



MORTUARY PRACTICES AND BURIAL CULTS IN CYPRUS FROM THE BRONZE AGE
THROUGH THE EARLY IRON AGE

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the use of certain vessels, and the consumption of associated substances, were socially restricted and perhaps gender biased, for which the Kamilari clay models provide iconographic evidence.¹⁰¹

Despite iconographical (Camp Stool fresco)¹⁰² and textual evidence¹⁰³ for the overall importance of feasting during the Final Palatial period, the absence of drinking vessels in large amounts (with the exception of the Temple Tomb)¹⁰⁴ suggests that consumption of liquid substances by many, before, during, or after primary burial was generally not practised but, when it was, it was highly restricted socially. Coincidentally, drinking vessels are absent from the Ayia Triada sarcophagus.¹⁰⁵ By contrast the few drinking vessels found inside Final Palatial tombs¹⁰⁶ should best be associated with the staged persona of the deceased as a member of a social group who actively participated in or sponsored such feasts. During the EIA instances such as the pouring of liquids down the grave at the cemetery of ancient Eltyna,¹⁰⁷ and the rich material from the cemetery of Orthi Petra at Eleutherna,¹⁰⁸ while following 'Homeric' practices known from other parts of Greece (for example at the so-called Heroon at Toumba, Lefkandi),¹⁰⁹ do not necessarily prove post funerary veneration of the dead. The re-appearance of tablewares in good numbers during the EIA¹¹⁰ has been linked to the symposium set. Their deposition together with cremation urns implies that feasting took place in relation to the collection in an urn and placement within a tomb intended to be re-used.

The dead for the living

What can we say about the role of the dead in relation to the living? The overall absence of tholos-settlement inter-visibility in the Prepalatial and Protopalatial Mesara¹¹¹ is not arbitrary, a pattern which applies to some of the house tombs of eastern Crete but not to Archanes-Phourni, or the Ailias and Mavro Spilio cemeteries at Knossos. This picture suggests temporally and spatially varied conditions dictated by contextually local parameters. Continuity in use of cemeteries and types of tombs from the Protopalatial period to the Neopalatial period, as in the case of Sphoungaras, Poros and Knossos, suggests the long-term survival of the social groups who, in the Protopalatial period, had departed from the long-standing tradition of burial in above-ground structures. At Knossos, the constantly changing location and temporal use of cemeteries in the early part of the Final Palatial period¹¹² suggests fluidity both in land ownership and in access to the burial grounds by different, unstable social groups. The re-use of Bronze Age LM III chamber tombs and material culture (such as re-cycled larnakes) accelerates from PGB (later 9th century)¹¹³ implies a process of legitimisation with the past intentionally pursued by different social groups.

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Priscilla Schuster Keswani

BURIAL CULTS AND MORTUARY RITUALS

The topic of this chapter, 'cults of burial', necessitates an examination of certain important nuances in conceptualisations of mortuary practice that are seldom explicitly addressed.¹¹⁴ These nuances revolve around our definitions of the words cult and ritual, along with the question of whether the mortuary practices of Bronze Age–EIA Cyprus involved 'cults' as this term is generally defined and as it is applied in other Bronze Age and Iron Age civilisations of the eastern Mediterranean.

The term 'cult' is not synonymous with the term 'ritual'. The primary definition of the term 'ritual' in the compact *Oxford English Dictionary* online is 'a religious or solemn ceremony involving a series of actions performed according to a set order'. From anthropology we learn that these actions may sometimes be intended to influence divine powers, but they may also involve specifically human life cycle changes, i.e. rites of passage. By contrast, the primary definition of the word 'cult' is 'a system of religious worship directed towards a particular figure or object'.¹¹⁵ We have ample evidence for the performance of mortuary *ritual* in Bronze Age and Iron Age Cyprus. But did the people of

101 Kamilari: Levi 1962; Myrtos–Pyrgos: Hankey 1986; the clay models of Kamilari (Lefèvre-Novaro 2001) depict male-only activities, while the Myrtos–Pyrgos Tomb during the Neopalatial period was exclusively used for male burials.

102 Driessen and Langohr 2007, 181, fig. 16.3; 183, fig. 16.5.

103 For example, Killen 2004; Wright 2004.

104 Hatzaki in preparation.

105 Mantzourani 1995.

106 For example, Evans 1906, 24, fig. 17; 71, fig. 79.

107 Rethemiotakis 1993; Rethemiotakis and Englezou 2010.

108 Stampolidis 1996, 2004.

109 Popham *et al.* 1993; Lemos 2002.

110 E. g. Kotsonas 2008, 301–34, and 303, figs. 73–4.

111 Branigan 1992; Murphy 2003.

112 Preston 2004a, 2004c.

113 For example Knossos North Cemetery: Coldstream 1994, 115; 1998; 2000; Orthi Petra at Eleutherna: Stampolidis 2004, 118, 238: 256; 293: 392–3.

114 I am extremely grateful to the organisers of the Parallel Lives Conference for the invitation to consider the subject of burial cults. I would also like to thank Dr Vassos Karageorghis for his permission to reproduce the illustrations shown in FIGS. 17.6 (bottom) and 17.7.

115 Renfrew (1985, 14–16) also emphasises the element of worship in his discussion of the archaeology of cult.

Cyprus actually worship the dead as deities or supernatural beings as is implied by the word *cult*? Or did they at least fear or revere the deceased sufficiently to perform sustained rituals of offering and communion well after the funerary rites were complete?

There is certainly textual, and in some cases archaeological, evidence for the latter practices in neighbouring Egypt and Mesopotamia.¹¹⁶ In the case of Bronze Age Ugarit, Schaeffer repeatedly noted hydraulic arrangements for channelling liquids to the entombed dead via libation pits, pipes, and a hole in the roof of a tomb,¹¹⁷ although many of his claims have been vigorously challenged.¹¹⁸ There are also Ugaritic textual references to the drinking club known as the *marzeah*, whose members apparently convened on various occasions including funerals, when the participation of the dead ancestors was invoked and the celebrants allegedly ate and drank to considerable excess.¹¹⁹ Some scholars have recently argued for the existence of *marzeah*-like institutions in both Bronze Age Crete¹²⁰ and Cyprus,¹²¹ as well as in Iron Age Greece.¹²² In the first half of this paper, I consider the archaeological evidence for these practices in the Cypriot Bronze Age.

The practice of tomb cults, hero cults, and ancestor rites has also been much discussed in the context of Iron Age Aegean societies. In 1921 Farnell proposed that cults honouring the heroes of myth and legend developed in Archaic Greece as oral traditions and incipient literacy promoted the circulation of the Homeric epics and other poetry. This thesis has subsequently received considerable attention from many scholars, often in regard to the significance of the Iron Age re-visitation or re-use of Mycenaean Bronze Age tombs.¹²³ Another major point of discussion concerns the extent and significance of the 'cults' focussed on new Iron Age tombs and burials, some of which were associated with extraordinary architectural features and/or practices that sometimes involved cremations, rich metal grave offerings, and other elaborate, allegedly 'heroic' forms of display (such as the Lefkandi horse sacrifices) echoed in Homer.¹²⁴ In the second half of this paper, I examine the mortuary record of EIA Cyprus for similar manifestations of 'cult' and consider the implications of contemporary mortuary trends within the context of local sociopolitical developments and ideology.

RITUAL AND CULT IN BRONZE AGE CYPRUS

I would like to begin my consideration of the Bronze Age evidence with a distinction that John Barrett has made between funerary rites of passage that 'control the transformation of death itself and relocate certain statuses and obligations among the living' and ancestral rites that 'allow an approach to be made, by the living, to those who are already dead.'¹²⁵ In some cases, ancestral rites might be construed as a form of cult distinct from funerals. As Barrett notes, however, the

relationship between funeral and ancestral rites is complex; funerary rites may create ancestors and bring the living into the ancestral domain. This was certainly the case in Bronze Age Cyprus, where familial tombs were reopened on successive occasions of death, and corpses were sometimes exhumed from primary burial contexts and reinterred in collective tombs in rituals of ancestral celebration.¹²⁶

But is there any evidence in the Bronze Age for approaches by the living to those who were already dead *outside* the occasions of funerary rites, approaches consistent with our definition of cult as involving worship, post-funerary offerings, and/or attempts at communion with the deceased? In Philia and EC tombs at Vasilia, Vounous and Alambra, there are sporadic occurrences of dromos offerings, most often a single ceramic pot placed near the chamber entrance at some time after the initial burials had taken place (FIG. 17.1).¹²⁷ The relatively rare occurrence and small number of these dromos offerings do not appear indicative of widely or regularly practiced cult devotions involving the

116 Egypt: Lloyd 1989, 128–31; Baines and Lacovara 2002; Mesopotamia: Bayliss 1973; Weadock 1975; Perlov 1980; Skaist 1980; and for recent discoveries at Qatna in Syria: Pfälzner 2006.

117 Schaeffer 1939, 49–56, and reports in the journal *Syria* from 1929 through 1938; see also Astour 1980; Spronk 1986, 143–4.

118 Pitard 1994; Salles 1995, 180–1.

119 Pope 1972, 1981; Spronk 1986, 198–202; Miller 1987; Lewis 1989. Pope (1972, 179) has gone so far as to claim that these rites involved wild sexual orgies and necrophagy, or consumption of the decomposition fluids of the deceased.

120 Hamilakis 1998; 2002, 128–130.

121 Herscher 1997, 31–4; Steel 1997, 43–4; 1998, 290.

122 Carter 1995, 300–5.

123 See Farnell 1921; Blegen 1937*a*, 1937*b*; Cook 1953; Coldstream 1976; Snodgrass 1980, 38–40; Whitley 1988, 1994, 2002; Morris 1988; Sherratt 1990; Antonaccio 1994*a*, 1994*b*, 1995, 1999; for the late Classical and Hellenistic periods, see Alcock 1991.

124 E.g., in Euboea: Lefkandi (Popham *et al.* 1982, 1993) and Eretria (Bérard 1970); in Naxos: Grotta (Lambrinoudakis 1988). For general discussions, see Morris 1988; Antonaccio 1995: 221–43; Mazarakis Ainian 1999.

125 Barrett 1988, 1994, 51.

126 Keswani 1989*a*, 2004, 2005.

127 Vasilia–Kafkallia T. 1 (Hennessy *et al.* 1988, 26); the dromos finds from Vasilia–Kylistra T. 104 (Hennessy *et al.* 1988, 39) are somewhat ambiguous; Bellapais–Vounous, Cemetery A, Tombs 84, 87, 107, 111, 152, 153 and possibly 164B (Stewart and Stewart 1950, 62–4, 73–4, 76, 128, 130, 139, 183, 185, 190–1, 226); Alambra T. 101 (Coleman 1996, 116–17, also noted in Herscher 1997, 32). The rich deposit of metal objects from the cutting within the dromos floor of Vasilia–Kafkallia T. 1 has recently been interpreted as a non-mortuary hoard by Webb *et al.* (2006, 277). I would suggest that these objects were looted from the tomb in the era of its use and hidden in the dromos. If, alternatively, the deposit was a devotional offering to the dead, it is unparalleled elsewhere in Cyprus.

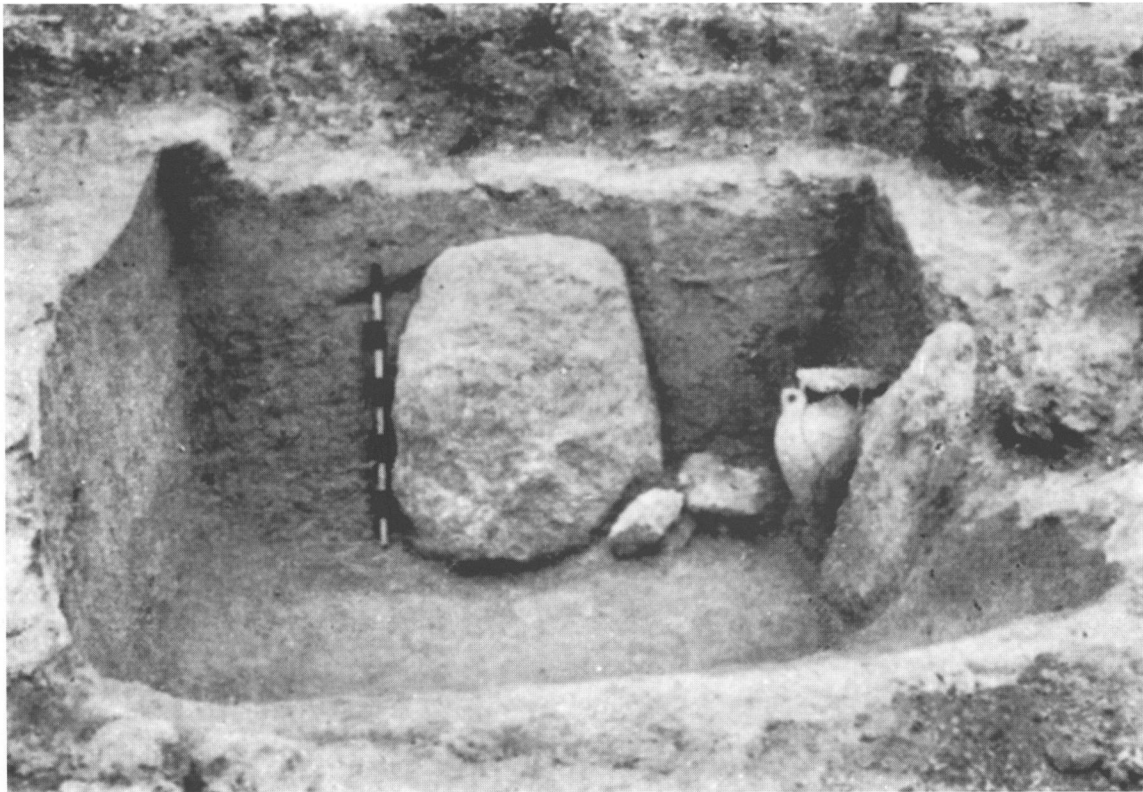


Fig. 17.1. Cyprus: offering pot in the dromos of Bellapais–Vounous Site A (EC I–II) T. 87, after Stewart and Stewart (1950, 76, fig. 36).

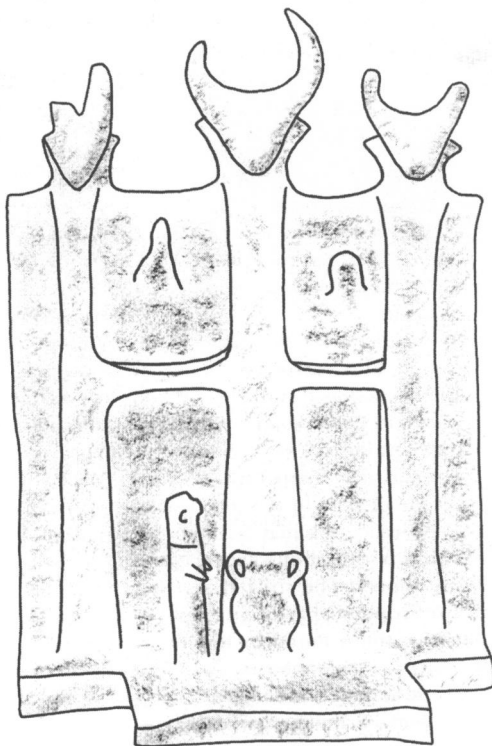


Fig. 17.2. Cyprus: Red Polished shrine model, H. 19 cm, from Kotchati (CM1970/V–28/1). Drawing by Keswani, after Karageorghis (1970, pl. 1; 1991, pl. 102: 2).

participation of large numbers of people, but they might be construed as examples of Farnell's concept of 'tendance',¹²⁸ occasional familial ministrations to the needs of the dead.¹²⁹ Viewing the dromos pots in conjunction with several instances of carved tomb entrance façades at Vasilia, Vounous, Karmi–Palealona, and Lapithos–Vrysi tou Barba,¹³⁰ some with pilasters and other features that evoke the 'shrines' depicted in coroplastic models (FIG. 17.2) ascribed to Kotchati,¹³¹

¹²⁸ Farnell 1921, 2, 4–5.

¹²⁹ The same applies to late, small groups of offerings placed just inside tomb chambers such as Lapithos T. 806A (with a small MC II offering following the EC III/MC I burials: Grace 1940, 21; Åström 1972, 183) and T. 820 (two pots dated to EC IIIB in the entrance to the chamber, which contained a single burial of a child accompanied by EC II pottery: Herscher 1978, 442), and possibly Enkomi Swedish T. 6 (LC IIC burials with a late LC IIC or LC IIIA offering near the door: SCE I, 491–7) some time after the last burials had taken place.

¹³⁰ Vasilia (SCEIV. 1A, 216, fig. 87); Bellapais–Vounous Cemetery A, Tombs 114, 116, 117 (Stewart and Stewart 1950, 152, figs. 111–12; 158, figs. 120, 124b; 162–3, fig. 123); Karmi–Palealona Tombs 2 and 6 (Webb *et al.* 2009, 85–7, figs. 3.14–3.18; 130–2, figs. 3.37–3.44); Lapithos–Vrysi tou Barba Tombs 811B, 827B, and others (Herscher 1978, 705, 716, n. 11).

¹³¹ Karageorghis 1970, 1991, 142–3, pls. 102: 2–3 and 103: 1–2. For the possible funerary significance of the models, see Frankel and Tamvaki 1973; Webb 1991, 92; Keswani 2004, 56; 2005, 349–50; Webb and Frankel 2010, 187–94.

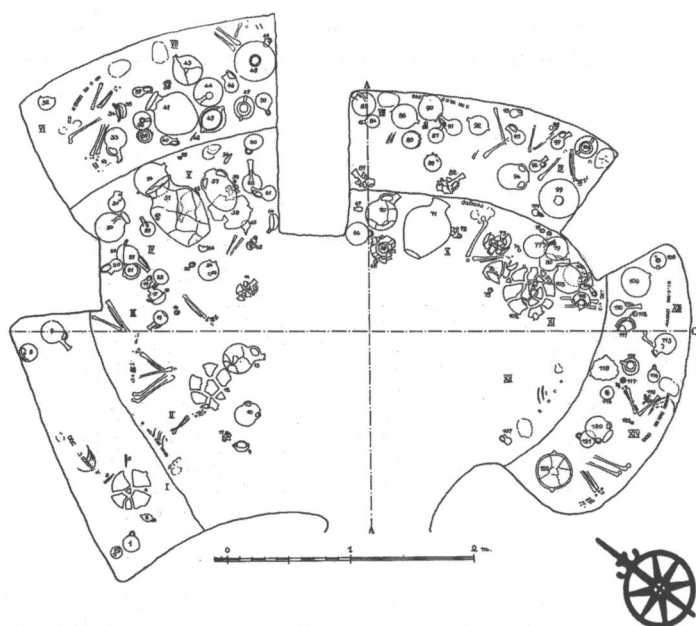
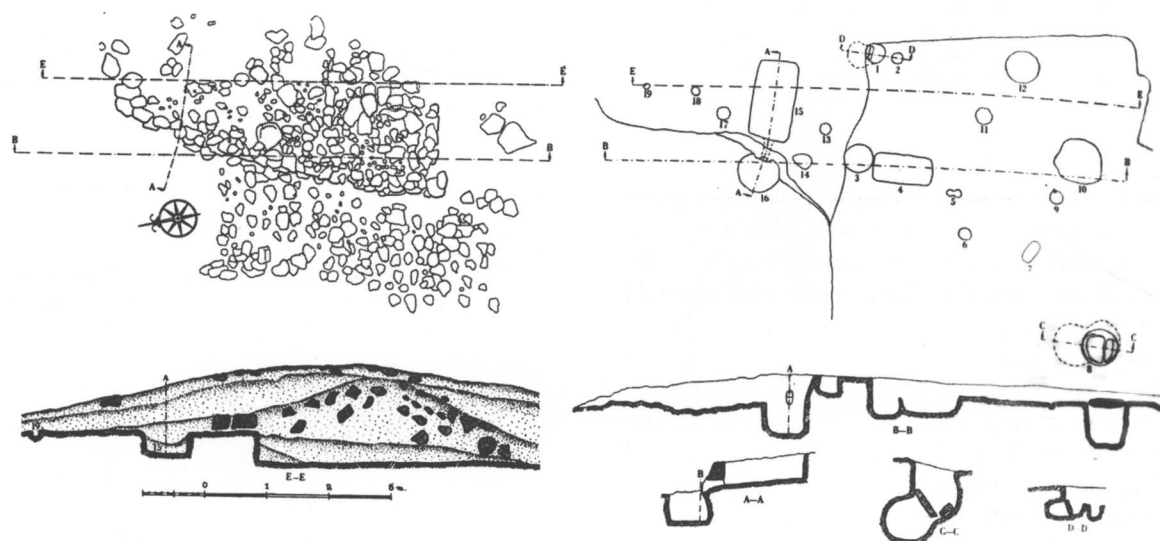


Fig. 17.3. Cyprus: plan of Korovia–Paleoskoutella T. 7 showing the careful arrangement of burials and grave goods, after SCE I, 433, fig. 171.

Fig. 17.4 (below). Cyprus: plan and sections of the features below Korovia–Paleoskoutella Tumulus 1, possibly attesting to feasting in conjunction with other mortuary rites, after SCE I, 420, fig. 163.



one might argue for the practice of post-funerary ancestor rites by some kin groups in the Philia and EC periods, but at present the material evidence for such practices is limited.¹³²

What about imbibing and feasting with the dead outside of funerary rites or in their zone of overlap with ancestor rituals? As Ellen Herscher and Louise Steel have noted in EC–MC and LC contexts, respectively, the Bronze Age Cypriots were sent to their deaths equipped with a remarkable array of vessels for drinking, pouring and serving liquids.¹³³ Many tombs also preserve faunal remains attesting to offerings of cattle, sheep and goat, as well as other animals; joints and sides of beef are particularly well preserved at third millennium Vounous.¹³⁴ Jennifer Webb and David Frankel have suggested that many of the pots and animal

bones found in third millennium tombs (Philia and EC periods) were actually the remnants of mortuary feasting and drinking activities rather than provisions

¹³² Webb and Frankel (2010, 193) suggest that Karmi–Palealona T. 6, the dromos of which was decorated with the relief carving of an anthropomorphic figure as well as an elaborate entrance façade, may have been established as a dromos shrine by founding members of the community, but they note that it was too small to have been used for communal ritual activity.

¹³³ Herscher 1997; Steel 1997, 1998, 2004, 172–7.

¹³⁴ See Keswani 1994, 270–1 and table 4 for specific references in Dikaïos 1940 and Stewart and Stewart 1950; see also Herscher 1997, 31–2, and Steel 2004, 167–8, 175.

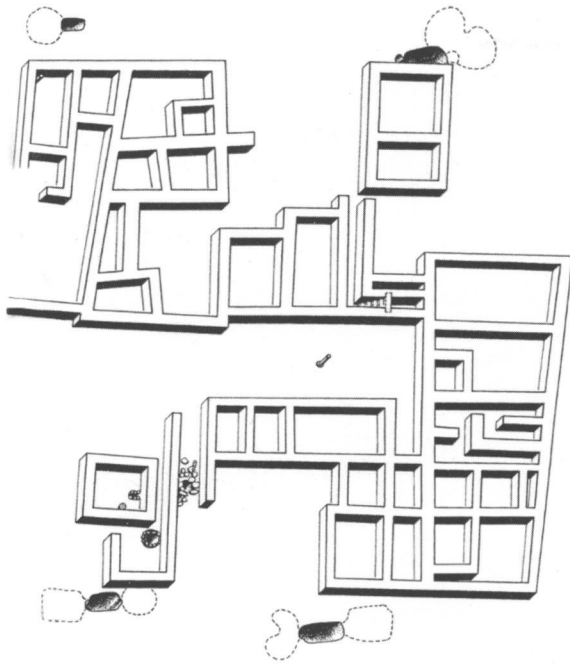


Fig. 17.5. Enkomi: isometric plan of Level IIB (LC IIC) architecture showing adjacent tombs in contemporary use in Area I, after Dikaios (1969, pl. 272).

for the dead.¹³⁵ If so, those activities probably took place outside rather than inside the tombs. The combined considerations of floor area and ceiling height of the majority of Bronze Age Cypriot chamber tombs would have rendered them problematic locales for rituals of consumption involving more than a few living people.¹³⁶ Moreover, even in the case of some unusually large tomb chambers with evidence for complex and elaborate burial rituals, we seldom find large concentrations of smashed drinking vessels or the destruction of burial deposits consistent with the presence of a large number of intoxicated celebrants (FIG. 17.3).¹³⁷

At the MC cemetery of Paleoskoutella, funerary repasts may be attested near contemporary tombs, in complexes of pits and cuttings with deposits reported to contain burned organic material and fragments of animal bone, along with many fragments of shallow bowls (FIG. 17.4). Other features with burned areas, charcoal, animal bone and broken pottery were found above predominantly LC I tombs at Toumba tou Skourou.¹³⁸ These remains may represent feasting and other rituals performed outside the tombs, possibly in conjunction with programmes of secondary treatment. But whether on such occasions the participants believed they were actually eating and drinking with the spirits of the dead, as alleged of the Syro-Palestinian *marzeah*, remains a matter for speculation. Lindy Crewe proposes that lamps and a silver bowl suspended from bronze pins in the wall by the door of the LC II ashlar T. 66 at Enkomi may be evidence for a Near Eastern-style

kispum ritual of feasting or drinking with the dead,¹³⁹ but we do not know if these items were actually used in post-funerary revisitations of the tomb or in the course of successive burial ceremonies. Such arrangements have not been discerned in other LC tombs.

What we can say with confidence is that throughout the Bronze Age in Cyprus the dead occupied an extremely important place in the social life of their communities. The evidence for multi-stage programs of mortuary treatment suggests that the ideological importance of the ancestors persisted well after their biological death. The great quantities of copper-based artefacts and local pottery interred with the dead, along with the overall energy expended in tomb construction in the EBA and MBA, imply high levels of communal participation in and contribution to the mortuary proceedings.¹⁴⁰ In the LBA, although we have many distinctive elite burials with gold jewellery and other imported valuables, tombs were smaller, the per capita quantities of locally produced grave goods decreased, and tombs were moved from extramural communal cemeteries into the living space around houses, workshops, and public buildings (FIG. 17.5).¹⁴¹ The proximity of burial and habitation areas suggests the ongoing, albeit transformed, meaningful social presence of the dead, but we should still be cautious of interpreting this as worship.

¹³⁵ Webb and Frankel 2008, 288.

¹³⁶ The EC–MC cemetery at Lapithos–Vrysi tou Barba, for example, has a number of tombs with large floor areas, with an overall mean of 7.5 m² (Keswani 2004, 194, table 4.4; 206–13, tables 4.11a–4.11c). The average chamber height, however, is 1.1 m. The LC chamber tombs of Enkomi have a mean floor area of 4.9 m² and a mean chamber height of 1.3 m (Keswani 2004, 222, table 5.5).

¹³⁷ Steel (2004, 175) is of the same opinion; see also Crewe 2009, 31. Even in cases of very large tombs such as Lapithos T. 322A (SCE I, 143–4, fig. 56: 4), where I have noted that secondary or tertiary rituals may have affected the preservation of human skeletal remains (Keswani 2004, 460), neither the objects in the tomb chamber nor their condition are particularly suggestive of drinking and feasting. It is unclear as to whether the deposits of smashed pottery in Vasilia–Kylistra T. 103 (Hennessy *et al.* 1988, 29) were produced in the course of ritual activities or ancient looting.

¹³⁸ Paleoskoutella: SCE I, 416–38, where see esp. the description of features underlying Tumuli 1, 3 and 6. Toumba tou Skourou: Vermeule and Wolsky 1990, 169, 245–6. Further commentary: Keswani 1989a, 237–51; 2004, 90; Webb 1991, 92; Steel 2004, 175. Vermeule and Wolsky (1990, 246) linked the smashed pithos sherds from the funeral ‘pyre’ with those found in T. 2, Chamber 2, which would imply that the associated rituals were funerary rather than later cult observances.

¹³⁹ Crewe 2009, 30–1.

¹⁴⁰ Keswani 2005.

¹⁴¹ For detailed discussion of these trends, see Keswani 1989b, 2004, esp. 81–3 and 140–4.

RITUAL AND CULT IN IRON AGE CYPRUS

At the onset of the Iron Age in the 11th century BC, there were significant changes in Cypriot mortuary practice: the founding of extramural cemeteries in new locations, the appearance of Mycenaean-style tombs with square chambers and long dromoi (FIG. 17.6),¹⁴² the appearance of cremation as well as inhumation burials,¹⁴³ a notable decrease in burial group size,¹⁴⁴ and other changes that will be discussed in the concluding section of this article. Together with these broad shifts in burial practice, there is also some evidence for the revisitation of LBA tombs and cemeteries at Kourion (Episkopi)–Bamboula,¹⁴⁵ Lapithos–Ayia Anastasia,¹⁴⁶ Milia–Vikla Trachonas,¹⁴⁷ Ayia Irini–Paleokastro¹⁴⁸ and Kalavassos–Ayios Dhimitrios.¹⁴⁹ In several instances, the Iron Age artefacts in these tombs appear to have been associated with Iron Age burials; there are no clear cases of specifically devotional, tomb cult offerings to the Bronze Age dead.¹⁵⁰ Furthermore, while some of these episodes of tomb reuse might be attributable to considerations of expedience or poverty, others are not. The CG finds from Lapithos–Ayia Anastasia T. 2, Milia–Vikla Trachonas T. 11 and Kourion–Bamboula T. 2 suggest that the reuse of these Bronze Age tombs represents not so much an inexpensive form of burial as the deliberate choice of older tombs by social groups of some wealth.¹⁵¹ In a context of ongoing immigration from the Aegean, the earliest Iron Age examples of Bronze Age tomb reuse could conceivably have constituted an expression of indigenous social identity and interests.¹⁵² Yet, given the apparent rapidity of cultural assimilation,¹⁵³ some of the later examples may attest primarily to an emphasis on ancient social heritage rather than to an expression of ethnicity.¹⁵⁴

The re-use of Cypriot Bronze Age tombs in the Iron Age probably had more to do with social factors than with the practice of tomb cults as seen in the Aegean world.¹⁵⁵ Nevertheless, the question of whether there is any evidence for cults in association with contemporary Iron Age tombs in Cyprus remains to be considered. As a starting point, there are a few instances of later Iron Age pottery deposits made in or around earlier Iron Age tombs. Pit A in the cemetery at Gastria–Alaas contained a mixture of eight 11th and 7th century pots, along with a gold earring.¹⁵⁶ Salamis T. 1 contained two Archaic closed vessels and three lamps that were apparently introduced 500 years after the original, very rich single burial of the 11th century BC.¹⁵⁷ While these objects could have been devotional offerings presented to the dead, it is also possible that they were peace offerings for the disturbance of earlier burials, taking place in conjunction with later tomb construction at Gastria and urban building activity at Salamis. Stewart and Stewart advanced a similar explanation in the case of Bellapais–Vounous T. 139, first used in EC IIIB–MC I and then disturbed by an Iron Age pit, T. 140. The resulting hole was closed with stones, and two CA II

- 142 For general treatments of EIA (CG) burials, see Karageorghis 1982, 115–21; Coldstream 1989; Iacovou 1999a, esp. 148. Sites with early examples of extramural Mycenaean-style tombs include: Salamis (Yon 1971), Kouklia (Palaepaphos)–Xerolimni (Karageorghis 1967), Gastria–Alaas (Karageorghis 1975), Kouklia–Skales (Karageorghis 1983), Lapithos–Kastros (*SCE* I, 172–265), Lapithos–Prostemenos (Pieridou 1965), Kourion (Episkopi)–Kaloriziki (Daniel 1937; Benson 1973) and Amathous (Karageorghis and Iacovou 1990; Hermary 1994; see also Hermary and Iacovou 1999a, 151). Benson (1973, 23–4) proposes a particular affinity between Rhodes and Cyprus with regard to the adoption of new tomb forms, tomb orientation and cremation practices.
- 143 EIA cremations in Cyprus have been observed in: Kourion–Bamboula T. 30 (Benson 1972, 27), Kourion–Kaloriziki Tombs 19, 39 and 40 (Benson 1973, 21, 27, 48–50; McFadden 1954) and Kouklia–Skales Tombs 83 and 89 (Karageorghis 1983, 7, 278, 312). These examples are rare in comparison to inhumation burials. On the probable spread of cremation practices from Anatolia to the eastern Aegean region and beyond, see Melas 1984.
- 144 The mean number of burials per tomb for a sample of 50 LC IIIB and CG tombs at Gastria–Alaas, Kourion–Kaloriziki, Lapithos–Kastros and Plakes, and Kouklia–Skales is 2.6, with a standard deviation of 1.9. Even if the actual number of burials per chamber was higher, as is likely given the limitations of older excavations and osteological studies, this is still considerably lower than the mean number of burials per chamber in LC tomb groups, calculated at 12.0 (with a standard deviation of 13.2) on a sample of 67 observations.
- 145 Several LC tombs at Kourion–Bamboula were reused for burials in CG I or later periods, including Tombs 2, 11, and 33 (Benson 1972, 10–11, 15–16, 28–9); the bronze fibula from T. 19 (Benson 1972, 22–3) may also be indicative of an Iron Age burial. Bamboula Tombs 8 and 30 seem to have been cut in the CG I period (Benson 1972, 14, 27). Benson's discussion indicates that Tombs 24, 25, 29, 31, 35, 38 and 39 are highly problematic, disturbed LC mortuary features with possible reuse in varying periods of the Iron Age. Åström's (1975) and Adelman's (1976) discussions of the misidentification of Proto-White Painted wares at Bamboula casts serious doubt on the presence of LC IIIB burials at this site; see also Iacovou 1994, 156–7; Steel 1996, 291–2, 299, table 2.
- 146 Lapithos–Ayia Anastasia T. 2 (Pieridou 1966; *SCE* I, 164), probably cut in LC IIC, contained a substantial deposit of CG I pottery and five bronze fibulae.
- 147 Milia–Vikla Trachonas T. 11 (Westholm 1939, 9–13) contained a single, poorly preserved burial ascribed to CG III clearly separated stratigraphically from the four underlying LCI burials. The burial was provided with five pots, a fragmentary stone bowl, a circular gold wire hair ring, a pair of circular gold wire earrings and a gold bead.
- 148 Ayia Irini–Paleokastro Tombs 3, 10, 11, 20 and 21, originally used in LCI, contained varying numbers of later CG or CA pots (Pecorella 1977).
- 149 Kalavassos–Ayios Dhimitrios T. 18 was disturbed repeatedly after its original LC II use; the presence of an intact CG III pot (Bichrome III) suggests that it may have been used for a burial in this period. South (1997, 169) also notes the presence of non-restorable sherds of CG III, CA and Classical wares in all deposits.
- 150 Among the cases of tombs cut in the LC period, Kourion–Bamboula Tombs 2, 11 and 33, Milia–Vikla Trachonas T. 11

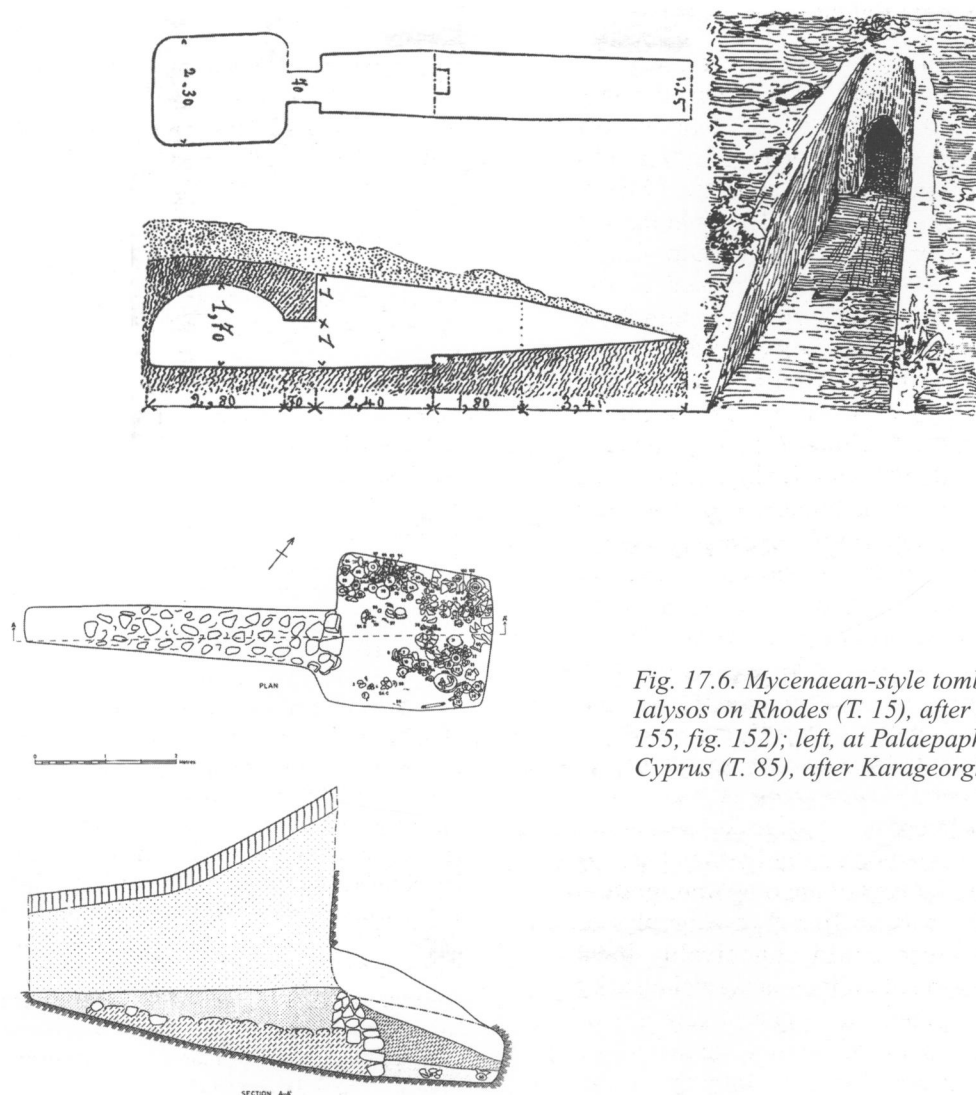


Fig. 17.6. Mycenaean-style tombs: above, at Ialysos on Rhodes (T. 15), after Maiuri (1924, 155, fig. 152); left, at Palaepaphos-Skales on Cyprus (T. 85), after Karageorghis (1983, fig. 29).

pots were deposited in the pit, which was then refilled.¹⁵⁸ None of these examples seems to attest to any protracted or repeated cult observances.

Other possible evidence of offerings to the dead outside of their tombs comes from the cemetery at Kouklia-Skales, where a shallow depression containing ashes and a few unburned CG I pots was interpreted as a pyre (FIG. 17.7).¹⁵⁹ Numerous pyres with burnt food offerings including fruit and seeds, miscellaneous small finds, and smashed vases were found adjacent to later Archaic and Classical tombs at Salamis-Cellarka. Karageorghis compares the Salamis pyres with the offering ditches of Geometric and later date in the Kerameikos at Athens and interprets them as single use features from the 'climax of the burial ceremonies'.¹⁶⁰ Neither at Salamis nor Kouklia were the pyres used for cremations.

The evidence for repeated, long-term post-funerary devotions that might be ascribed to a prevalent worship or cult of the dead in Iron Age Cyprus is thus rather limited. A few claims have been made, however, for the

and Ayia Irini-Paleokastro T. 11 have CG or later finds associated with human skeletal remains. In the other cases, Iron Age finds may also have been deposited with actual Iron Age burials, but tomb disturbances have rendered the associations ambiguous.

- 151 For Lapithos and Milia, see nn. 146–7. Kourion-Bamboula T. 2 contained a bronze fibula and an iron knife as well as CG pottery (Benson 1972, 10–11).
- 152 Cf. Antonaccio (1999, 119) on ancient tomb re-use in Sicily in the context of Greek colonisation.
- 153 Sherratt 1992; Iacovou 1999b, 2005; see also Given 1998.
- 154 The CA re-use of CG tombs at Amathous (Karageorghis and Iacovou 1990, 76) might also reflect an emphasis on ancient local heritage. Perhaps this might further explain the presence of Bronze Age 'heirloom' pots in Iron Age tombs at a number of sites, such as Gastria-Alaas T. 15: 2, a LH IIIA2 piriform jar (Karageorghis 1975, 10, 26); Amathous Swedish T. 15: 45 (Red Polished I amphoriskos: SCE II, 93, 94, pl. 23; see also Aupert 1997, 19); Idalion Swedish T. 3: 24 (LH IIIB piriform jar: SCE II, 637, 641, pl. 89); Idalion-Eliouthkia tou Kouzourtou T. 19: 31 (Base Ring I tankard: Hadjicosti

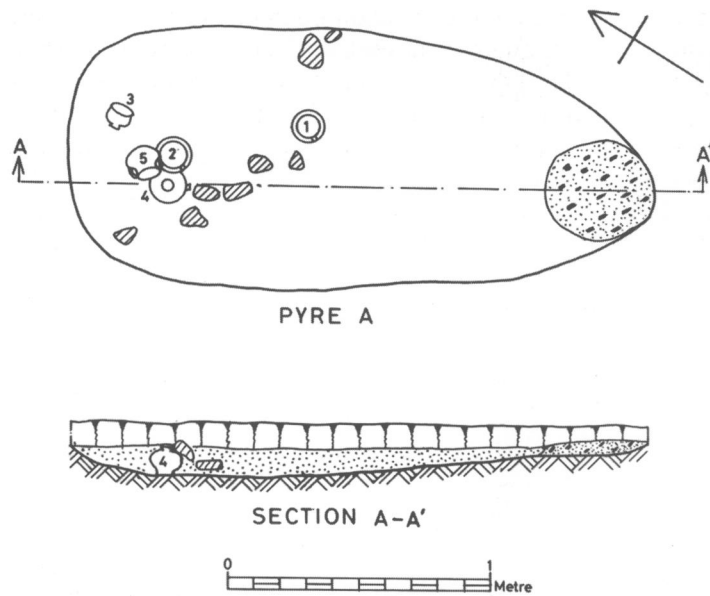


Fig. 17.7. Palaepaphos-Skales Pyre A, after Karageorghis (1983, fig. 12).

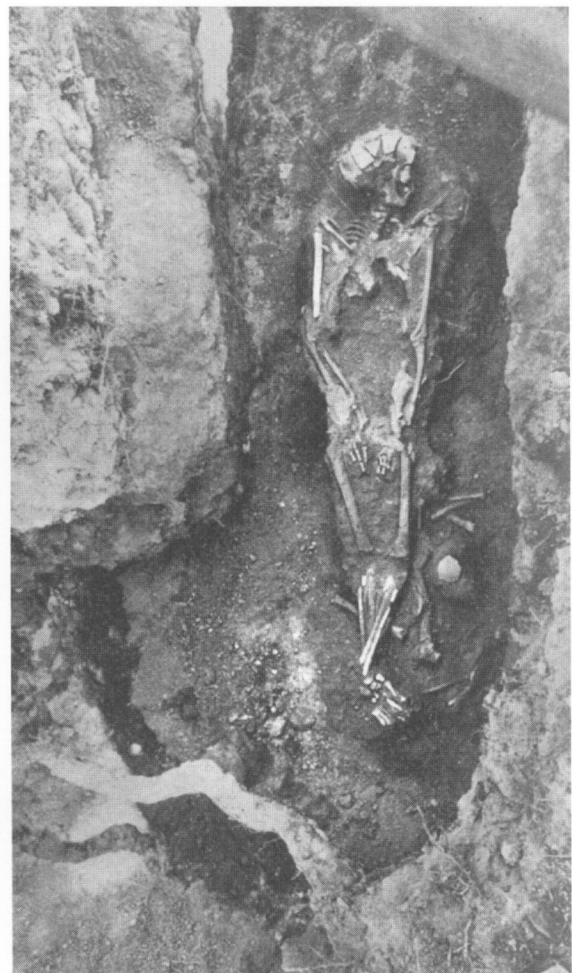


Fig. 17.8. Cyprus: Lapithos-Kastros T. 422: left, stone slabs covering bodies; right, skeletons beneath the slabs, after SCE I, 242, figs. 88-9.

occurrence of specific hero cults focussed on tombs found in sanctuaries. A tomb bearing an architectural resemblance to CG I Mycenaean-style tombs at Kouklia–Skales was apparently deliberately preserved in the sanctuary of Aphrodite at Amathous, when it was built in the CA period. Gaming stones and a possible libation channel were found outside the tomb.¹⁶¹ Citing Plutarch's account of the death of Ariadne in Amathous, Antoine Hermary has interpreted these features as evidence for the practice of a tomb cult devoted to this Cretan heroine.¹⁶² As Hermary notes, however, other Cypriot parallels for such a tomb cult are tenuous and scarce.¹⁶³ Sandro Stucchi's claim for the presence of the tombs of Kinyras and Agapenor in the Temple of Aphrodite at Kouklia is not even discussed in relevant contexts by Franz Maier, the site's excavator.¹⁶⁴

Finally, no survey of potential evidence for tomb cults would be complete without mention of the alleged 'slave sacrifices' in the dromoi of tombs at Lapithos,¹⁶⁵ Salamis,¹⁶⁶ Tamassos¹⁶⁷ and Vouni.¹⁶⁸ The interpretation of these burials as sacrifices still retains some credence in the literature, but Dennis Hughes has recently offered an extremely critical review of the supposed instances.¹⁶⁹ In the absence of forensic evidence, it is difficult to resolve this controversy, but several cases are open to alternative explanations. Most of the dromos burials could be viewed as lower-status retainers or 'poor relatives' who were ostensibly being honoured, after death by natural causes, with burial in proximity to higher status people in the tomb chambers. The exceptional case of Lapithos–Kastros T. 422 (FIG. 17.8), in which one of the three dromos burials was interred upside down, possibly with the hands and feet tied, may represent an unusual or violent death. The burial in the associated tomb chamber, however, does not appear to have been an individual of such exalted wealth and prestige as to have merited the sacrifice of three slaves; the only object accompanying the burial was an iron pike.¹⁷⁰

RITUAL TRANSFORMATIONS IN IRON AGE CYPRUS

In Iron Age Cyprus, it is highly likely that the dead retained a deep personal and social significance in the world of the living, but this importance seems to have been most fervently expressed in the more immediate rites associated with death rather than in the performance of post-funerary cults or devotional rituals. In contrast to the LBA and especially LC IIIA, the re-emergence of the funeral as a public spectacle in the Iron Age (beginning in LC IIIB) is striking.¹⁷¹ The adoption of extramural cemeteries, for example, would have necessitated extended funeral processions, compelling widespread communal notice, if not participation. The interment of large numbers of grave goods with some burials, such as the 200 or more pots associated with a single individual in CG IA Salamis T. 1, would have excited further attention.¹⁷² Moreover,

the increased expenditure in funerals was not merely a phenomenon associated with the wealthiest, most prestigious social groups. Per capita investment in tomb construction and grave goods rose sharply from the preceding era, even among groups of middling status (TABLE 17.1). As illustrated in TABLE 17.1, at the LC IIIB cemetery of Gastria–Alaas, which was not impressively rich, the values for mean floor area per burial and mean pots per burial considerably exceeded those observed at LC Enkomi.¹⁷³ Of course, many of

1999, 39, 54, fig. 30); Kourion–Kaloriziki T. 34: 21a/K975 (Base Ring bowl or imitation: Benson 1973, 34). Discussion of other tomb valuables that may have been heirlooms: Coldstream 1989, 329–30.

155 In the case of Cyprus it is awkward to hypothesise (as has been done for the Aegean) that in re-using Bronze Age tombs, Iron Age families were seeking to establish their connections with Homeric heroes, since those heroes allegedly arrived in Cyprus at the onset of the Iron Age itself.

156 Karageorghis 1975, 24–7.

157 Yon 1971, 4–5, 42, pl. 26: 82–3; 79–80, pl. 40: 230–2.

158 Stewart and Stewart 1950, 315–16, fig. 231.

159 Karageorghis 1983, 8.

160 Karageorghis 1970a, 225, 202; also 1969, 117–21; Tatton-Brown 1985, 67.

161 Hermary 1994; 1999, 56; Aupert 1997, 19–21.

162 Plut. *Thes.* 20. 3–4; Hermary 1994, 208–10; Fourrier and Hermary 2007, 160–3.

163 See Hermary 1994, 208, n. 35. The finds of Archaic sculpture in tombs excavated by the British Museum at Enkomi, discussed by Hermary in the present volume, are particularly difficult to interpret.

164 Stucchi 1991, 413–14; cf. Maier 1986, 1999.

165 Lapithos–Kastros Tombs 412, 417, 420 and 422 (SCE I, 218, 228, 236, 244–5, 265; IV.2, 433); also Lapithos–Prostemenos Tomb P. 74 (Pieridou 1965, 73). Still other instances of dromos burials not interpreted as sacrifices were observed in Lapithos–Kastros Tombs 407, 408 and 410 (SCE I, 201–13), suggesting that the use of dromos space for subsequent burials was not at all uncommon.

166 Salamis T. 2 (Karageorghis 1967b, 9, 121) and Salamis–Cellarka T. 83 (Karageorghis 1970a, 124).

167 Tamassos T. IV.11; this is a very poorly documented case (see Hughes 1991, 40 with references).

168 Vouni–Korakas T. 10 (SCE III, 316, fig. 171; 321, fig. 173: 5, 6; 322). This very late (Cypro-Classical II) case is probably just a very poor burial, not a sacrifice (see Hughes 1991, 41).

169 Hughes 1991, 35–42, 66–70; cf. Coldstream 1989, 332; Rupp 1988, 122.

170 SCE I, 241–6.

171 On the relatively low levels of energy expenditure in LC overall and LC III tomb construction, see Keswani 2004, 118–19, fig. 5.5; also 1989a, 673, table 5.35. On the LC III decline in grave goods expenditure, see Keswani 2004, 127–8 and 240, table 5.10.

172 Yon 1971; see Coldstream 1989 for a discussion of other rich eleventh century tomb groups.

173 The Gastria statistics have been calculated from the six tombs published in Karageorghis 1975. For the Enkomi statistics see Keswani 1989a, 673–5, tables 5.35–5.36; 2004, 240, table 5.10.

TABLE 17.1: Rising indices of mortuary expenditure at Early Iron Age Gastria–Alaas compared with Late Bronze Age Enkomi.

(Enkomi values calculated from Keswani 1989a, 673–5, tables 5.35–5.36; 2004, 240, table 5.10; Gastria values calculated from Karageorghis 1975 [Tombs 13–17, 19]).

	<i>Enkomi chamber tombs LC I–III</i>	<i>Enkomi shaft graves LC IIC–IIIA</i>	<i>Gastria chamber tombs LC IIIB (Iron Age)</i>
Mean floor area per burial	0.5 m ² n = 24	1.0 m ² n = 15	2.6 m ² n = 6
Mean pots per burial	9.2 n = 23	3.2 n = 16	12.3 n = 6

the Enkomi chamber tombs and shaft graves had higher concentrations of metal goods, but the expenditure in tomb architecture and potentially contributed ‘gifts’ (i.e., pottery) per person was notably higher at Gastria.

The practice of cremation — unprecedented in Cyprus before the Iron Age and rare even then — would have been still more extraordinary, with its dramatic sights, sounds and smells.¹⁷⁴ The LC IIIB funeral(s) of the woman and another presumed male burial in Kourion–Kalogriziki T. 40 would surely have been deemed remarkable if only in terms of the bronze vessels, tripods, cloisonné sceptre and other valuables ascribed to this tomb.¹⁷⁵ But the burning of the bodies, assuming it was carried out in a public space, would have sublimated the status of the dead people in social memory even before the interment of their ashes and rich grave goods took place. Like the burial of the so-called hero of Lefkandi in tenth century Euboea,¹⁷⁶ the funerary rites associated with Kalogriziki T. 40 may have served to create a legend of heroic ancestry that would be long remembered and re-invoked by subsequent users of the cemetery.

Funerals featuring impressive tombs, conspicuous displays of wealth, even sacrifices of donkeys and horses pulling chariots — surely intended for public amazement — reached their apogee in the Archaic period at Salamis.¹⁷⁷ From the foregoing examples of LC IIIB–CG IA practice, however, it is clear that the funerals of ‘epic’ scale originated much earlier in Iron Age Cyprus, well before the epics of Homer, and that they emerged in the context of broader cultural shifts in mortuary practice.

Why is it that we see such a re-centring of funerary ritual as major social performance at the very onset of the Iron Age? Part of the answer must lie in the ongoing redefinition of the social order following the abandonment/collapse of most LBA centres, with new towns and polities arising in the wake of immigration from the Aegean and other regions. As new communities developed, new cemeteries were established, their recurrent use forging an acknowledgment of communal identity and connections to community founders. Meanwhile, as the long lived elite descent groups and power centres of the LBA gave way

to new players, new modes of authority were created and new definitions of social prestige and personhood emerged as well. In a context of social mobility, the adoption of prestigious forms of burial from adjacent regions (Mycenaean tomb types, cremation) would have constituted an expression of social distinction. Per capita increases in mortuary expenditure, along with the more limited re-use of tombs for familial burials, may in turn reflect a greater emphasis on individual prestige as opposed to ancient hereditary status — a trend that was already underway before the end of the Bronze Age.¹⁷⁸ In some cases, funerary rites would have afforded the occasion for the attribution of heroic identities to the deceased, identities that were not derived primarily from ancestral lineage, nor merged with generations of ancestors in death.¹⁷⁹ In other cases (the majority, no doubt), the performances of death would have served, as always, as occasions for complex expressions of grief and mourning, the re-allocation of social resources and responsibilities, and negotiations of status and prestige that were ongoing even as the living paid their final homage to the dead.

CRETE–CYPRUS: CONCLUSIONS

Eleni Hatzaki and Priscilla Schuster Keswani

The culturally distinct communities of ancient Crete and Cyprus had unique rituals and beliefs about death, along with diverse material expressions of the

¹⁷⁴ See Williams 2004 on the sensory engagement of onlookers with cremation rites.

¹⁷⁵ McFadden 1954; see also Steel 1996, 297–8; Buitron-Oliver 1999, 70–2. This was a shaft tomb that was looted 50 years before McFadden’s excavation; the presence of a male burial and the attribution of the sceptre and a number of the bronze finds to the tomb are uncertain, albeit widely accepted.

¹⁷⁶ Popham *et al.* 1982, 1993.

¹⁷⁷ Karageorghis 1967b, 117–19; Rupp 1988; Hermayr 2005.

¹⁷⁸ Keswani 2004, 143–4.

¹⁷⁹ For discussions of heroic self-definition, see Sherratt 1990, esp. 815–16; 1992, 333, 337.

social identities of the dead and their relationships to the living. Even so, we can see parallels between these two island societies in terms of how changes in mortuary practices went side by side with changes in socio-political life.

Prior to the emergence of MBA Cretan palace-centred polities and elite-dominated LC urban centres, we see mortuary ritual as the principal arena for the negotiation of social identity and prestige, both of which were enhanced by the creation and celebration of group ancestors. Both societies buried their dead in extramural collective tombs, practising varied programmes of funerary and post-funerary burial ritual. The overall investment in tomb construction as well as material display for the dead was considerable, and it may often have been accompanied by feasting and imbibing among the living celebrants. There are sporadic indications that devotions to group ancestors persisted after the actual funerary rites were complete, but to characterise these practices as ‘ancestor worship’ or a ‘cult of the dead’ may be an overstatement.

In the socially stratified and institutionally complex polities that emerged in the second millennium, the mortuary practices of these two islands followed divergent paths. In Cyprus, the use of rock-cut chamber tombs continued, but these were moved into the precincts of the living where, in some cases, they were re-used over many generations. Members of the elite were lavishly equipped with gold jewellery and exotic goods, but the association of tombs with specific houses and other buildings suggests a decreasing level of communal participation in funerary rites, as does the general decline in mortuary expenditure towards the end of the LBA. In Crete during the Protopalatial period, caves, peak sanctuaries and palaces became the major arenas for social gatherings, a situation which accelerated in relation to the palaces during the Neopalatial period. The dramatic rise in the number of seals deposited is directly related to the establishment of Protopalatial elite groups with access to administrative transactions. In the Neopalatial period, the ideology towards body disposal underwent a dramatic transformation, where burying the ‘old way’ became a highly exclusive activity of a few social groups, a restriction that continued into the Final Palatial period. Preservation of the body articulated for posterity gradually rose to importance and proliferated when Knossos became the dominant political and social force on the island. With the renewed attention to ostentatious burial ‘warrior burials’ and ‘exotica’ were conspicuously prominent, expressing the emergence of new, and fluid, social groups in Final Palatial Crete. On both islands, the evidence for post-funerary cult is scarce.

With the collapse of Bronze Age polities at the end of the 2nd millennium, mortuary practices again attest to changes in social structure. The most striking similarity between the two islands is perhaps the

emphasis on smaller social groups and the affirmation of individual identities, developments that were consistent with a more fluid political environment. In both islands we see manifestations of what might be classed as ‘heroic burial’, but little that qualifies as evidence of ongoing, post-funerary tomb or hero cults.

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