or prestigious evidence (e.g. the Northwest House).

Discussion

The buildings fall into three categories (excluding the Palace), but there are formal variations within these groups. There is a certain homogeneity in the material culture of the grand mansions, in size (c. 220-245 sq m), adoption of a Minoan Hall, Lustral Basin, and/or Pillar Crypt, and the lack of storage for agricultural produce or administrative evidence. There are certain variations

in the location of specific features, but the overall impression is one of intense formalisation of ceremonial activities. This suggests both emulation of the Palace's architecture, and competition among those responsible for commissioning these buildings. Evidence for production is generally to be found away from the grand mansions, but they have yielded evidence for the consumption of prestige goods. The Little Palace stands outside this group and, above all other Neopalatial buildings, blurs the line between Palace and town (Hatzaki 1996: 41).

The specialised buildings form an idiosyncratic group; they are well built and often unique. Many contain idiosyncratic manifestations of ritual, rather than adopting formalised settings. This suggests that the elite architectural assemblage (of Minoan Hall, Lustral Basin and/or Pillar Crypt) was restricted to certain buildings, obliging the excluded people to turn to other, less standardised, forms of ritual expression. Evidence for Linear A being used for administrative purposes is absent in the urban context, but non-administrative examples do appear.

The Town at Malia

Our knowledge of the urban landscape of Malia is again based on the excavation of individual houses (for bibliography, see Driesen and Macdonald 1997: 186-92), and also a survey of the wider region (Müller 1991a; 1992; 1996; 1998). Approximately 12 Neopalatial buildings at Malia have been published well enough for analysis.

Size and Architectural Elaboration

There are less coherent groupings in terms of size here than at Knossos (Figure 12; see also Whitelaw 2001b). After the Palace, Epsilon is the largest building (c. 1370 sq m), but there is no evidence for an upper storey. The storage areas in Zeta Alpha and Zeta Beta account

for their substantial size (420 and 310 sq m, respectively), but Epsilon Alpha and Delta Alpha also had storage areas, and yet are much smaller (180 and 165 sq m, respectively). Delta Beta could in fact have formed two 'households', the eastern one of 200 sq m and the western one of 185 sq m. The final group consists of simple houses of 130 sq m (Maison de la Cave au Pilier, Maison de la Façade à Redans and Ayia Varvara). The buildings cluster in quarters all around the Palace (but how exactly is unknown due to the excavation bias). Some buildings employed ashlar masonry (e.g. Zeta Alpha), but Epsilon, which contained other notable features, had little of it. Evidence for painted stucco has been found in the Zeta and Epsilon quarters, but this is non-figurative and simple. Little correlation can be discerned among size, location and architectural elaboration.

Ceremonial Evidence (Figures 7 and 8)

Several buildings have halls. Zeta Alpha contained four halls, and is the only building at Malia to have two Minoan Halls. Three of

its halls are located in the western part of the building. The separation between ceremonial and 'functional' activities in this building is made the more notable by the presence of an entrance to serve each section. Zeta Beta has an unusual Minoan Hall: not only is it 'lop-sided', but it also provides the only entrance to a workspace, which is very rare in Minoan architecture. Two further Minoan Halls have been located in Delta Alpha and Delta Gamma. It is surprising that Epsilon does not possess a Minoan Hall, while it has two other types of Hall (Columnar and Impluvium). As at Knossos, there is some variety concerning the location of the Minoan Hall in terms of the building's entrance. Thus, while halls are widely distributed across the site, they do not conform to a pattern.

Other than the example in the Palace, there are three certain Lustral Basins at Malia (Delta Alpha, Zeta Alpha and Epsilon), and a further possible example in Zeta Beta. Epsilon's is abnormal in that the building did not contain a Minoan Hall, while in the other cases the Lustral Basin tended to be located close to the

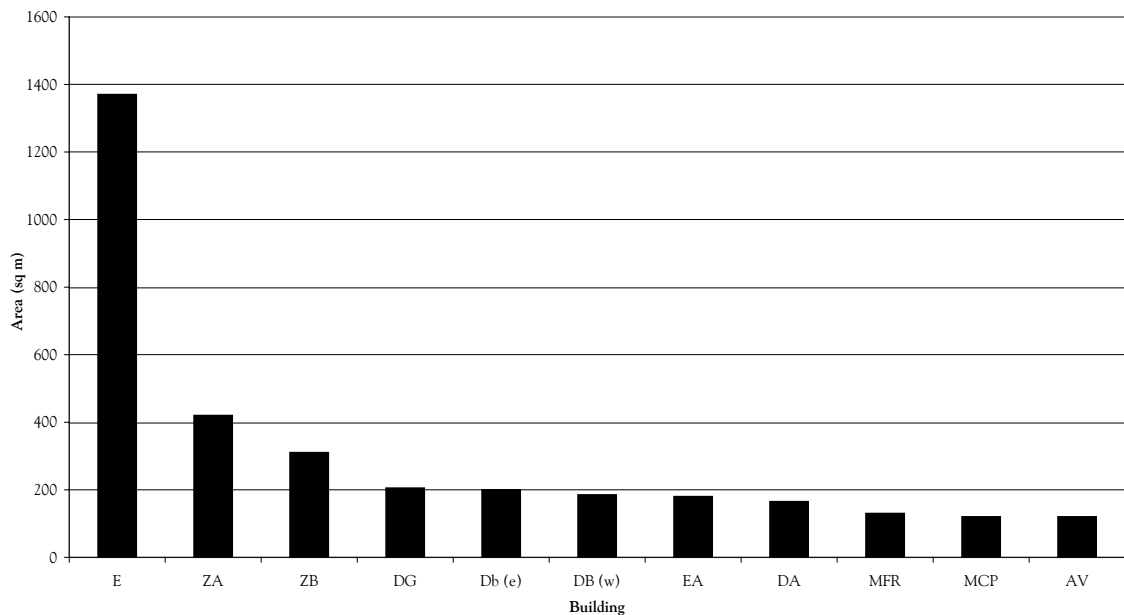


Figure 12. The sizes of non-palatial buildings at Malia.

Minoan Hall (but not close to the entrances). One of the many similarities between Delta Alpha and Zeta Alpha is the location of the Lustral Basin in a central western position, about mid-way from the South Entrance to the buildings. There is only one (probable) example of a Pillar Crypt in the town, in the Maison de la Cave au Pilier. Ritual areas were therefore widely spread throughout the site, but there was no general adherence to a particular architectural assemblage. Zeta Alpha and Delta Alpha are the only buildings that would conform to the Knossian 'grand mansion' group in this way.

Apart from XVIII in the Palace (entered from outside the Palace), three main ritual deposits have been found in the town, one in the Maison de la Façade à Redans and two in Epsilon. Space XXXVIII in Epsilon contains a particularly rich and unusual deposit, based around a limestone basin set in the floor (Gesell 1985: 108). Idiosyncratic deposits could be found in buildings with formalised ceremonial spaces, such as Epsilon (Lustral Basin) and the Maison de la Cave au Pilier (probable Pillar Crypt). The distribution of prestige artefacts is also wide, and consists mainly of stone vases. Since Linear A has been found only in the Palace, we move straight to discussion of the economy.

The Economy (Figure 10)

There are urban buildings with magazines for agricultural storage, including Epsilon and Zeta Alpha. In both cases, the adoption of a specific architectural design for storage indicates long-term organisation and the desire to possess storage facilities in a distinct location from the rest of the building. The potential space for storage varied within the site, but the only two buildings without any evidence at all are Delta Gamma and the Maison de la Façade à Redans. Therefore, the evidence for storage is widely spread throughout the town, and of varying degrees of extent and elabora-

tion. Presumably, the occupants of the majority of buildings were self-sufficient.

Tool assemblages were found in Zeta Alpha, Zeta Gamma and Delta Beta. Workspaces have been discovered in Zeta Beta, the Maison de la Cave au Pilier (stone carving), and possibly Zeta Alpha and Epsilon (stone carving). On the whole, the evidence for production is very widespread, and includes some of the grander buildings. The prestige artefacts from the Maison de la Cave au Pilier probably indicate production, rather than consumption.

Discussion

In summary, in the Neopalatial town there are no clear groupings or patterns concerning the non-palatial buildings, in terms of specific distribution patterns of data or how they correlate. Formalised architectural features were adopted, but there was no regular architectural assemblage to which the inhabitants of the more elaborate, and presumably 'elite', buildings chose to conform. Evidence for the use of Linear A is generally absent in the town, but evidence for agricultural storage, production and the use of prestige goods is widespread, with no clear correlations among size, architectural elaboration or ceremonial practices.

Comparison between the Towns

There appear to be four groups (or tiers) of buildings at Knossos: the Palace, the grand mansions, the specialised buildings and the less elaborate houses. There are three tiers at Malia (the Palace, the more elaborate houses and the less elaborate houses), although the divisions between them are less clear than at Knossos. Malia does not appear to have any examples of 'specialised buildings'; the Maison de la Cave au Pilier may have had its main function as a market/workshop, but this is the exception.

The grand mansions at Knossos possess a standardised architectural assemblage (Minoan Hall, Lustral Basin and/or Pillar Crypt) and building size, a formalisation that appears to be absent at Malia. While Delta Alpha, Zeta Alpha and Zeta Beta follow the usual Minoan coupling of Minoan Hall and Lustral Basin, Epsilon's inhabitants adopted only the Lustral Basin. The adoption of other, idiosyncratic ritual practices in Epsilon is a further departure from the pattern of Knossian grand mansions, whose inhabitants rejected individualistic rites. Furthermore, the Malian urban elite buildings differ from those at Knossos in that they were self-sufficient in terms of storage for agricultural produce and they possessed work areas.

The concept of factional competition can shed light on the second-tier elites of these two towns. Competition among this group at Knossos led to the homogeneity of ceremonial practices (an argument not dissimilar to that of peer-polity interaction, but now at the intra-site and class level). However, the lack of self-sufficiency renders it unlikely that these inhabitants were the elites of factions, since there appears to have been some level of economic dependency upon the palatial elite. This differs from the factional model, whereby a certain degree of autonomy is assumed for each faction, and they seek to compete among themselves for economic resources. In contrast, the variation in the ceremonial practices of the more elaborate buildings at Malia could represent the manifestation of collective identities such as factions, where a statement of difference would be advantageous during competitive practice. The self-sufficiency of the inhabitants of these buildings indicates that they were in a stronger position to act as patrons of a particular faction.

While certain similarities and differences between the Palaces and the towns have been observed, it remains to bring Palace and town together at each site, and elucidate the social strategies employed and aspired to in both.

Changes from the MM III–LM IA to the LM IB situation are also discussed below.

Knossos: Palace and Town throughout the Neopalatial Period

The features exclusive to the Palace are the figural fresco programme and the Courts, as well as its exceptional size and elaboration. Most other aspects of so-called palatial features and functions are widely distributed throughout the site, but there is nonetheless a concentration of Linear A administration, prestige artefacts and the storage of agricultural produce in the (pre-LM IB?) Palace. The Palace provided a clear ritual focus, but ritual activity was not exclusive to it; ritual practices were diffused throughout the settlement.

The presence of a substantial non-palatial elite at Knossos partly explains why the palatial elite displayed the trappings of power in such an elaborate and monumental manner; it was continuously pressured to reaffirm its status and increase its expenditure. With power comes the fear of losing it. Therefore, a close analysis of Knossos indicates that there were not only regional or island-wide reasons why the Palace was so impressive, but also that an unusually intense level of hierarchical socio-political competition existed at the site. However, a strong sense of Knossian identity ran alongside this, centred on the Palace. The fresco programme, with the emphasis on group participation and perpetual enactment, and the adoption of certain ceremonial features and artefacts throughout the site (including the large number of Pillar Crypts), point to the promotion of a strong sense of collective identity. While intense levels of socio-political competition are apparent between Palace and town and among urban elites, there was also a strong sense of community.

As for the specialised buildings, it does appear that some of them had a specific function. For example, the lack of workshops in the Palace

has been noted above. This need not imply a lack of control; in particular, the ideological symbols shared between the Palace and the Royal Road North Building would suggest a special relationship. These include bull frescoes (these are the only buildings to have produced them), Horns of Consecration, figurines, rhyta and libation tables (see Adams 2004a, for the distribution of ritual artefacts across the Knossian and Malian landscape). The presence of seals in the Royal Road North Building could be interpreted in a variety of ways: they could indicate the ability to mark goods on behalf of the Palace, or they could indicate some degree of independence (and, given the ideological link, the former appears more likely). That the two buildings are located at some distance is unsurprising; it may well have been considered preferable to establish production areas away from ceremonial focal points.

There is remarkable contemporaneity regarding the construction of buildings, indicating a conscious building programme by palatial and urban elites. However, Figure 1 indicates that their collapse or destruction was not such a simultaneous affair, and that not all buildings were occupied throughout the Neopalatial period. The grand mansions located close to the Palace were not occupied in the LM IB period (the South House, the Southeast House and the House of the Chancel Screen; see also Evans 1928: 415-16; Macdonald 2002: 49). This may support the notion that the Palace itself was a weakened entity—if not necessarily ‘ruined’, then not fully functioning either. Signs of stress can be detected, in that access to the Palace through the North and West Entrances was increasingly restricted during the Neopalatial period (Driessen 1995).

It has been suggested in this article that the relationship between the palatial and urban elites was close, with regular contact and involvement. The interdependency between the Palace and the grand mansions might explain why the latter, especially those close

to the Palace, tended to be disused in LM IB. In contrast, many specialised buildings continued in use (the evidence from the Royal Road North Building contains much LM IB material, which provides problems for the ‘special relationship’ between it and the palace discussed above). The second-tier elite appears to have been particularly unable to recover after the practical, and psychological, impact of the LM IA earthquake.

Malia: Palace and Town throughout the Neopalatial Period

In the case of Malia, the features exclusive to the Palace are the Courts and its size, and it possesses the only certain Pillar Crypt found at the site. Administration appears to be centralised in the Palace, but there is no fresco programme depicting a strong sense of collaborative and collective identity. Other functions appear to be widely distributed throughout the site, including storage for agricultural produce and production, although the only evidence for ivory-working comes from the Palace.

The similarities among Delta Alpha and Zeta Alpha and the Knossian grand mansions indicate a considerable level of contact and influence. It is notable that these similarities are limited to the ceremonial features adopted by the occupants; in terms of size, storage and production activities, these Malian buildings differ from the grand mansions at Knossos. The formal ceremonial similarities appear to demonstrate the aspiration to membership of the urban elite group in the more spectacular site. Furthermore, the ‘Residential Quarter’ in the Palace has certain similarities with the ‘grand mansion’ group, in that it comprises a Minoan Hall, Lustral Basin and possible Pillar Crypt. However, Epsilon provides an excellent example of a certain group of people who eschewed this set pattern, and adopted certain cultural features for their own requirements. Therefore, not only were functions relatively

decentralised at Malia, but also the grander houses formed a diverse group; I suggested above that the inhabitants of these buildings may have been factional elites.

The LM IB use of the Palace is again very unclear, and few other buildings have yielded positive evidence for full LM IB use. These include both elaborate and simpler buildings, so there is no pattern between building group and LM IB use, as seen at Knossos. Whether the buildings continued in use or not in LM IB seems to depend more on location (Epsilon and the Zeta Quarter appear to have continued in use, but not the Delta Quarter). Of the two buildings similar to Knossian grand mansions, only Zeta Alpha continues to have been used in LM IB. In summary, the LM IB picture is clearly different from that of MM III–LM IA, but the inhabitants experienced change regardless of social group.

Knossos and Malia: Differences in Scale or Nature?

The heterarchical and factional competition models do offer insights into prehistoric social structures, but I have considered it more advantageous in the case of Neopalatial Crete to retain the term ‘hierarchy’, and to focus on how power relations were acted out within this framework.

The Palaces at both sites were clearly the ceremonial and, most likely, economic centres of the settlements. The combination of ceremonial activity and economic control points to their inhabitants having a strong political position within the settlement, which is supported by the concentration of (early Neopalatial) administrative evidence in both Palaces. However, this is not to say that the palatial elite was autonomous, and that the social relations comprised a static hierarchical structure. By placing the Palaces in context, it is clear that the power relations in this hierarchical world were dynamic, if not necessarily fluid.

The Palace at Knossos had more architectural elaboration, more wealth, more unique finds, more imagery (with a fresco programme), more evidence for ceremonial activities and the centralisation of agricultural storage than the Malian Palace. The strategies of social differentiation were much more intense at Knossos, which placed pressure on the palatial elite to perform more ceremonial activities and maintain a greater concentration of agricultural produce. The palatial elite provided staples for the urban elite not on altruistic grounds, but because this created the opportunity for conspicuous consumption. This is supported by the imagery of the fresco programme, with its emphasis on collective ceremony and perpetual enactment. This did not deliver an ‘egalitarian’ political message, but reinforced the social and traditional (cultural) obligation for all to support the palatial institution. In contrast, the palatial elite at Malia was ‘less concerned’ with enacting power. It functioned with the dignity that being a long-lived palatial institution allowed, but without the intense pressure from within and around to expand relentlessly in investment and consumption.

Certain ceremonial areas are widely distributed across Malia, but they do not seem to conform to a pattern, nor to represent part of a standardised elite architectural assemblage as at Knossos. There is less of a correlation between size and architectural elaboration than among the urban buildings at Knossos. Furthermore, visual iconography (the fresco evidence) appears to be less important at Malia. The fact that there is no standardised mode of elite expression among the more elaborate mansions may suggest that they formed a less substantial challenge to the Palace—perhaps more concerned with factional competition than with hierarchical conflict. The alternative is that the Malia Palace had absolved itself of any pressure to enter the (Knossian) spiral of conspicuous consumption,

or to create the situation where the urban elite relied on it for staples.

While the MM IIIB–LM IA power relations at both sites differed, the LM IB picture is similar, in that the socio-political make-up changed at both sites. At Knossos, the LM IB use of the Palace is uncertain, although the lack of evidence need not necessarily prove that it was uninhabited. However, the grand mansions to the south and east of the Palace fell out of use, and the area as a whole may have become taboo. Then again, many of the ‘specialised buildings’ indicate LM IB use (as do some of the grand mansions). At Malia, fewer than half of the buildings examined have shown positive evidence for LM IB use, but there is no clear pattern concerning what type of building continued to be inhabited.

In conclusion, this article stresses that the ‘palace’ cannot be fully understood out of the context of the palatial site. Acknowledging the presence of highly institutionalised, hierarchical networks does not mean that I believe that the socio-political structure was static. On the contrary, by contextualising the Palaces at Knossos and Malia it has been demonstrated that power relations were much more complex and dynamic than has hitherto been appreciated, varying across space and changing through time.

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Special abbreviations:

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- Heterarchy* = R.M. Ehrenreich, C.L. Crumley and J.E. Levy (eds.), *Heterarchy and the Analysis of Complex Societies*. Archaeological Papers of the American Anthropological Association 6. Arlington, Virginia: American Anthropological Association.
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