

## Death in Late Bronze Age Greece: Variations on a Theme

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## *Middle Minoan III—Late Minoan III B Tombs and Funerary Practices in South-Central Crete*

*Luca Girella*

### INTRODUCTION

Funerary data are considered a special corpus of evidence that has been interpreted and critiqued at different levels over the past decades (Parker Pearson 1999; McHugh 1999; Charles 2005). This particular body of evidence has received varying degrees of attention on Crete, being a primary source for exploring political dynamics and social structures at different scales (Kanta 1980; Löwe 1996; Perna 2001; Cucuzza 2002; Girella 2003; Preston 2004; Murphy 2011; Legarra Herrero 2014). Moreover, analyses for the various periods of the history of Crete have stressed the possibility for understanding aspects of social and political transformation, and for examining periods of stress and transition, especially when the majority of the archaeological evidence comes from the funerary record, as in the case of Prepalatial Crete. As for this last period, the analysis of mortuary data has raised crucial questions about social, political, and ideological differences between communities on the island beginning in the Early Bronze Age (Soles 1992; Murphy 1998; Legarra Herrero 2014). The result is an intricate history of regional trajectories where different stories and languages are also shaped by the occurrence and incorporation of external stimuli, (i.e., off-island objects). Similarly, the picture presented by funerary data during the Protopalatial and early Neopalatial (i.e., MM III) periods shows analogous patterns of diversity and regional trajectories combined with a general drop in the investment in tomb architecture and ritual performances, now reoriented toward the palatial buildings (Girella 2003, 2013a, 2013b, 2015, 2016a; Preston 2013).

Successively, starting from LM II, the orientation toward the Greek Mainland during the period of the presence of Mycenaean groups at Knossos has gradually changed the funerary landscape of several parts of Crete. The exploration of funerary assemblages and tomb architecture suggests the existence of different strategies of elite representation, from the affiliation to a “new” funerary code to the resurgence of local ideologies (Kanta 1980; D’Agata 1999a, 1999b, 2005; Perna 2001; Preston 1999, 2004; Hatzaki 2005; D’Agata and De Angelis 2016).

The aim of this chapter is to adopt a different perspective. Rather than focusing on one or few periods to revise the funerary practices all over the island, this chapter analyzes the Western Mesara in Southern Crete as a case study to understand patterns of change and discontinuity between the Neopalatial period and the end of 13th century BC (Fig. 12.1). As for the previous periods, a comprehensive study (Legarra Herrero 2014, 31–64) has suggested a complex scenario where funerary practices, tombs construction, and distribution might be understood in relation to a gradually integrated regional landscape (Relaki 2004). In these societies, communal rituals and consumption activities were not only used by living individuals to gain a particular status (similar to “Big-man dynamics”—cf. Sahlins 1963; Lederman 1990), but they were also progressively moved from cemeteries to regional centers (Patrikies) to central palatial buildings (Phaistos), when one can register after the MM IB a significant decrease in tomb construction (Murphy 1998, 2011; Legarra Herrero 2014). After the Protopalatial period,

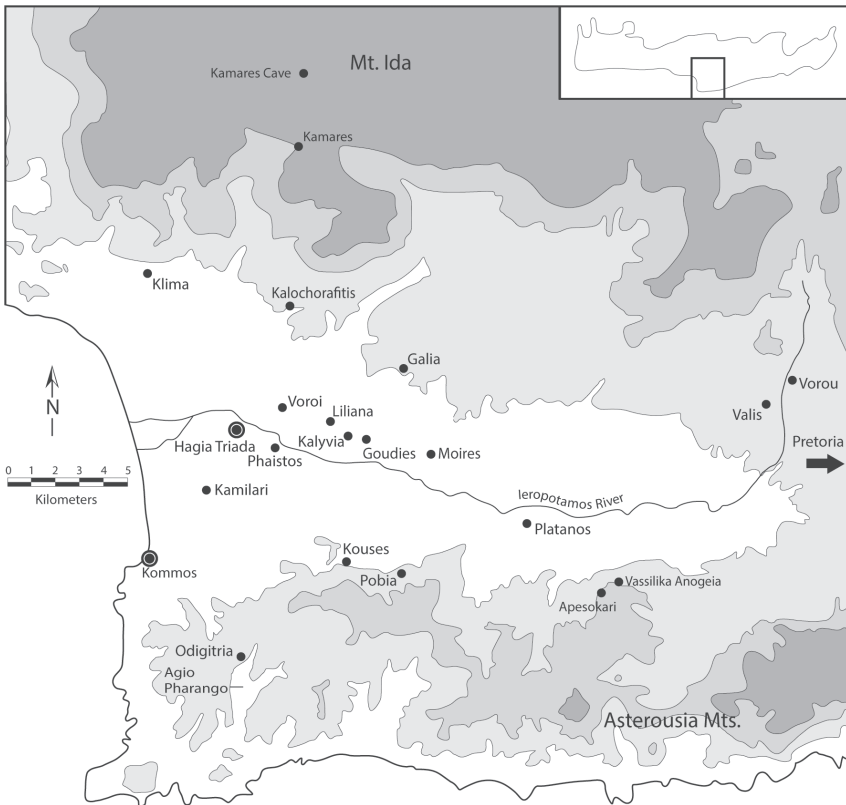


FIG. 12.1 Map of the western Mesara with the main sites discussed in the text (adapted from Watrous, Hadzi Vallianou, and Blitzer 2004).

instead of drawing a diachronic analysis of the funerary data until the end of 13th century, investigation of single cemeteries or periods has been preferred. The aim of the following analysis is to measure through the study of funerary practices internal developments of social groups of the Western Mesara from the second Palatial period down to the political and cultural transformation of the island under the establishment of a new kingdom of mainland character at Knossos and the subsequent dissemination of cultural ideas and symbols throughout many parts of Crete.

#### THE NEOPALATIAL EVIDENCE (MM IIIA–LM IB)

During the Neopalatial period the Mesara area saw a complex transitional period derived from the turmoil of the MM IIB destruction. Fluctuations in the number of sites at a regional level are difficult to assess, although a general contraction of settlements and funerary areas is visible from regional surveys (Watrous *et al.* 2004). MM IIIA in the Mesara, as in north-central Crete, was a phase of important advances (Girella 2010a, 2010b, 2016b), especially in the area of architecture and pottery production.

While in north-central Crete MM IIIB was a time of consolidation of political and social power, in the south this phase experienced a redefinition of power strategies, with the rise of Hagia Triada as a leading center of Southern Crete throughout the LM I period (Puglisi 2003; Girella 2013b). During LM I, local developments at major sites hint at the control of the Western Mesara by the palace of Knossos, which also took control over the administrative system located at Hagia Triada.

Unfortunately, the aforementioned picture does not have an equal correspondence in the funerary evidence (Tables 12.1–12.2). The Neopalatial evidence in Southern Crete is characterized by a significant decrease in the number of cemeteries and a much less significant deposition of objects in the tombs that were still in use: both these patterns had already started in MM II (Girella 2003, 2015, 2016a). Therefore, the MM III and LM I evidence seems to reflect the development of the same process.

In particular, several patterns confirm a general stability in funerary practices: (1) the grave offerings do not relate to a great number of burials and they are mainly represented by ceramic and stone vessels; (2) the preference for pouring rituals and liquid consumption is largely embodied by the same ceramic repertoire; (3) there is a general escalation in performing collective consumption in outer spaces, especially in tholos tomb cemeteries; (4) burial practices show an interesting variety of primary and secondary depositions directly on the floor, or within pithoi (often inverted, e.g., at Vorou) and larnakes.

The expected correlation between the funerary record of north-central Crete, and the Knossos area in particular (Preston 2013), is hampered by the lack of comparable evidence. The evidence at our disposal, however, helps to draw a rather different picture. During MM III investment in tomb construction was not impressive, and the re-use of pre-existing tholos tombs is the common preference (Table 12.1). Although regional surveys can add new information, they lack important details and MM III and LM I are unfortunately often conflated. Reoccupation of old communal tombs followed different criteria: while Vorou Tholos tombs A and B and Apesokari B show a possible reuse for burial purposes (Marinatos 1930–1931, figs. 16, 21 (last row, first from the right), 22e, 23a, c–d, h, j, o–q, 24n–o, q, 26, 27c; Vavouranakis 2012), the situation observed at Apesokari A and Moni Odigitria B, where MM III pottery can demonstrate only a ritual reoccupation (Vasilakis and Branigan 2010, 109–110 (P 266–267, 272, 276–277, 281), fig. 49, pl. 43.), is not clear. In contrast Kamilari Tholos tombs A and B are clear cases showing an uninterrupted use throughout the MM and LM periods (Levi 1961–1962; Girella 2013a, 2016a, 2018; Girella and Caloi 2019).

Further to the east, the site of Pretoria/Damandri represents one of the main novelties of the final stages of the Neopalatial period, but is unfortunately mostly unpublished. The Greek Archaeological Service has brought to light a considerable portion of a palatial building with magazines, column bases, ashlar blocks, and mason marks; the pottery found has been generally dated to MM III–LM I. West of the site, a small cemetery of 17 MM III tombs has been discovered (Antonakaki 2011). The tombs are of two types, pithos and larnax burials placed within pits and covered by irregular stones. All the tombs contain child burials, placed in a crouched position and accompanied by two or at most three ceramic vessels (generally conical cups and juglets). Other grave offerings consist of 1 small bronze knife, 1 seal (portraying an *agrimi*), and 20 stone vessels.

The LM I funerary evidence follows the same pattern as MM III, but now the decline in the use of cemeteries contrasts with the consolidation of political power in the south. Tholos tombs continue to be reused (Table 12.2), but again only at Kamilari A and B do we have a clear evidence of the use of the tomb for burials. On the other hand, the regional survey reveals the likely use of pithos and cist burials. Within this meager picture, the rectangular building in the northeast sector of Hagia Triada known as Tomba degli Ori constitutes a unique case, being a space likely employed for the manipulation of human bones, as discussed later.

#### *Ritual and the Social Unit of Burials*

In light of the present evidence, the reconstruction of funerary rituals appears quite disparate. The ceramic assemblage at Kamilari emphasizes the important role of drinking and pouring rituals. Compared to the MM II ceramic assemblage, during MM IIIA and IIIB one can register an important formalization

Table 12.1 MM III Funerary Contexts from South-Central Crete

Cemetery	Tomb type	Burial type	References
Kamilari A	Tholos tomb	Multiple inhumations	Levi 1961–1962; Levi 1976, 703–741; Girella 2003; 2013a; Girella, Caloi 2019
Kamilari A: Rooms $\alpha$ – $\epsilon$	Annexes	Secondary burials ( $\beta$ , $\delta$ – $\epsilon$ )	Levi 1961–1962, 55–79; Girella 2003, 2013a; Girella, Caloi 2019
Kamilari A: Cortile	Open space	Rituals, offerings	Levi 1961–1962, 80–91; Girella 2003, 2013a; Girella, Caloi 2019
Kamilari B	Tholos tomb	Multiple inhumations	Levi 1961–1962, 107–110; Levi 1976, 742–743; Girella 2003, 2013a; Girella, Caloi 2019
Kamilari C	Tholos tomb	Inhumations?	Alexiou 1957; Branigan 1976; Girella, Caloi 2019
Moni Odigitria B (Group BA)	Tholos tomb	Inhumations?	Vasilaki, Branigan 2010, 109–110, fig. 49 (P266–267, 272, 276–277, 281)
MS* 12: Makri Armis	Cist grave?	Inhumations?	Watrous <i>et al.</i> 2004, 528
Festós: Phalangari	Chamber tombs	Inhumations?	ArchDelt 42 (1987), 538–542, pls. 308–316
MS 15: E of Kamilari	?	?	Watrous <i>et al.</i> 2004, 529
MS 81: W Effendi Christos	?	?	Watrous <i>et al.</i> 2004, 536
MS 89: Logiadihi	Pithoi?	?	Watrous <i>et al.</i> 2004, 537
MS 90: Kalivia Area	?	?	Watrous <i>et al.</i> 2004, 538
MS 105: Aghia Paraskevi	?	?	Watrous <i>et al.</i> 2004, 539–540
Vorou A: external annexes	Tholos tomb	Pithos and larnax burials or offerings?	Marinatos 1930–1931; Girella 2003
Vorou B	Tholos tomb	Pithos and larnax burials	Marinatos 1930–1931; Girella 2003
Apesokari A	Tholos tomb	Offerings, cult of dead?	Matz 1951, 13–22; Flouda 2011; 2012
Apesokari B	Tholos tomb	Inhumations?	Davaras 1964, 441; Vavouranakis 2012
Pretoria/Damandri	Cist graves	Pithos and larnax burials	Antonakaki 2011

\* MS = Mesara Survey (Watrous *et al.* 2004).

Table 12.2 LM I Funerary Contexts from South-Central Crete

Cemetery	Tomb type	Burial type	References
Kamilari A	Tholos tomb	Multiple inhumations	Levi 1961–1962; Novaro 1999; Girella, Caloi 2019
Kamilari A: Rooms α-δ	Annexes	Secondary burials? Rituals	Levi 1961–1962; Novaro 1999; Girella, Caloi 2019
Kamilari A: Cortile	Open space	Rituals, offerings	Levi 1961–1962; Novaro 1999; Girella, Caloi 2019
Kamilari B	Tholos tomb	Multiple inhumations	Girella, Caloi 2019
MS* 12: Makri Armis	Cist grave?	Inhumations?	Watrous <i>et al.</i> 2004, 528
MS 81: W Effendi Christos	?	?	Watrous <i>et al.</i> 2004, 536
MS 89: Logiadhi	Pithoi?	?	Watrous <i>et al.</i> 2004, 537
MS 90: Kalivia Area	?	?	Watrous <i>et al.</i> 2004, 538
MS 105: Aghia Paraskevi	?	?	Watrous <i>et al.</i> 2004, 539-540
Hagia Triada: Tomba degli Ori	Rectangular building	?	Paribeni 1904; Soles 1992, 120–125; La Rosa 2000, 146–147; Cucuzza 2002, 164; Puglisi 2003, 185–188
Apesokari B	Tholos	Inhumations?	Davaras 1964, 441; Vavouranakis pers. comm.
Platanos, tomb α	Rectangular building	?	Soles 1992, 193
Platanos, tomb γ	Rectangular building	Mass of half burnt bones	Soles 1992, 193
Yialomonochoro	Tholos?	?	Blackman, Branigan 1977, 44, 66, fig. 34, pls. 4d, 5a; Vasilakis 1990, 47

\* MS = Mesara Survey (Watrous *et al.* 2004).



of shapes and decoration (Girella 2011, 2013a, 2018; Girella and Caloi 2019). The high volume of conical cups indicates the likely involvement of the living during the ceremonies, whereas ceramic sets for the dead are basically composed by straight-sided cups and bridge-spouted jars. There is also a larger volume of closed shapes, mostly for pouring or transport purposes (jugs of medium and large size and oval-mouthed amphoras), as well as cooking ware with some large examples, mainly of tripod pots. The picture derived from Kamilari remains unique, however, and without substantial comparisons from other cemeteries.

The case of Pretoria/Damandri (unless it is a special cemetery only for child burials) might be interpreted as an opposite scenario. The contents of the 17 tombs (23 ceramic vessels and 20 stone vessels) suggest that each tomb contained one stone vessel and two pots, namely one conical cup (or another cup) and one juglet. Therefore, the two cases here discussed might be interpreted as two opposing levels of funerary rituals. Grave offerings at Pretoria/Damandri cemetery can be considered the basic unit derived from a short ritual performance largely embodied by the burial, whereas at Kamilari the large size of pottery assemblages attests the involvement of the living in ceremonies for the dead.

From LM I, Kamilari Tholos A is the only well excavated site. The deposition of seals and pottery suggests that, although the tomb apparently served far fewer burials than in MM III, Tholos A continued to be used as a burial place (Girella 2018; Girella and Caloi 2019). The analysis of the pottery assemblages shows the well-known package of MM III forms, but other shapes are now attested, such as bell and rhytid cups, strainers, and fireboxes as well as new types of *stamnoi* and rhyta. The real novelty of Kamilari Tholos A is represented by a different function of the annex rooms and the external open-air area, which now served as a religious space of performing ceremonies (dances and the preparation and offering of food to ancestors), as demonstrated by the location of the famous clay models in this area.

Despite the small data set from the period, the study of known MM III and LM I ceramic offerings indicates a continuity of practices during MM II, especially in relation to the emphasis on drinking and pouring vessels. Funerals, therefore, involve almost the same elements for both the burial and the composition of the offerings, which seem to betray a social composition with kinship relations based on clans, as seen in the late Prepalatial period. In this sense, it is not easy to disentangle possible social differentiations from burial records: seals and also ware diversities/opposition maybe have served as ways of signaling social diversity (Girella 2018).

The apparent absence of personal and precious objects might indicate an intention to obscure or disguise rank and status differences among the deceased (Table 12.3). We do not have enough data regarding artifact distributions and corpse treatment to assess what kind of *individuality* was constructed by burial

Table 12.3 Artifact Types in South-Central Cretan MM III and LM I tombs

Cemetery	Adornments	Toilette	Weapons	Stone vessels	Ceramic vessels	Drinking	Pouring
Kamilari A	X	X	?	X	X	X	X
Kamilari B	—	X	X	X	X	X	X
Kamilari C	—	—	—	—	X	X	?
MS 12: Makri Armis	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Phaistos: Phalangari	—	—	—	—	?	?	?
Hagia Triada: Tomba degli Ori	X	—	X	X	X	X	?
MS 15: E of Kamilari	—	—	—	—	X	?	?
MS 81: W Effendi Christos	—	—	—	—	?	?	?
MS 89: Logiadhi	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
MS 90: Kalivia Area	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
MS 105: Aghia Paraskevi	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Vorou A and B	—	—	—	—	X	X	X
Apesokari A	—	—	—	—	X	X	X
Apesokari B	—	—	—	—	X	?	?
Platanos, tombs $\alpha$ , $\gamma$	—	—	—	—	X	?	?
Pretoria/Damandri	X	—	X	X	X	X	X

\* MS = Mesara Survey (Wattrous *et al.*, 2004).

assemblages. At Kamilari, however, such differentiation might be visible in MM II and MM III thanks to the deposition of seals (Levi 1961–1962, figs. 127–130, 134–137). The same picture may be envisaged for Pretoria/Damandri, based on the deposition of the seal and the bronze knife.

As far as the burial method is concerned, beside the case discussed at Pretoria/Damandri, there are a few, but significant, examples of burial interments in pithoi and larnakes. This shift might reveal a different social strategy that emphasizes individuality within the context of collective inhumations. However, pithos and larnax burials seem to be an expression of the same approach to individuality, which is integrated within a context of a group affiliation (Girella 2015).

On the other hand, situations like that at Kamilari show a clear absence of major segmentations, such as differences in age, sex, and status. Preliminary data derived from the forthcoming study on the human bones of Kamilari Tholos A illustrate that approximately 21 corpses per century were deposited in the tomb, which approaches the composition of a nuclear family of five to seven members (Triantaphyllou and Girella 2018; Girella and Caloi 2019). Furthermore, individuals of all age groups—even neonates—and both sexes have been recognized from the human remains.

#### *The Manipulation of the Dead: A New Ritual Code?*

The case of the clay models at Kamilari indicates a significant change in the performance of funerary rituals. It is difficult, however, to understand whether similar shifts were widespread and formalized within the same region. What seems to be clear is that after MM II mortuary practices underline the corporate character of the represented groups in similar ways to those observed in the Prepalatial period (Legarra Herrero 2014), where the rituals and ceremonies involved are intended to preserve community cohesion.

A decisive factor in the reinforcement of corporate links is represented by the treatment of the human body visible through secondary burial practices where the manipulation of human remains is really embedded in both the funerary and the living world. A special case is represented by several buildings, widespread in central and eastern Crete and dated to LM I, that in various ways were used as special spaces, for they probably maintained an indeterminate or hybrid character where cultic, funerary, and living spheres were linked together (Girella 2016a).

This hybrid character might also be evidenced at the Temple Tomb at Knossos (Evans 1935, 964–978), Building 4 at Archanes/Phourni (Soles 1992, 139–142), and the house tomb at Myrtos Pyrgos (Cadogan 2011). Similarly, Tomba degli Ori at Hagia Triada was built during LM IA in the northeast sector of the settlement, i.e., the cemetery area that had lost its funerary connotation after MM II (Long 1959, 61–65; Puglisi 2003, 185–188) and attached to Complesso della

Mazza di Breccia, a complex used only by living people for ritual and artisanal activities. A thick layer of human bones in secondary positions was found inside this building, with exceptional objects and *paraphernalia* used for ritual purposes, such as stone and terracotta figurines, stone vessels, bronze knives and spearheads, gold amulets, rhytid amphoras, and several small “terracotta stools,” that have been interpreted as movable altars (Cucuzza 2002, 160–165; La Rosa 2000b, 146–147).

All these elements drawn together suggest that we are dealing with a special space that provided a cosmological link between the living and the dead where ceremonial purposes and honoring ancestors took place. Unfortunately, the small amount of evidence at our disposal leaves many questions unanswered. On the one hand, these practices go back to the Prepalatial period and aim to reinforce group cohesion and stability. On the other hand, it is not sufficiently clear whether such performances were exceptional and took place as special episodes reflecting periods of stress or whether they reflected specific segments of the social body. One wonders if we are to conclude that the clay models at Kamilari, such as the well-known offerings of food to ancestors (Levi 1961–1962, fig. 170a–f), could indeed portray a ceremony inside this special space, where offerings and manipulation of human bones took place to reinforce group cohesion and stability of social units (Girella and Caloi 2019).

#### THE MONOPALATIAL EVIDENCE (LM II–III A2 EARLY)

The period between the beginning of the 15th century and c. 1370 BC is traditionally considered a peculiar moment in the history of Crete, characterized by Knossos’s political domination over a large part of the island. Settlement destruction as well as aspects of depopulation characterized many sites throughout the island with a practical and ideological consolidation of the Knossian authority (Popham 1994). Furthermore, the introduction of mainland-derived artifacts and symbols, such as the adoption of Greek as the administrative language at Knossos, as well as pottery styles, burial practices, and fresco iconography, has permitted scholars to use the term “Mycenaean” to talk about the island material culture transformation of this period. The presence of a substantial amount of artifacts of Greek Mainland derivation reflects a movement of population groups toward Crete during and after the LM IB. Then, during LM II and III A material cultural practices underwent forms of adaptation and innovation according to the internal agendas of various areas of Crete. Especially for the area of Knossos, the analysis of funerary data is particularly crucial (Preston 1999, 2004). In this regard, the Mesara region, like the north, represents another case study, where funerary practices help to understand aspects of affiliation and modification of a new funerary language.

During LM II–III A2 Early the Western Mesara became a province of the newly established kingdom based at Knossos; likely, Hagia Triada functioned as the main residence of bureaucrats (*ko-re-te*) in charge of controlling the local economy on behalf of the palace of Knossos (La Rosa 1997; Cucuzza 2003, 263–267).<sup>1</sup> The regional survey has pointed out a general drop in the number of settlements and cemeteries (Watrous *et al.* 2004, 300). This aspect is possibly due to a decrease in population after the turmoil at the end of LM IB, but it seems that repopulation afterward was quite a difficult and slow process (D’Agata 1999a). At a different developmental pace, Hagia Triada (D’Agata 1999a; Cucuzza 2003) and Kommos (Shaw and Shaw 2006, 873–875) became the two main sites of Southern Crete and stood out from Phaistos (now only partially reoccupied—cf. Borgna 2006), sharing together a general and progressive building reorganization.

The funerary evidence of this period is embodied in only a few cemeteries that are quite different from each other (Table 12.4). The four funerary contexts briefly presented here show different approaches to mortuary behavior as regards tomb architecture, burial system, and composition of grave assemblages (Cucuzza 2002).

At Kamilari it seems that Tholos B went out of use after LM IB and thereafter Tholos A was the only burial place of the former cemetery that continued in use, with significant changes in burial practices and the composition of funerary offerings (Girella 2018; Girella and Caloi 2019). The main areas of deposition are the circular chamber and the open-air courtyard. In this last space fragmentary kylikes and bowls, as well as stirrup jars, have been found and suggest that toasting, libation, or smashing of vessels were carried out as a *ritual of separation*. The circular chamber was probably only used by a small group, as one can gather from the composition of the funerary assemblages, now embodied by the presence of two clay larnakes and the deposition of vessels likely to have been containers for unguents or perfumed substances (pixides, alabaster, miniature juglets), objects for personal adornment of the dead, such as jewelry, and bronze implements, in particular bronze mirrors (Levi 1961–1962, figs. 32–33, 38–39, 42–43, 147–151, pl. IV; Girella and Caloi 2019).

A similar funerary code is evident in the reuse of Tholos B at Hagia Triada, though the data at our disposal for this context are meager (Paribeni 1904, 681–691). Within the tholos tomb two unpainted larnakes have been found. The material likely associated with the burials is largely without context and datable between LM III A1 and LM III A2 (Paribeni 1904, figs. 4–6).

A few meters to the south an unusual house tomb, known as the Tomb of the Painted Sarcophagus (Long 1974; Militello 1998, 154–167) was erected in

1. For a different and provocative interpretation of Hagia Triada as Hieria Polis, see also Privitera 2016.

Table 12.4 LM IIIA1–A2 Early Cemeteries and Relative Grave Offering Materials Discussed in the Text

Context	Cemetery type	Burial type	Ceramic	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Stone	Ivory	Faience	Glass
<b>Kamilari A</b>	Tholos tomb	2 Larnakes	X	X	X	X			X	
<b>Hagia Triada Tholos B</b>	Tholos tomb	Inhumation on floor?					X			
<b>Hagia Triada and Tomb of the Painted Sarcophagus*</b>	House tomb	2 Larnakes	X				X			
<b>Goudies</b>	Chamber tomb	2 Larnakes	X			X	X			
<b>Kalyvia</b>	12 chamber tombs 2 shaft-graves	Inhumation on floor, bench, bier, pit	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

\* Tomb of the Painted Sarcophagus

LM IIIA2<sup>2</sup> (La Rosa 1999). It contained two larnakes, one of which is the famous painted stone sarcophagus, whereas the second smaller one is clay and unpainted. Grave offerings divided between the two larnakes consisted of few vessels and other items, i.e., a stone and clay cup, two bronze razors, a clay figurine, and two seals (Paribeni 1904, 713–719). According to a recent hypothesis (La Rosa 2000a), part of the human bones and the grave assemblages (among which were daggers, gold jewels, and an imported Egyptian ovoid bearing the name of Queen Tiyyi, wife of Amenhotep III) found inside the nearby Tomba degli Ori, further to the south, belonged to the Tomb of the Painted Sarcophagus and was moved from the original context after a profanation act.<sup>3</sup>

A different type of funerary context is evident at the tomb of Goudies and the cemetery of Kalyvia. The tomb excavated in 1968 at Goudies (Laviosa 1970), west of the modern city of Moires, is probably part of a larger complex of chamber tombs that has not been found or investigated.

The cemetery of Kalyvia (Table 12.5) is situated on the slopes of a low hill about 1 km northeast of the palace of Phaistos (Savignoni 1904; Kanta 1980, 99–100; Cucuzza 2002; Preston 2004, 334–336; D'Agata 2005, 112–113; Privitera 2011). The cemetery probably belonged to a small settlement not yet identified and consists of 14 tombs excavated along the eastern slope: 12 rock-cut chamber tombs and two shaft graves (Tombs 4 and 14). Of the first group, one can also distinguish between the three tombs (2–3, 5) with irregular pentagonal chambers and a second cluster (Tombs 1, 6–13) with an apsidal chamber. It is difficult to say whether this architectural distinction in two clusters has an explanation: the grave offerings from the cemetery allow us to date the use of all tombs between LM IIIA1 and IIIA2 Early. The presence of gold rings in Tomb 2 seems to exclude that we are dealing with tombs belonging to “nonelite” people; on the other hand, the presence of empty tombs (Tombs 2 and 5), if not looted, might suggest the existence of secondary burial rites. At any rate, the main cluster of the Kalyvia cemetery is represented by rock-cut chamber tombs, with a long dromos oriented east-west and an apsidal singular chamber. This particular feature suggests a different architectural tradition when compared with the tomb of

2. The chronology of the painted sarcophagus has been variously changed from LM II to LM IIIA2 Late, cf. Militello 1998, 154, for a summary. The tomb and the sarcophagus and its painted scene do not provide any definitive evidence for a date to an early or late stage of LM IIIA2 thus far. The subdivision followed in the present analysis between an early and late stage of LM IIIA2, coinciding respectively with the kingdom of Knossos and its fall, is of course arbitrary and aims to disentangle possible political explanations from the archaeological data at our disposal. The chronology of the Tomb of the Painted Sarcophagus, however, cannot be securely pushed back and forth within LM IIIA2. Therefore, I have followed the “traditional view” and considered this context as belonging to an early stage of LM IIIA2; however, it seems reasonable to think that the construction and the use of the tomb with the sarcophagus and the other larnax may date to the last few generations of LM IIIA2. For the relationship between the sarcophagus and the wider urban reorganization at Hagia Triada during the middle stage/phase of LM IIIA2, and the specific association between the frescoes of CASA VAP and those of the painted sarcophagus, see Privitera 2016.

3. *Contra* Puglisi, who has suggested that luxury objects found inside Tomba degli Ori belong to this building as part of the offerings to dead (Puglisi 2003, 185–188).

*Table 12.5* The Kalyvia Cemetery and the Associated Material as Reconstructed after Savignoni 1904 and Privitera 2011 Other items (vessels, bronze objects, and jewelry) are described in Savignoni 1904, but they are not associated with the tombs

Tomb	Type	Burial	Vessels	Bronze	Stone vessels	Jewelry
1	Apsidal chamber	6 on floor 1 on bench				4 seals
2	Pentagonal chamber	3 on floor				2 gold rings
3	Pentagonal chamber	Heap of bones in a pit	3 vessels (?)			
4	Shaft grave			3 vessels 3 mirrors	Stone lamp	1 seal 3 gold rings Various necklaces
5	Pentagonal chamber	?	fragments	fragments		
6	Apsidal chamber	3 on floor	1 jug	1 mirror	1 bowl 1 lamp	Various necklaces
7	Apsidal chamber	1 > on floor				1 gold ring 1 seal 1 gold necklace 1 necklace 1 gold ring 3 seals
8	Apsidal chamber	2 > on floor Cremation?		4 vessels 1 mirror 2 cleavers 2 daggers		

(continued)



Table 12.5 Continued

Tomb	Type	Burial	Vessels	Bronze	Stone vessels	Jewelry
<b>9</b>	Apsidal chamber	10 on floor, benches and pits	5 kylikes 1 squat alabastron 1 stirrup jar 1 cooking pot	1 knife	1 bowl 1 lamp	1 bronze ring 2 seals 1 gold sheet 1 gold ring (pit 1) Necklace (pit 2) 1 silver ring 1 gold ring 10 loomweights 1 bronze ring 2 gold rings
<b>10</b>	Apsidal chamber	Several				
<b>11</b>	Apsidal chamber	Numerous separated by earth layer	1 stirrup jar 1 pyxis 2 alabastra	1 knife		
<b>12</b>	Apsidal chamber	?	?			
<b>13</b>	Apsidal chamber	?	?			
<b>14</b>	Shaft grave	Bones and 2 skulls				

Goudies, although the two cemeteries were contemporary. Finally, one special feature of the Kalyvia cemetery is the absence of clay larnakes. Although Kanta has suggested the possibility of identifying fragmentary larnakes stored at the Heraklion Museum as coming from Kalyvia (Kanta 1980, 99), the recent reading of the excavation notebook confirms their provenance from a different location (cf. Privitera 2011, 178, n. 25).

#### *Ritual and the Social Unit of Burials*

The picture derived from the collected data is quite varied and suggests a complex funerary landscape where different strategies and funerary representations operated in the context of the social and political transformation of the Mesara with the consolidation of Knossian authority in the south. This unique view helps to understand the reorganization of social groups after the turmoil at the end of LM IB around a “Mycenaean” funerary code (expressed in several Knossian cemeteries of this period) or to a local response based on “traditional” behaviors (D’Agata 2005). Strong opposition to a Mycenaean funerary code is seen in the use of the clay larnax at Kamilari, Hagia Triada, and Goudies, but not at Kalyvia. Clay larnakes are not common in this period at Knossos, where the new cemeteries of rock-cut chamber tombs and shaft graves show a complex ritual of burial directly on the floor, into pits, or on benches as well as on wooden biers. This means, therefore, that the appearance of the rock-cut chamber tomb type—a real novelty in the south—is not automatically accompanied by this complex mortuary behavior, since the larnax would represent a local response used either in former cemeteries of tholos tombs (Kamilari and Hagia Triada) or in rock-cut chamber tomb cemeteries.

The real innovation, therefore, is represented by the Kalyvia cemetery, the only one in this period to exhibit a clear link to the Knossian vocabulary: an absence of larnakes, the deposition of the burials on the floor, benches, wooden biers and pits, the presence of two shaft graves, sealed with large stones, and ostentatious grave offerings including gold jewelry, bronze vessels, and weapons.

A second innovation is represented by the Tomb of the Painted Sarcophagus at Hagia Triada. Here, along with the reuse of Tholos B and the introduction of clay larnakes, the construction of a “house tomb” nearby and the interment of a painted limestone chest larnax reflect a complex scenario that saw the reorganization of the settlement after LM II (La Rosa 1997). These changes were accompanied by an innovative building program and the likely establishment of bureaucrats representing the palace of Knossos (Cucuzza 2003). According to this perspective, at this unique tomb and in the scenes on the painted sarcophagus itself, several ideological and iconographical aspects combine (Cucuzza 2002): (1) the Egyptian influence (also corroborated by the circulation in this area of objects and exotica belonging to the reign of Amenhotep III); (2) the

intentional fusion of Greek Mainland and Cretan elements resulting in an elaborate decoration that suggests high prestige for both the deceased and the living individuals conducting the funerary rites connected with the sarcophagus; and (3) the performative aspect of the sarcophagus along with the contemporary public architectural program, whereby this special larnax almost certainly figured as part of a ceremony for the dead, that reaffirmed the identity of the new elite group in the LM IIIA2 period.

In sum, the two burial contexts at Hagia Triada seem to represent different responses to the new political situation. With the Tomb of the Painted Sarcophagus a new elite group adopted an innovative competitive strategy channeling prestige symbolism from various origins into mortuary display, while the reoccupation of Tholos B may reflect a different trajectory of mortuary ostentation aligned with a traditional vocabulary.

Analysis of the composition of grave offerings calls for several considerations. Kalyvia is the only case where one can see a particular ostentation of prestige objects and conspicuous consumption. This aspect is clearly manifested in the deposition of bronze weapons, vessels, and other tools. Although bronze mirrors or razors appear widely in all funerary contexts, at Kalyvia there is a particular emphasis on bronze vessels (which in some cases appear as a special set, as in Tomb 4 or the likely male burial interred within a pit of Tomb 8 with four vessels, one mirror, two cleavers, and two daggers) and weapons (swords, daggers, arrowheads). Similarly, seals are documented at Goudies, Hagia Triada, and Kamilari. At Kalyvia, however, they were more numerous and had more detailed iconography. The exact location of the jewels and luxury items found inside Tomba degli Ori is unknown as the context was quite disturbed: either these objects came from Tomba degli Ori or from the Tomb of the Painted Sarcophagus or, alternatively, from Tholos B (cf. Privitera 2016). The recently suggested synchronism between LM IIIA1 and Amenhotep III (Brandl *et al.* 2013) forces us to reconsider a special use of the cemetery at Hagia Triada during LM IIIA1, when other Egyptian imports of the Amenhotep III reign are attested at Kamilari and Kommos (Phillips 2005).

With regard to the ceramic assemblages, while the deposition of vessels follows some special patterns, there exist some significant differences (Table 12.6). First, the presence of open shapes is not overwhelming and compared to the closed ones definitely less important. At Kalyvia, according to the published material and the new publication project, one can calculate only one spouted cup and five kylikes (Privitera 2011) (the latter all coming from Tomb 9!). At Goudies the open shapes are represented exclusively by six conical cups. At Hagia Triada no open shapes are documented from Tholos B and only one cup was found inside the painted sarcophagus. In contrast, a wider range of open shapes is documented at Kamilari Tholos A (conical cups, one-handed foot

Table 12.6 Ceramic Shapes Represented in LM IIIA1–IIIA2 Early Funerary Contexts

Ceramic shape	Kalyvia	Kamilari A	Goudies	Hagia Triada Tholos B	Hagia Triada TPS*
Conical cup		X	X		
One-handled footed cup		X			
Kylix	X	X			
Spouted cup	X				
Shallow cup		X			?
Goblet		?			
Bowl		X			
Pyxis	X	X			
Squat alabastron	X	X			
Baggy alabastron	X	X	X	X	
Strainer		X			
Jug	X	X		X	
Juglet	X	X	X	X	
Stirrup jar—medium size	X				
Stirrup jar—small size	X	X	X		
Piriform jar	X				
Scuttle		X			
Lamp		X			
Cooking pot	X	X			

\* Tomb of the Painted Sarcophagus

cups, bowls, and kylikes) and the proportion of closed shapes is slightly less than 50%.

Second, by observing the distribution of open shapes there is a possible division between contexts where the kylix is attested (Kalyvia) and those where we find the conical cup (Goudies). Instead of drawing from this small dataset any ethnic or gender explanation, one can rather suggest the presence of two different funerary vocabularies with the kylix signaling the affiliation to a Knossian/Mycenaean behavior opposed to the conical cup indicating the incorporation of the Minoan tradition (D'Agata 1999a, 1999b, 2005). However, both shapes are documented at Kamilari and indicate that the picture is much more complicated.

Thirdly, the deposition of closed shapes indicates the preference toward small vessels used for unguents or other liquids, i.e., juglets, stirrup jars (in small numbers), alabastra, or special shapes, such as the strainer at Kamilari. The occurrence of the baggy alabastron is of particular importance, as it is present in almost all the contexts analyzed (Goudies, Hagia Triada Tholos B, Kamilari, and Kalyvia). In particular, the strong stylistic affinity between the example found at Kamilari and the two alabastra from Kalyvia Tomb 11 suggests the possible production from the same workshop, which must have been active in the area during LM IIIA1. On the other hand, the squat alabastron is documented only at Kamilari (unfortunately without a clear context from the inner chamber) and Kalyvia Tomb 9 (Privitera 2011, figs. 7–8). Although some of the contexts are mixed, the association between bronze mirrors and baggy alabastron attested at Kalyvia, Kamilari, Goudies, and Hagia Triada Tomb B might suggest a special set for female burials (Cucuzza 2002, 145).

Finally, Kalyvia is the only funerary context where the piriform jar is documented with eight examples (Privitera 2011), a fact that creates a special link with analogous depositions at Knossos and Katsamba in the north and the specific drinking sets conceived for elite groups. The systematic absence of this shape from other contemporary funerary contexts in the south indicates the presence in the area of different ritual codes that were variously adopted from the social groups of the Mesara plain.

Unfortunately, the old excavation of the cemetery did not preserve much detail about the burial method or the social unit derived from it. The aforementioned opposition between Kalyvia and the other cemeteries also implies two different concepts of inhumation, i.e., the extended position used for the inhumation on the floor and benches on the one hand, the contracted position of the individuals buried within a chest larnax on the other. Larnakes from the other cemeteries contained burials of unidentified numbers (such as at Kamilari and Goudies); two skulls were found inside the painted sarcophagus at Hagia Triada and a third one in the unpainted larnax nearby. At Goudies only two teeth and some skeletal material has been found inside the first larnax. Finally,

no information about human bones is associated with the larnakes found inside Kamilari Tholos A. Despite this small dataset at our disposal, it is, however, possible to suggest post-depositional manipulations of the dead and the performance of secondary activities following the original burial episode/s inside the tomb.

The picture offered by the Kalyvia cemetery is quite complex and might suggest the existence of various levels of bone manipulation after the primary burials, although osteological analysis has not been undertaken. Aside from the uncertain case of the cremation (Tomb 8), the number of burials oscillates significantly from empty chambers (Tomb 5, and possibly 12–13) to collective burials (at least 10 individuals from Tomb 9); in between there are cases of skeletal material separated by a layer of earth (Tomb 11), simple heaps of bones (Tomb 3), or just skulls (Tomb 14).

#### THE FINAL PALATIAL EVIDENCE (LM IIIA2 LATE–III B)

During the period spanning the destruction of the palace of Knossos around 1370 BC and the end of 13th century (LM III B), the centers of the Mesara region consolidated their local power and independence from the state formerly run by Knossos.

The regional survey indicates a growing number of settlements during this period nucleated around Phaistos, Hagia Triada, and Kommos, with Hagia Triada preeminent (Watrous *et al.* 2004, 300–302). A major gap, however, has been observed at Phaistos in this period (Borgna 2003, 350–353; 2006). In contrast, in the mature stage of LM IIIA2 and during LM III B, Hagia Triada shows undisputable evidence of continuity, represented by the use of a large open space, the so-called Agora, surrounded by monumental buildings (i.e., Edificio Ovest, Edificio Nord-Ovest, and Edificio P) and residential houses (Casa VAP) (La Rosa 1997, 258–261; Cucuzza 2003, 217–219; Privitera 2015, 136–137, 145–146). The complex building program, the cultic activity now concentrated on important residences, and the storage capacity of silo complexes (Edificio Ovest, Edificio Nord-Ovest) indicate that Hagia Triada was in this period a major religious and political center at the head of a “small agrarian state” (La Rosa 1997; Privitera 2015, 146).

Whereas the north region of the island is characterized by a general decline in mortuary display (Preston 2004; Hatzaki 2005), the situation in the south is rather opposite and the funerary data suggest a more general orientation toward a common vocabulary (Table 12.7). The funerary landscape is almost completely represented by rock-cut chamber tombs, always with singular and circular chamber, a short dromos, and a door closed by a wall of rough stones; inside, the chest larnax is the main receptacle for interment.

Table 12.7 LM IIIA2–IIIB Cemeteries and Relative Grave Offering Materials Discussed in the Text

Context	Cemetery type	Burial type	Ceramic	Silver	Bronze	Stone	Ivory	Faience
<b>Lilliana</b>	Chamber tombs A–B, D	? larnakes	Stirrup jars 1 juglet Hemispherical cups Feeding bottles 1 kylix?			1 piriform jar		Beads
<b>Hagia Triada</b>	Tholos tomb/Shaft	1 larnax	1 stirrup jar 1 cup	1 ring	2 cleavers			
<b>Tholos B</b>			?					
<b>Valis</b>	Tholos tombs	15 larnakes						
<b>Kouses</b>	?	2 larnakes	2 stirrup jars 1 juglet					
<b>Vasilika Anoghia</b>	Chamber tomb	4 larnakes	12 vessels		1 sword?			
<b>Pombia Palioesterno</b>	Chamber tomb	1 larnax	1 stirrup jar		1 dagger			
<b>Moires</b>	Chamber tomb	5 larnakes	“Several”		1 mirror			
<b>Klima Ellinas</b>	Chamber tomb I	4 larnakes	8 stirrup jars 1 kylix					
<b>Klima Ellinas</b>	Chamber tomb II	5 larnakes	2 one-handled footed cups 6 stirrup jars 4 juglets 1 incense burner 1 one-handled footed cup					
<b>Stavros Galias</b>	Chamber tomb 1	2 larnakes						
<b>Stavros Galias</b>	Chamber tomb 2	2 larnakes	1 stirrup jar 1 jug			3 seals	1 comb	beads
<b>Stavros Galias</b>	Chamber tomb 3	? larnakes						
<b>Stavros Galias</b>	Chamber tomb 4	2 larnakes	2 conical cups					

<b>Stavros Galias</b>	Chamber tomb 5	1 larnax 1 wooden bier	1 stirrup jar 1 flask 1 one-handled footed cup 1 conical cup	1 dagger 1 knife 1 spearhead 1 cheek-piece 1 ladle	
<b>Kalochorafitis Prinaria</b>	Chamber tomb	2 larnakes Bench, pit	18 stirrup jars 10 juglets 1 feeding bottle 2 amphoriskoi 1 kalathos 1 hemispherical cup 1 spouted cup 1 conical cup	1 cleaver 7 spindle-whorls	Several necklaces
<b>Kalochorafitis Anevolema</b>	Chamber tomb A	?	17 stirrup jars 5 juglets 1 hemispherical cup	5 spindle-whorls	
<b>Kalochorafitis Anevolema</b>	Chamber tomb B	8 larnakes	50 stirrup jars 11 juglets 1 flask 1 feeding bottle 2 amphoriskoi 2 bird vases 1 kylix 1 deep bowl 1 hemispherical cup 4 one-handled footed cups	1 spearhead 1 cleaver 1 tweezers 2 rings 1 pendant 1 whetstone 2 vessels	5 seals 27 spindle-whorls 1 button 1 bead
<b>Kalochorafitis Anevolema</b>	Chamber tomb C	3 larnakes			1 bead
<b>Kalochorafitis Anevolema</b>	Chamber tomb D	4 larnakes	10 stirrup jars 1 feeding bottle 1 piriform jar	2 spearheads	8 spindle-whorls



In the area around Phaistos, the cemetery of Kalyvia went out of use after LM IIIA2 Early. The nearby chamber tomb cemetery at Liliانا was first occupied in LM IIIB and continued in use down to the Subminoan period (Savignoni 1904, fig. 107 c, i–j, o–p, u–v; Borda 1946, 29, nos. 175–176, pl. XXXIII.6, 9; 29, nos. 173–174, XXXV.5–6; Kanta 1980, 100; Löwe 1996, cat. nos. 738–745, 246–247). The surviving examples of chamber tombs at Liliانا are almost circular in shape and contained several clay larnakes. Burials are located inside the larnakes, whereas previous depositions are systematically piled up together with grave offerings between the larnakes on the chamber floor. This is the case in Tomb A, where the spaces among the five larnakes host a great quantity of skeletal material with vases of various periods, including two stirrup jars and one cup of LM IIIB date (Savignoni 1904, 637–639, fig. 107 i, o–p). Furthermore, Larnax I from the same tomb contained many faience beads of various shapes datable to the same period (Savignoni 1904, 632–633, figs. 100–103). A LM IIIB use can be hypothesized also for Tomb D, thanks to the recovery of two stirrup jars, one juglet, and maybe one kylix on the chamber floor mixed with secondary deposits (Savignoni 1904, 640, 642, figs. 107 j, u–v, 112). A feeding bottle was found inside Larnax I (Savignoni 1904, 645, fig. 107 c) and a stone reproduction of a miniature LM IIIA piriform jar was inside Larnax III (Savignoni 1904, 646, fig. 114). It is possible that a feeding bottle was also found in Tomb B (Savignoni 1904, 649).

South of the palace hill of Phaistos, in the area of Alisandraki, close to the Hagios Ioannis village, the remains of one larnax and ceramic sherds of LM IIIA2/B date were collected (Hadzi Vallianou 1989, 431). The area west of Liliانا toward the Panagia Kalyviani monastery seems to have been densely occupied, since several accounts refer to LM III sherds and larnakes in this area (Savignoni 1904, 652; Kanta 1980, 100), as well as along the road connecting Heraklion and Tymbaki through Vori, where a bronze set composed of a cauldron, two spearheads, and a few daggers, must be linked to a grave assemblage (Kanta 1980, 100).

At Hagia Triada the area of Tholos B is reused again: a shaft was dug in the bedrock south of the tholos tomb between it and the Tomb of the Painted Sarcophagus (Paribeni 1904, 710–713, figs. 7e, 17–18; Cucuzza 2002, 137). The scanty number of tombs and burials in the site is worth noting, especially when compared with the flourishing activity in the settlement. Either we must reconsider the role of Hagia Triada during LM IIIB and the effective number of inhabitants living in the houses or we must argue that the cemetery area was primarily used for ritual performances and only occasionally for burials. Actually, the recovery in the 1980s, 300 m southwest of the Villa, of a LM III chamber tombs with three larnakes (Hadzi Vallianou 1987, 548, pl. 320b), might suggest the location of a cemetery in this area, but the connection to a different settlement cannot be ruled out.

To the south, at Kouses, Sp. Marinatos reported discovering infant burials inside larnakes with pottery datable to LM IIIA2 Late (Marinatos 1924–1925, 75–77; Kanta 1980, 94–95). At Valis, an EM tholos tomb was reused during LM III and at least 15 larnakes have been counted (Kanta 1980, 95), but unfortunately the account lacks specific detail. South of Moires, the chamber tombs at Vasilika Anoghia (Kanta 1980, 93) and at Pombia/Paliosterno (Kanta 1980, 95; Löwe 1996, cat. n. 752, 249), were used between LM IIIA2 and LM III B.

Of the same date is the chamber tomb from Moires, where five clay larnakes were found (Kanta 1980, 89; Löwe 1996, cat. n. 705, 239–240). Larnax burials were also reported by Pendlebury (1932–1933, 90) at Moroni, on the road going down to Moires (Löwe 1996, 240–241).

Three other cemeteries must be mentioned in the area of Pyrgiotissa. At Klima/Ellinas there are two chamber tombs used between LM IIIA2 and III B (Rethemiotakis 1995; Löwe 1996, 197). At Stavros Galias 5 chamber tombs of the same period were excavated between 1963 and 1975 (Davaras 1964; Kanta 1980, 80; Löwe 1996, 252–253; Karetsou and Merousis 2018). This cemetery is quite close to the village of Kalochorafitis, where a total of five chamber tombs were excavated between the 1960s and 2010 in the areas of Prinarià and Anevolema (Davaras and Banou 2003; Karetsou and Girella 2015). The chamber tombs contained an assorted number of larnakes, some of them richly painted, plentiful ceramic assemblages, seals, jewelry, and bronze objects.

On the slopes of Mt. Ida, Taramelli (1901) excavated a cemetery of small tholos tombs close to the village of Kamares. From the material stored at the Heraklion Museum at least two stirrup jars are datable to LM III B (Kanta 1980, 112, fig. 49.2–5), but, unfortunately, the publication of the context remains too preliminary to understand its real use and the related funerary practices.

The area of the Eastern Mesara was similarly characterized by cemeteries of chamber tombs, although their number is definitely lower than in the west: Tefeli (Kanta 1980, 80; Löwe 1996, 252–253), Neo Chorio (Kanta 1980, 83; Löwe 1996, 241), and Ligortyno (Savignoni 1904, 656–659; Kanta 1980, 83–84; Löwe 1996, 234–235; D'Agata 2015), but they will not be discussed in this study.

#### *Ritual and the Social Unit of Burials*

Compared to the previous period, the evidence shows a growth in cemetery areas in the south that contrasts with the situation in the north and in the area around Knossos. Although the dataset is heavily hampered by the occasional character of the excavations and looting, it suggests, however, a new landscape strategy where, along with the nucleation of bigger centers, a growing number of small settlements with their cemeteries nearby developed. Within this framework, the strong homogeneity of the funerary landscape (tomb and burial types, composition of ceramic assemblages, decrease in mortuary ostentation, and valuable

artifacts) may indicate a special network between centers of power and small settlements after the fall of the palace of Knossos, but the dynamics of such an interrelationship remain unclear thus far. Furthermore, the paucity of clear LM IIIA2 Late (post Knossos) contexts makes it difficult to trace a clear line between tombs used before and after the collapse horizon.

As discussed earlier, with the exception of the reuse of EM tholos tombs (Hagia Triada Tholos B, with the shaft dug out outside the tholos, and Valis), the funerary landscape is characterized by small cemeteries of rock-cut chamber tombs. Burials were preferably put inside larnakes in a contracted position; larnakes were used for multiple burials, and the presence in many contexts of skulls and bones, instead of complete skeletons, suggests a clear manipulation of the skeletal material after the primary burials (Karetsou and Girella 2015). On the other hand, burials on the floor or in pits are not uncommon, although the evidence at our disposal is very meager. Worth noting is the case of Stavros Galias Tomb 5, which has the only clear evidence of a warrior burial in the area (Karetsou and Merousis 2018, fig. 1a, pl. 3b–c). This special burial refers to the continuation of a warrior ideology expressed almost exclusively by bronze tools and the deposition of the male corpse on wooden biers of Knossian tradition that is not otherwise attested later than LM IIIA1.

A real novelty of this period is the special use of the larnakes, which are now frequently depicted with terrestrial, marine, or religious themes (Watrous 1991; Merousis 2000; Karetsou and Girella 2015). It is likely that clay larnakes now function as a special device incorporating and transmitting old and new languages derived from the composite and varied scenes depicted on them.

The composition of grave assemblages requires some further comment. As far as the nonceramic material is concerned, the data show a drastic decrease of valuable artifacts, especially in gold and silver. Seals are also very uncommon and, apart from the example from Tomb B at Kalochorafitis Anevolema (Karetsou and Girella 2015), they do not function as a status symbol. On the other hand, bronze weapons, tools, and vessels, although few in number, continue to appear in grave assemblages in significantly varying degree.

After the rich period of widely distributed tombs with weapons and other bronze implements during the LM II–III A2 Early (Alberti 2004; Preston 2004), with a particular concentration at Knossos, the occurrence of warrior graves in Crete becomes rare (Perna 2001, 130–134; Preston 2004, 337–242; Hatzaki 2005, 87–89). As a result, the package of mirrors, tweezers, weapons, jewelry, razors, cleavers, and seals found in Knossian graves is limited to a few items and a restricted selection of weapons (Hood and de Jong 1952; Hood 1956; Popham *et al.* 1974; Alberti 2004). Significantly, swords are probably replaced by daggers. Cleavers, in contrast, are common in the grave offerings and spearheads are attested in the south (Galía, Kalochorafitis). Whether such differentiation in distribution is related to symbolic constructs at the time of

burial as opposed to personal wealth or a warrior identity is hard to say for now. With the noteworthy exception of the aforementioned tomb of Gallia (with a composite set of a dagger, a spearhead, and a helmet) (Karetsou and Merousis 2018, 8, fig. 3, pl. 5), sets are generally composed of one or two weapons.

On the other hand, bronze vessels are now extremely rare, but not completely absent. In particular the finds from Gournes and Galia (Table 12.7) as well as from Tefeli (one bronze bowl) (Kanta 1980, 80), and Knossos Gypsades/Papadakis field Tomb 3 (one bowl and one ladle) (Grammatikaki 1993) might indicate the existence of a special set consisting of a bowl or cup joined by a ladle. It seems, therefore, that although mortuary practices owed much to the precedents set at Knossos, the circulation of bronze vessels in centers of secondary importance shows that the degree of accessibility was still an important factor in the social construction of the value of commodities.

An interesting picture is derived from the analysis of the ceramic assemblages. Small stirrup jars and miniature juglets are the most common shapes found in the tombs and indicate a great degree of homogeneity in drinking and pouring ceremonies. On the contrary, the presence of large-sized stirrup jars is very scanty. Furthermore, closed pouring shapes exceed in number their open counterparts that were usually used for drinking. Interestingly, drinking shapes are systematically found not inside but outside the larnakes, whereas within clay coffins stirrup jars, personal items, and bronze tools are more common.

Regarding open drinking shapes, they only occur in specific tombs (Table 12.7) and with great variety, where simple hemispherical cups and one-handed footed cups are more common, compared to the kylix, the spouted cup, the conical cup, and the deep bowl. Aside from chronological aspects that would possibly consider the conical cup and the spouted cup more typical of LM IIIA2 Early drinking sets, the variety expressed by drinking shapes in the other tombs is remarkable and can be related to the expression of individual identity (D'Agata 1999b). At any rate, the lack of information from many contexts with respect to the pottery assemblages and their association with burials leaves any chronological or gender speculation open.<sup>4</sup>

In sum, although the decrease in mortuary ostentation indicates a higher level of homogeneity (compared to the previous period) and the adoption of a common vocabulary, it seems also that high status groups were particularly active in the promotion of their identities. On the one hand, the substantial absence of seals and rich jewelry as well as the rarity of gold, silver, amber, and ivory items show that the elites of these groups did not benefit from a high level of access to exchange networks of prestige goods. On the other hand, such promotion operated by relocating old aspects of funerary vocabulary at various levels, i.e.,

4. A good context is offered by Galia Tomb 5 (Table 12.7) where the footed cup was associated with the male burial (see Karetsou and Merousis 2018, fig. 5, pl. 8).

the use of weaponry and metal feasting vessels albeit on a smaller scale, as well as new ways for displaying personal or status identities, such as the use of figurative scenes on painted chest larnakes.

### CONCLUSIONS

The analysis presented in this chapter was necessarily condensed, but it aimed to show how valuable results can be gained by approaching the issue of funerary practices on a more regional scale. The diachronic perspective adopted in the chapter has enlightened a complex history after the Protopalatial period whose real dynamics are not completely understood. Changes in mortuary behavior and funerary practices seem to follow internal processes and developments, as well as the progressive integration of the Mesara into the Knossian political landscape.

As for the Neopalatial period, along with the problem of the identification of secure MM III and LM I funerary contexts, it is also clear that the southern region suffered much more than the northern one the consequence of the collapse of the palatial authority (Girella 2010a, 2010b). The reallocation of power and emergence of leading centers was very slow and characterized by a dispersion and then a negotiation of authority in regional centers (Girella 2016b). The funerary landscape, if compared to what occurs at Knossos, is not the best field through which one can measure this rehabilitation process, since it is largely oriented toward the continuation of an old funerary vocabulary. This small dataset, however, can also hide a different archaeological pattern. Open air cemeteries with pithos and larnax burials might have been much more widespread on the island than previously thought, with the following loss of much information due to taphonomic processes and the low degree of preservation. Therefore, aside from possible changes in burial choices, the centralization and monumentalization of palatial power probably created a shift in the investment of mortuary behavior and only few segments of groups had real access to the mortuary arena (Girella 2016a).

After LM IB, the role of Knossos seems to have been quite important for many parts of the island, the Western Mesara included. This analysis has deliberately shifted away from attempts to distinguish between Minoan and Mycenaean funerary contexts in order to stress the complexities of cultural interactions, by means of the selection and incorporation of external ideas (D'Agata 2005). On the one hand, Knossos had a seminal role in the introduction and dissemination of a new Greek Mainland funerary vocabulary (Preston 2004); on the other hand, the picture presented by the Western Mesara indicates how social groups reacted at different levels from rejecting to adopting or incorporating the new funerary code into local traditions. Compared to the Neopalatial period, one can say that during the Monopalatial period there was a high level of competition among

social groups and that regional centers (Hagia Triada at the head) played an important role in creating a special network where centers of both primary and secondary importance had various levels of access to exchange network especially in relation to acquiring prestige goods.

After Knossos collapsed a reduction in the scale of political competition is to be expected. The diffusion of the chamber tomb coupled with the extensive use of larnakes inside the chamber expressed a gradual formalization of burial practices, where the investment in tomb architecture was dramatically reduced and status differences were constructed and affirmed by means of other devices. Elite groups may have benefited from the collapse of the Knossian hegemony, but it is also clear that the previous funerary vocabulary changed into a predominantly less homogeneous and more complex language. This complexity is no longer noticeable in patterns of distribution of wealth and ostentatious objects, but rather contextually constructed by means of selecting specific drinking shapes in the pottery assemblages (e.g., the rarity of the kylix and deep bowl, and the common use of the one-handled footed cup). In addition, internal distinctions are also emphasized through the deposition of seals and weapons, as well as the use of large pictorial scenes.

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