ARTICLE

6 Crete: Early Iron Age to Classical

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This review covers recent archaeological work on Early Iron Age to Classical Crete, focusing on research conducted and published in the 2010s. Proceeding from the west to the east part of the island, and encompassing material ranging from the 12th to the mid-fourth century BC, this study finds that, overall, the field is flourishing, despite the challenges created by the international financial crisis and the constraints posed by the global pandemic. In the last decade, the major archaeological projects which focus on Crete for the period under examination continued with their fieldwork and finds research, while new projects were also established. Additionally, as many as eight archaeological museums were opened, reopened, or are about to open. Nevertheless, final publication of large bodies of Cretan material from the period in question remain scarce, a condition which is more severe on the western half of the island. Notwithstanding its floruit, research on Early Iron Age to Classical Crete is often treated as relatively marginal, and – arguably – rather inconsequential to the grand narratives of Greek history, and art and archaeology. This paper traces the roots of this problem and shows that current work on the archaeology of Early Iron Age to Classical Crete has full potential for revolutionizing the largely Athenocentric paradigm which still pervades the study of ancient Greece.

Introduction

This review covers recent archaeological work on Early Iron Age (EIA) to Classical Crete, building upon previous reviews by Matthew Haysom published in *AR* 2012–2013 (Iron Age to Hellenistic Crete) and *AR* 2013–2014 (prehistoric to Hellenistic Crete) (Haysom 2012–2013; 2013–2014). The literature cited in this paper includes articles from the *Archaiologikon Deltion* (*ADelt*) from the past 15 years (including volumes covering 2006 to 2015), the *Archaiologiko Ergo Kritis* (*AEK*) (volumes 3 and 4), and the 10th, 11th, and 12th Cretological conferences, as well as a range of monographs and other publications from around 2010 onwards (excluding works previously covered by Haysom). Accordingly, this review focuses on the 2010s, but also includes select references to work published in the late 2000s and the early 2020s. Only a few of the discoveries and the literature cited below have so far made it into *Archaeology in Greece Online* (*AGOnline*; where appropriate references to ID numbers are given in the text that follows).

Notwithstanding the economic crisis and its grave impact on archaeology in Greece (Plantzos 2018), archaeology in Crete has flourished over the past decade. The hefty volumes of *AEK* 3 and 4 are indicative of the success of this recent enterprise, which dates from 2008. Indeed, *AEK* has emerged as the preferred journal for the publication of reports of current archaeological work in the region. Conversely, Cretan contributions to the *ADelt*, especially concerning the east of the island, are in sharp decline for unclear reasons. Only excavations of the Archaeological Service at Chania and American fieldwork projects at Kommos and in east Crete have received systematic annual reports in the *ADelt* in the last 15 years, which means that Azoria is the only systematic excavation from EIA to Classical Crete that one can follow uninterruptedly in the *ADelt*. The new and diversified state of the field leaves a lot to slip through the cracks, with important (and systematic) work potentially not being reported, being reported only in the mass media (and only rarely through press releases from the Ministry), or receiving only interpretative studies which appear long after the actual fieldwork and can be highly selective. A more consistent approach to the reporting of archaeological fieldwork would probably be more useful, and this issue deserves the attention of stakeholders of Cretan archaeology, perhaps in a future *AEK* meeting.

Reference works and current debates

Literature on EIA to Classical Crete has applied different names to the island's culture of this period, including Post-Minoan, Dorian, and Greek, but none of them is without conceptual problems and they

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have grown unpopular as a result. The entry for 'Ancient Crete' in *Oxford Bibliographies* provides an up-to-date literature review (Chaniotis and Kotsonas 2020), while reference works by Saro Wallace (2010) and Brice Erickson (2010a) have synthesized data and current interpretations on EIA to Classical Crete. These two works capitalized on monographs of the 2000s, which offered comprehensive studies of the settlements, sanctuaries and cemeteries of the island from the periods in question (Sporn 2002; Prent 2005; Sjögren 2006; Eaby 2007). Major studies of sub-regions of the island, especially the Messara (Lefèvre-Novaro 2014) and the Mirabello (Gaignerot-Driessen 2016), have also appeared in recent years. Site-specific studies have proliferated, as explained below, and a database for Cretan sites of the 10th to seventh centuries BC is available through the project *The Social Archaeology of Early Iron Age and Early Archaic Greece* (http://aristeia.ha.uth.gr/theproject.php). A steady flow of collective volumes presents new research and synthesizes earlier work on EIA to Archaic Crete (Rizza 2011; Niemeier, Pilz and Kaiser 2013; Gaignerot-Driessen and Driessen 2014), and one such volume problematizes the low archaeological visibility of the island's material culture in the Archaic and Classical periods (Pilz and Seelentag 2014). Other books cover specialized topics, such as terracotta plaques and figurines (Pilz 2011; Pautasso and Pilz 2015) or fortifications (Coutsinas 2013). Gagarin and Perlman (2016) provide an authoritative analysis of the Archaic and Classical inscriptions of Crete, which are also explored by the *Cretan Institutional Inscriptions* project (https://ilc4clarin.ilc.cnr.it/cretaninscriptions/en/). Oikonomaki (2010) studies the epichoric alphabets of Archaic and Classical Crete. The field is increasingly attracting historiographic studies that situate the exploration of ancient Crete in the context of broader political and disciplinary history (e.g. Whitley 2015b; Kotsonas 2016; 2019a). These studies help illuminate the complex pedigree of some of the current debates on the island's history and archaeology.

Notwithstanding this output, and the fieldwork and research reported below, the archaeology and history of Crete of the first millennium BC remains relatively marginal to the grand narratives of Greek history and archaeology of this period. This attitude has a long history, indicative of which is Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff (1893: 24–25) conceptualizing Crete as an isolated island occupied by semi-barbarous people, which was discovered by scholars in Athens only in the fourth century BC. Although current literature does not embrace such terminology, general works on Greek history and archaeology make little reference to EIA to Classical Crete, and, when they do, this is typically limited to Late Minoan (LM) IIIC Karphi and the EIA cemeteries of Knossos (an exception is Hall 2014: 190–99 on the Cretan Archaic Gap), while discussion of Greek religion often engages with evidence from the sanctuary of Syme Viannou. Conversely, neither the spectacular finds from the cemetery of Eleutherna nor the systematic fieldwork at the settlement of Azoria, which is probably the best excavated Archaic site anywhere in the Greek world, have been incorporated into the grand narratives of ancient Greece. Perhaps it is too early for this fieldwork to reach broader audiences and perhaps the lack of final publication has a limiting effect. It might also be because Crete is too peculiar for most archaeologists and historians of Greece to engage with and Greek archaeology of the period remains terribly Athenocentric and resists groundbreaking discoveries from alleged peripheries that call for major revisions in the traditional master narratives. Nevertheless, the archaeology of Crete receives greater attention in a recent discourse on the importance of context in Classical archaeology (Osborne 2015; Whitley 2017b; Haggis 2018), which is indicative of the ways in which fieldwork on the island can revolutionize the discipline.

The relative marginalization of the archaeology of Crete is partly due to the problematic concept of Cretan exceptionalism. This concept is centred on perceived unusual attributes of the culture of ancient Crete, which include the remarkably strong religious continuity from the Bronze Age, the limited evidence for pictorial art and the culture of the symposion, the lack of any peripteral temples, the rarity of sculpture and the scarcity of evidence for private inscriptions (e.g. Whitley 2015a; 2017a; 2021). The notion of Cretan exceptionalism has received considerable pushback in recent years. Studies on Cretan religion (Haysom 2011), the relevance of Homer to Crete (Kotsonas 2018b; 2019b), myth in Cretan art (Sporn 2013; Pilz 2014; Kotsonas 2019b) and Cretan epigraphic habits (Perlman 2014) have challenged the otherness of the island's culture, while acknowledging remarkable local traditions.

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The notion of Cretan exceptionalism has partly been shaped by the island's close contact with the Eastern Mediterranean in the EIA. Indeed, the study of Near Eastern imports to Crete during this period has become a topic of perennial interest. Recent work on this includes a comprehensive analysis of the island's record of Near Eastern imports dating to the EIA (Pappalardo 2012) and a study focused on Cypriot imports and imitations (Karageorghis *et al.* 2014). These catalogue-based projects make important contributions, while adhering to a line of inquiry that has been explored intensively since the 1990s. Contextual analyses of such imports can probably offer more original insights (e.g. Antoniadis 2017). The traditional emphasis on imports has offered implicit support to widespread assumptions on the passive role of Cretans in Mediterranean interaction during the EIA. These assumptions seem problematic to me (Kotsonas 2017), and they are called into question by the identification of Cretan vases beyond the Aegean, including Late Geometric–Protoarchaic and – much more numerous – Classical pieces in the Eastern Mediterranean (see respectively Kotsonas 2012, 156–57; Gilboa *et al.* 2017) and Protoarchaic pieces at Megara Hyblaia (de Barbarin 2020). More exceptional is the discovery of much earlier, Cretan Subminoan-Early Protogeometric pottery in two chamber tombs at Lindos, Rhodes, which show Cretan architectural features and have been attributed to Cretans (Zervaki 2019). These little known, but highly important, finds can generate a more balanced appreciation of the role of Cretans in Mediterranean interaction during the period in question.

Archaeologists and historians of Crete have been particularly concerned with the poor archaeological visibility of the sixth century BC, which has been variously conceptualized as a 'Dark Age', a 'period of silence' or the time of the 'Archaic gap' (Erickson 2010a: 1–22). The problem has a long history, which has been traced back to the work of Thomas Dunbabin in the late 1930s (Kotsonas 2020: 31–32), and has received considerable attention in the last two decades (e.g. Pilz and Seelentag 2014), during which our understanding of ceramic typology and chronology has improved considerably (Erickson 2010a; 2010b) and the systematic excavations at Azoria in east Crete have revealed a well-preserved Archaic settlement (Haggis 2014; 2015; Haggis *et al.* 2011a; Haggis *et al.* 2011b; Haggis and Fitzsimons 2020). However, much more groundwork is needed to generate a solid understanding of the material culture of sixth-, and partly fifth-, century BC Crete.

Presently, Classical archaeologists of Crete focus their attention on identifying the *andreion*, the important all-male political, social and economic institution (Whitley 2018). The first attempts to identify an excavated building as an *andreion* can be traced back to the work of Minos Kalokairinos at Knossos (Kotsonas 2016: 320), but over time, and especially during the last few decades, various other buildings in the central and the eastern part of the island have been identified tentatively as *andreia* (as the following review indicates), with most scholars remaining unconvinced. The frantic search for the *andreion* parallels the search for Minoan palaces by prehistorians of Crete. However, unlike the numerous Minoan palaces discovered to date, the Cretan *andreion* remains elusive. Inadequately described by ancient textual sources, and systematically sought after since the beginnings of Cretan archaeology, the *andreion* has become a holy grail for Classical archaeologists working on the island.

Fieldwork and publication

The discussion proceeds geographically from west to east and chronologically from the LM IIIC to the Classical period, but excludes material dated broadly to the fourth century BC (which may thus be Early Hellenistic).

Chania district (Map 6.1)

Archaeology in the Chania district is dominated by the work of the Greek Archaeological Service. Katerina Tzanakaki (2016) has produced a comprehensive thesis on the site of **Chania** (Kydonia) from the Geometric to the Classical period. In addition to a discussion of local geology, and a gazetteer of locations of domestic, cultic, industrial, and burial activity, the work offers a diachronic analysis of occupation at the site. Archaeological evidence from the period after the abandonment of the LM IIIC

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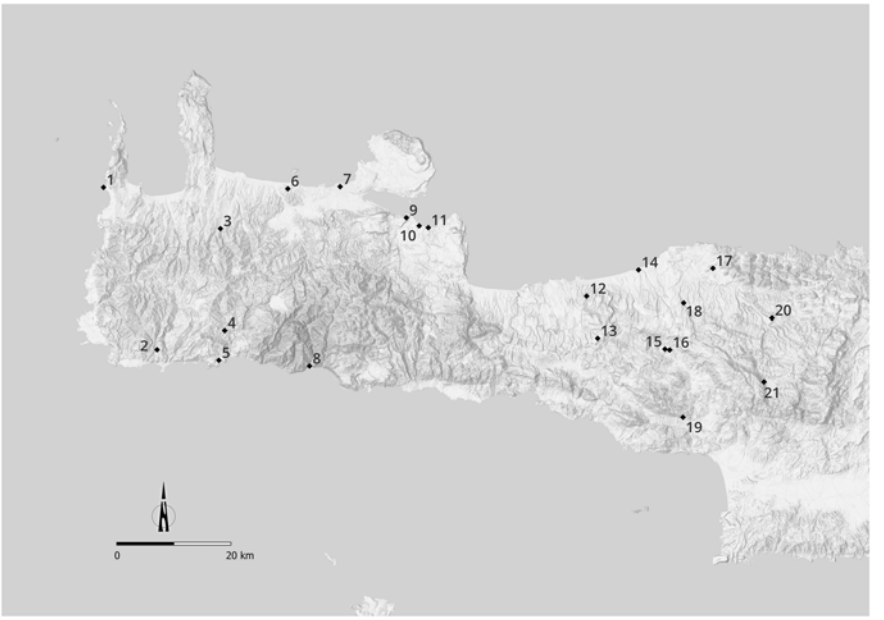

Map 6.1. Map showing sites in west and central-west Crete mentioned in the text: 1) Phalasarna; 2) Fournakia; 3) Kato Kefala; 4) Elyros; 5) Lissos; 6) Nerospilia; 7) Chania; 8) Tarrha; 9) Aptera; 10) Kalyves; 11) Kera; 12) Agia Eirini; 13) Onithe Gouledianon; 14) Stavromenos; 15) Thronos/Kephala; 16) Kalogeros; 17) Melidoni Cave; 18) Eleutherna; 19) Orne Kastellos; 20) Axos; 21) Idaean Cave. © BSA.

settlement on Kastelli hill is very poor. Protogeometric evidence is scarce and comes from only two locations in the periphery of the modern city: in the mid-eighth century, occupation resumed on top of the prehistoric ruins on Kastelli hill and another settlement nucleus emerged at a short distance to the southwest of the hill. Despite a destruction event in the early seventh century BC, the two nuclei persisted and have yielded fragments of stone architecture and sculpture dating from the Archaic period. References by Herodotus (3.44.1, 3.59.3–14) to settlement at the site by people from Zakynthos, to their expulsion by settlers from Samos in 524 BC and to the involvement of Aeginetans in the expulsion of the Samians in 519 BC have not been confirmed by the material record. The city grew considerably in the Classical period, and its main cemetery was located southeast of the settlement.

Tzanakaki's thesis builds upon an overview of the history of occupation at Chania produced by Maria Andreadaki-Vlazaki (2011a: esp. 121–27, 136 and 140–41) (**Fig. 6.1**). This allows for better contextualization of discoveries made at Chania in recent years, including within the LM IIIC settlement (**ID2832**, **ID2833**; Tsigkou 2008: 1159; 2010; Andreadaki-Vlazaki 2010 (**ID9408**, **ID9409**, **ID9410**, **ID9411**); 2011b (**ID9106**)), the Geometric to Classical settlement (Preve 2006; 2008; Andreadaki-Vlazaki 2010 (**ID9408**, **ID9409**, **ID9410**, **ID9411**); 2011b (**ID9106)**; 2022; Tsigkou 2015; for a room filled with imported transport amphorae of Classical date, see Tsigkou 2010: 1692; 2015: 82–83; Kataki and Tsingou 2018) and burials of LM IIIC (Protopapadaki 2015), Late Geometric II (Kataki and Tsigkou 2012: 741) and Classical date (Kataki 2009: 910; Kataki and Tsigkou 2011 (**ID9107**); 2012: 741; Preve 2012; 2015; Skordou 2012). The notable finds on the plot of 1 Katre Street, on the Kastelli hill, include a sanctuary of the late seventh and early sixth century BC and evidence for a major seismic event of the early sixth century BC (Andreadaki-Vlazaki 2022: 31–32).

The name *a-pa-ta-wa* is attested on a Linear B tablet from Knossos, but prehistoric (specifically LM II-IIIB) habitation in the area of **Aptera** is located north of the Classical city, on the hill of Palaiokastro (Papadopoulou 2018). The hilltop of Aptera has yielded evidence for occupation going back to *ca.* 700 BC, but individual burials located west and east of the hill date to *ca.* 1000 BC (Niniou-Kindeli and Tzanakaki 2018). Archaic and Classical occupation is represented by sporadic finds, a small temple

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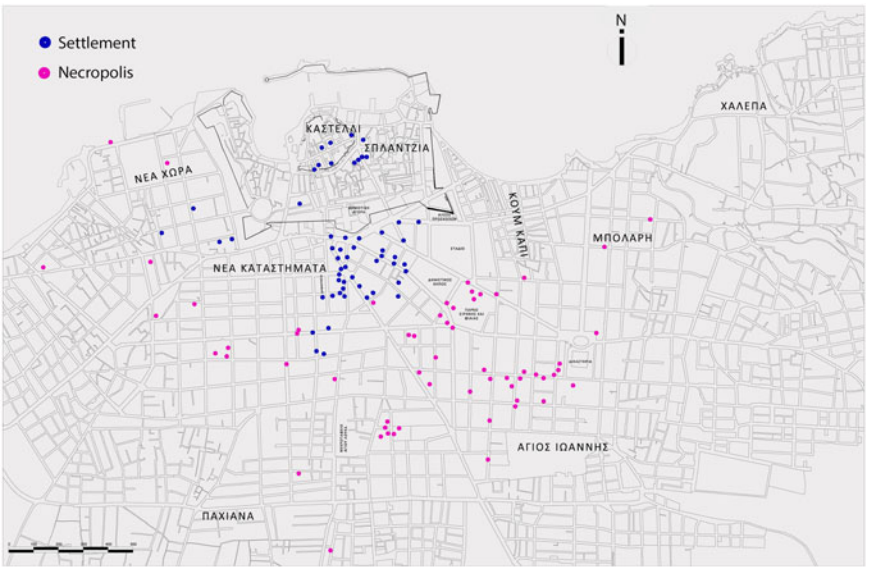

6.1. Plan of modern Chania showing the location of settlement and burial remains from the EIA to the Roman period (10th century BC to 4th century AD). The Kastelli hill overlooks the harbour area. © M. Andreadaki-Vlazaki.

with a double cella, which dates to the fifth century BC and overlies an earlier cult site, and evidence for the construction of the fortification wall before the mid-fourth century BC. Burial activity at the western cemetery commenced in the LM IIIC-late or the Subminoan period, but can be traced more clearly from the late eighth century BC, when pithos burials became common (Tzanakaki 2007; 2011a; Niniou-Kindeli and Tzanakaki 2018). Pithos burials persisted to *ca.* 400 BC, but at least one secondary cremation is documented, and rock-cut pits seem to have been introduced at the end of the sixth century BC. Part of the cemetery was levelled during the Late Archaic period, with old burials giving way to new ones. This development involved some ritual activity, which is represented by a deposit of the first half of the fifth century BC containing pottery and silver pins probably deriving from disturbed burials.

East of Aptera, a building of the seventh and sixth centuries BC was excavated at **Kalyves** (Tzanakaki 2006), while further east, at **Kera**, fieldwork revealed 104 pits of the 12th century BC (**Fig. 6.2**), which contained burned soil, animal bone, horn and shell, plant remains, ceramics, lumps of clay, and stone tools (Milidakis 2015; Papadopoulou 2018: 33; Milidakis and Papadopoulou 2020). Comparable finds are known from the district of Rethymnon, at Agia Eirini and Eleutherna (on which see below), as well as Chamalevri and Thronos/Kephala (Sybrita).

Other activity at the north coast and its vicinity includes: the discovery of a marble head from a large funerary monument at Phalasarna, dated *ca.* 370–350 BC (Fragkakis 2016–2017); the exploration of the cave sanctuary of **Nerospilia**, southwest of Chania, which hosted the cult of Eileithyia from the fourth century BC onwards (Liakopoulos 2020: 674–75); and the offering to the local Ephorate of a number of Attic white-ground and especially black-figure *lekythoi* of the second quarter of the fifth century BC from **Kato Kefala** (south of Kolymvari), a site that falls into the district of ancient Pergamos and is known from limited and scattered excavations of Classical graves (Kataki 2012; 2020).

The rest of the district of Chania from the EIA to Classical period is little known. Contributions from recent years include: the publication of a cluster of seven seventh/sixth-century BC pithos burials from **Tarrha** (Tzanakaki 2013); a study of the topography and the little known archaeological record of **Elyros**, which includes a few Classical burials (Kyriazopoulou 2011); the identification of a fifth- or early fourth-century BC building at the sanctuary of Asklepios at **Lissos** (Kanellopoulos 2020: 756); a cache of 58 well-preserved vases, and a few clay figurines and sherds of Late Geometric to Classical date, offered by a villager who claimed they came from **Fournakia**, northwest of Palaiochora (Tzanakaki 2011b).

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6.2. Kalyves Apokoronou, Kera pit 62. © Ministry of Culture and Sports/Ephorate of Antiquities of Chania.

Rethymnon district (Map 6.1)

Recent archaeological output in the region of Rethymnon includes richly illustrated accounts of finds from Eleutherna and the Idaean Cave.

Besides newspaper reports on discoveries from recent years (**ID271**, **ID1827**, **ID2005**, **ID2857**), the archaeology of **Eleutherna**, and especially of the cemetery of Orthi Petra, is showcased in a recent exhibition catalogue, a popularizing book, and a conference volume, which cover familiar ground but also present new material. A notable new find presented in the catalogue is a Late Archaic inscription from the eastern part of the city (Stampolidis 2018: 121 and 184, no. 67). The importance of this location emerged through the study of the notebooks of Federico Halbherr, which resulted in the discovery of an earlier Archaic inscription (Kotsonas 2018a). The popularizing book presents the collection of the newly established museum of Eleutherna (see below), including a fair amount of previously unknown finds (Stampolidis 2020a). The conference volume includes short studies on a range of finds from the cemetery of Orthi Petra (Stampolidis and Giannopoulou 2020).

More comprehensive work on the cemetery of Orthi Petra includes a monograph that publishes some 400 clay vessels from chamber tomb A1K1 that date from the ninth to early sixth centuries BC (Kotsonas 2008), and an unpublished PhD thesis that deals with over 150 pieces of gold, silver and electrum jewellery from the site (Mitaki 2019). Shorter studies review the archaeology of the cemetery (Stampolidis 2020b) and discuss the form and modern reconstruction of two seventh-century BC monuments (Stampolidis and Koutsogiannis 2013) and a range of pieces of Protoarchaic limestone sculpture (Stampolidis 2014). The archaeology of other locations at Eleutherna has also received considerable attention. The top of the acropolis (Pyrgi) yielded LM IIIC-PG pits – comparable to those found at Chamalevri, Thronos/Kephala (Sybrita), Agia Eirene (on which more below) and Kera (as noted above) – as well as a temple (an oikos with a porch), which was built in the Protoarchaic period and remained in use for many centuries (Kalpaxis *et al.* 2021). The finds from the temple include a Daedalic mould-made figurine and a bronze *mitra* (a helmet belly guard) with a Daedalic face (Spanou 2020; Kalpaxis *et al.* 2021: 164–65) (**Fig. 6.3**). Other studies discuss finds from the top of the Nisi hill, which extends immediately west of the acropolis of Eleutherna. These finds include numerous clay figurines of various types that date from throughout the EIA (Karamaliki 2020), as well as evidence for occupation and the making of ceramics during the Late Geometric and Protoarchaic periods (Tsatsaki 2013).

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6.3. Bronze mitra with Daedalic face. © Eleutherna, Sector II excavations.

Recent publications on the **Idaean Cave** include a popularizing well-illustrated book, which outlines the exploration of the site and its finds (Sakellarakis and Sapouna-Sakellaraki 2011), as well as a set of three volumes that summarize the results of specialist studies on a range of artefact classes (Sakellarakis and Sapouna-Sakellaraki 2013). The first of these three volumes covers the textual tradition on the Idaean Cave, the landscape of the Nida plain and the history of excavations in the cave. It also offers an outline of activity at the site from the Neolithic to Roman period and a study of ritual practices. The second volume discusses the clay finds (vessels, other equipment and figurines), the bronzes (vessels, other equipment, figurines, jewellery, weapons and other finds; on bronze figurines see also Lagogianni-Georgakarakou 2011), the gold and silver objects, the ivory and bone objects, and a range of other finds made in faience (on which see also Psaroudakis 2012–2013) (**Fig. 6.4**), glass, rock crystal, amber, and stone, as well as the inscriptions. The third volume includes photographs and drawings of numerous finds, some previously unknown to the scholarly community.

Axos has recently received renewed attention, which has shed light on the ancient topography (Tegou 2013; 2014). Locations of interest include the Subminoan to Hellenistic sanctuary of Aphrodite, the Archaic to Roman suburban sanctuary of Demeter stou Gerakaro, the '*andreion*' on the acropolis, the LM IIIB to Early Geometric and Archaic to Roman cemetery at Megalos Trafos/Teichio, and the EIA cemetery at Limnostratari.

The extra-urban sanctuary in the **Melidoni Cave** was probably connected to Axos for part of the EIA to Classical period. Recent studies have discussed a few figurines of Subminoan to Classical date (including fragments of life size terracotta statues of the first half of the sixth century BC), and they have shown that a female divinity was worshipped at the site in this period (Pateraki 2016–2017; Gavrilaki 2017: 217–26).

Thronos/Kephala (Sybrita) has yielded a clay pictorial krater that dates to the 10th century BC and depicts two male warriors dancing next to a lyre and perhaps more instruments, indicating the importance of dance in the Cretan socio-political system (D'Agata 2012). The village of **Kalogeros**, just east of Thronos/Kephala, is the findspot of some 600 figurines of Subminoan to Hellenistic date (Karamaliki 2019). South of Thronos and close to the south coast of Crete lies **Orne Kastellos**, a fortified acropolis inhabited in the earlier part of LM IIIC (Kanta 2014; Kanta *et al.* 2020).

Other fieldwork was conducted in the broad area surrounding the city of Rethymnon. New fieldwork at **Onithe Gouledianon** revisited the Archaic and later settlement and the general topography of the site

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6.4. Figurine of male god made of Egyptian blue. After Psaroudakis 2012–2013: 94–95 no. A2. © K. Psaroudakis. Photo by Y. Papadakis-Ploumidis.

(Psaroudakis 2015). A Classical cemetery was excavated at **Stavromenos**, east of Rethymon (Tzigounaki 2020: 115). The settlement of **Agia Eirini**, 3km southeast of Rethymnon, yielded LM IIIC remains underlying a Hellenistic settlement (Karamaliki 2015). These remains include traces of buildings as well as two pits cut into bedrock and filled with burned soil, cooking and table ware, and animal bone. The contents of the pits are ascribed to ritual meals and are comparable to finds made at nearby Chamalevri, and also at Thronos/Kephala (Sybrita), Eleutherna and Kera (on the last two sites, see above).

Notwithstanding the importance of these scholarly outputs, the western half of Crete suffers from the paucity of any major final publication of material from the period in question since 2008. This has perpetuated the imbalance of archaeological research between the west and east part of the island.

Heraklion district (Map 6.2)

A review of the archaeology of Knossos from the end of the Bronze Age through the EIA (Hatzaki and Kotsonas 2020) and the *Knossos Urban Landscape Project* (KULP) (**Fig. 6.5**) have shed new light on the site. KULP confirms that Knossos greatly reduced in size by the LM IIIC period. The potential extent of *ca.* 20ha, however, would make the site the largest in Postpalatial Crete (Cutler and Whitelaw 2019: 17–19). Knossos grew markedly in the EIA to reach 50–60ha in the eighth and seventh centuries BC (i.e. four times larger than previously assumed). This was a nucleated settlement surrounded by cemeteries, but involved no dispersed villages, which refutes the model of polis formation through synoecism at Knossos (Kotsonas 2019c; cf. Kotsonas *et al.* 2018). Although sixth-century BC Crete is poorly documented, especially in relation to Knossos (but see Paizi 2019), the KULP material includes pieces that clearly date to this period (**Fig. 6.6**). Additionally, the Early Classical city seems to match Geometric and Protoarchaic Knossos in size, and indicates stability over the sixth century BC, with notable growth during the Classical period (Trainor 2019: 4–5).

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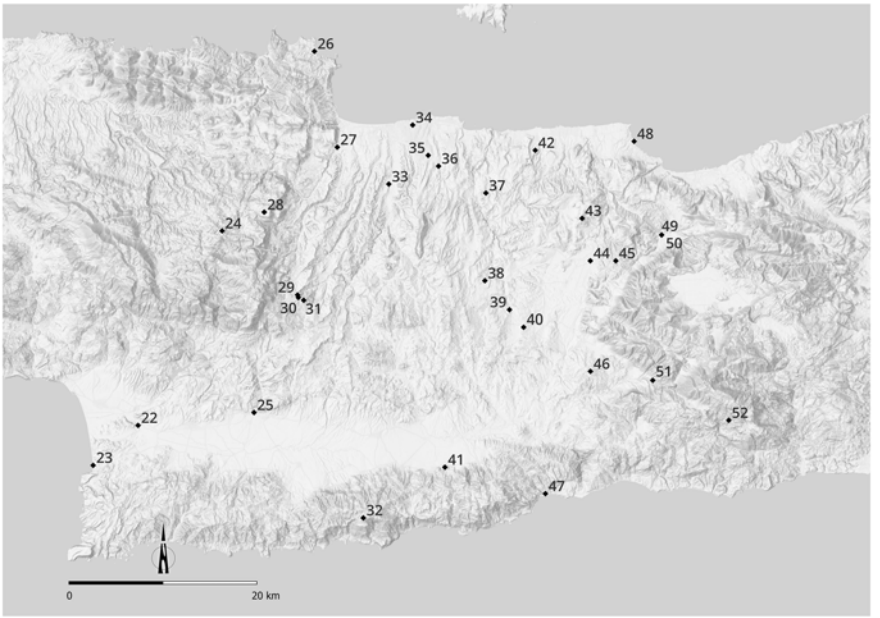
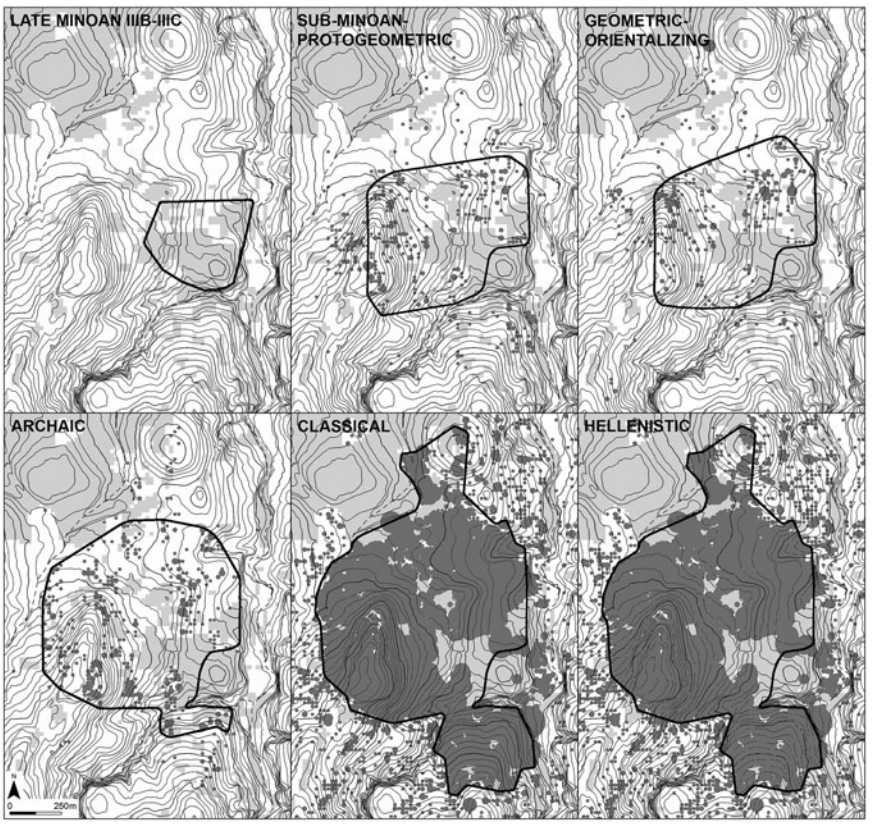


Map 6.2. Map showing sites in central Crete mentioned in the text: 22) Phaistos; 23) Kommos; 24) Kouroupitos Cave; 25) Gortyn; 26) Agia Pelagia; 27) Kavrochori; 28) Krousonas; 29) Prinias: Dodeka Apostoli; 30) Prinias: Siderospilia; 31) Prinias: Patela; 32) Kophinas; 33) Phoinikia; 34) Heraklion; 35) Knossos: Tekke; 36) Knossos; 37) Aitania; 38) Astritsi: Kephala; 39) Choumeri: Kephala; 40) Arkalochori; 41) Rotasi; 42) Kefala; 43) Smari; 44) Kastelli; 45) Lyktos; 46) Afrati; 47) Inatos; 48) Hersonissos; 49) Malia: Pezoula; 50) Agios Konstantinos; 51) Katofygi-Erganos; 52) Syme Viannou. © BSA.



6.5. Knossos: KULP survey plans showing the distribution of pottery in different phases, from the LM IIIB/IIIC to the Hellenistic period, as well as the outline of the settlement in these phases. Created by Todd Whitelaw. © BSA.

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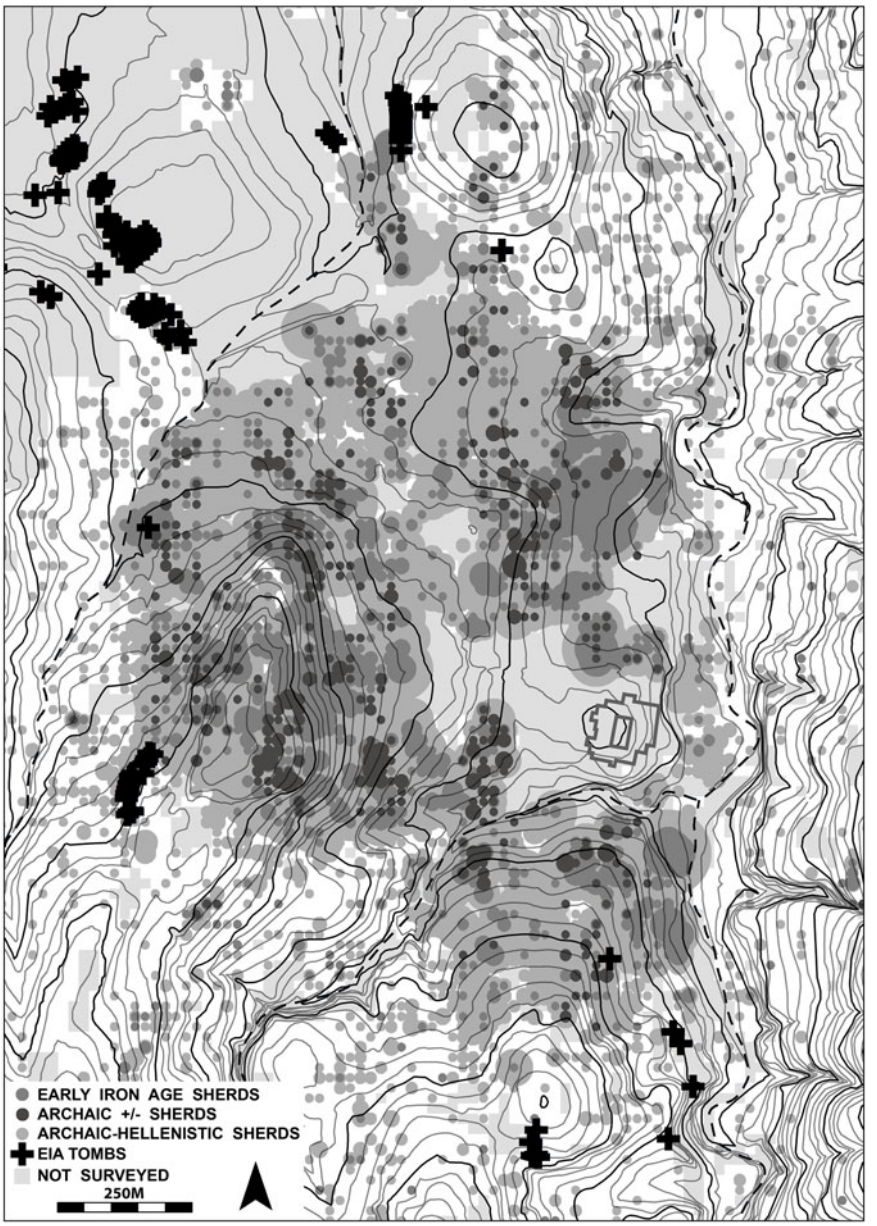

6.6. Knossos: KULP survey plan showing the distribution of EIA, Archaic, and Archaic-Hellenistic pottery, as well as the location of EIA tombs in the Knossos valley. Created by Todd Whitelaw. © BSA.

The work of the Archaeological Service at Knossos and Heraklion has produced further insights. The Anetaki plot at Knossos yielded two kilns of the LM IIIC period and two more of the Protogeometric period (Sythiakaki 2020: 28), as well as pits and other deposits with burned remains and EIA material (Kanta 2018: 263). A destroyed Archaic funerary monument was identified at Knossos Tekke (Mavraki-Balanou 2008a). Previously unpublished EIA finds from burials located north of Knossos appeared in a recent exhibition (Stampolidis, Lourentzatou and Fappas 2018: 288–303). Further north, in the southern suburbs of **Heraklion**, rescue work explored a rock-cut chamber tomb and a pit grave of the EIA (Spercheiou street) (Sythiakaki 2020: 32) and a larnax of the Protogeometric period (Kanta and Serpetsidaki 2015: 66). At Heraklion itself, two limestone pieces of seventh-century BC architectural sculpture from a door frame were found reused in a Venetian structure located north of the Archaeological

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Museum of Heraklion (Ariadnis street) (Sythiakaki 2020: 36–37; cf. Stampolidis, Lourentzatou and Fappas 2018: 307). The lintel illustrates a row of bovids, while the vertical jamb shows a goddess wearing a polos. The pieces are attributed to a sanctuary located on the acropolis of ancient Heraklion.

West of Knossos, an EIA chamber tomb from **Phoinikia** was published (Galanaki and Papadaki 2009), and two others were found at **Kavrochori** (**ID1817**; Kanta and Serpetsidaki 2015: 67). Further west, Late Archaic and Classical burials were identified among Hellenistic graves at **Agia Pelagia** (ancient Apollonia) (Kanta and Serpetsidaki 2015: 67; Kontopodi *et al.* 2020: 136).

East of Knossos, at **Aitania**, pottery from two EIA chamber tombs excavated in the 1950s and the 1990s was published (Galanaki and Papadaki 2019), while an Archaic to Hellenistic sanctuary was tentatively identified on the hilltop of **Kefala**, south of Gournes (Panagiotakis, Panagiotaki and Dipla 2011; Panagiotakis and Panagiotaki 2014–2015). This may have been a border area between Knossos and Lyktos. Further east, **Malia Pezoula**, a defensible but not inaccessible site that lies southwest of prehistoric Malia, commands a view of the north coast of Crete and dates from the 11th and 10th centuries BC (Mandalaki 2006). The site comprises a stand-alone building complex, which preserves evidence for two architectural phases. Because of its very small size (0.04ha), Malia Pezoula could be classified as a farmstead, in which case it would be the first of its kind in Crete to be fully excavated, and a rare find for the Aegean of the period as a whole. Around **Hersonissos**, finds from the period in question include Geometric material from north of the Amirandes Hotel (Mandalaki 2010: 1657; **ID8580**) and at Lyttos Beach Hotel (Kanta and Serpetsidaki 2015: 61), and Archaic and Classical material from Limenas Hersonissou (Mandalaki 2010: 1657; **ID8581**).

Fieldwork activity extended over different parts of the plain of Pediada. The recent publication of the Galatas survey, which covers diachronic occupation in the northwest part of the area, established that, from the EIA to the Classical period, habitation was restricted to **Astritsi Kephala** and **Choumeri Kephala** (Watrous *et al.* 2017). The settlement pattern of the Pediada changed markedly in the LM IIIC period, when the Minoan town of **Kastelli** was abandoned and other sites (re)-emerged, namely Smari and Lyktos. The fortified Prepalatial acropolis of **Smari** was re-inhabited *ca.* 1200 BC, when three megara were built on the hilltop; habitation spread beyond the old fortifications and involved a new rampart (Chatzi-Vallianou 2016). After a destructive episode in the LM IIIC or Subminoan period, only the hilltop was resettled and the three megara were re-inhabited, allegedly by a ruler and his kin, and remained in use until the late seventh century BC, when the site was abandoned. A temple dedicated to Athena, which yielded ample terracotta plaques, is also assigned to the late eighth and seventh centuries BC. The excavator, Chatzi-Vallianou, identifies Smari with Homer's Lyktos, and interprets the site in light of Homeric and other textual tradition for Lyktos (thus, the megara are thought to have been used both for Homeric type feasting and for the Lyktian *syssitia*, the common meals shared by citizens). She further suggests that the ancient toponym was relocated to the area of Classical to Roman Lyktos (on the hill of Xidas) after the abandonment of Smari. I have previously expressed scepticism over the identification of Smari with early Lyktos, the associated use of Homer and the actual date of the latest material from Smari, which seem to be as late as the fourth century BC (Kotsonas 2018b: 6–7; 2019a: 433–34).

Limited LM IIIC surface evidence from the top of the Xidas hill indicates that **Lyktos** was perhaps founded at this time (Kotsonas 2019a: 410 and 431–33). The excavations, which commenced in 2021, revealed Protogeometric material and thick deposits of Archaic and Classical date, which include ample pottery imported from Athens (**Fig. 6.7**), and considerably fewer pieces from Laconia and Corinth. The range of material found in these deposits may not represent ordinary settlement debris.

Two clusters of Archaic settlement remains were excavated at **Agios Konstantinos**, northeast of Lyktos and just west of Avdou (Mavraki-Balanou *et al.* 2011: 96–97; Kanta and Serpetsidaki 2015: 54). The settlement was destroyed by fire *ca.* 550 BC.

Finds from Lyktos, Smari, and other sites confirm that the Pediada was a major production area of relief pithoi. Numerous pieces of Archaic style have been found in Hellenistic settlement contexts around this area and elsewhere in Crete, thus raising questions on the survival of individual vessels over several centuries and the persistence of earlier styles into later periods (Galanaki, Papadaki and Christakis 2015:

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6.7. Attic black-figure and red-figure pottery of the sixth and fifth centuries BC from Lyktos, Sector A. © Lyktos Archaeological Project and Archaeological Society at Athens.

326–28; Galanaki *et al.* 2017a: 205–07; Galanaki, Papadaki and Christakis 2019; Ximeri 2021: 194–218). Particularly interesting is a Late Archaic to Early Classical pithos from **Arkalochori**, which bears pictorial decoration and two graffiti (Galanaki *et al.* 2017b) (**Fig. 6.8**).

The area west of the Pediada is dominated by work on **Prinias**. Indeed, the Italian team working at the site has produced probably the highest number of excavation reports and interpretative studies for any Cretan site in recent years. Their work is reported on an annual basis in the *Annuario della Scuola Archeologica di Atene e delle Missioni Italiane in Oriente* (*ASAtene*) (see, e.g. Pautasso *et al.* 2021), but there are also ample reports in the tenth, 11th, and 12th Cretological conferences, in *AEK* 4 and in Stampolidis and Giannopoulou (2020). This research output is summarized by Pautasso (2014) and Palermo (2018). Below, I comment on the most recent and important studies.

Recent fieldwork on the hill of **Prinias Patela** has targeted the settlement area south of Temple B, which has yielded late eighth- and seventh-century BC structures (Gigli Patanè 2018; Pautasso *et al.* 2021), and the building complex on the south-central part of the Patela hill, which was built in the mid-seventh century to host both communal and domestic functions (**Fig. 6.9**) and overlies possible ritual remains of the two previous centuries (Rizza and Pautasso 2015; Pautasso and Rizza 2015). Likewise, the area of Temple A was found to have attracted ritual activity from as early as the 12th century BC (Pautasso and Rizza 2018). The rich sculptural decoration of Temple A was re-examined in light of recent findings. Accordingly, the famous frieze of the riders is now reconstructed as a dado frieze on the façade of the temple. Also, the relief of a female figure on the lintel is reconsidered in light of the discovery of a new fragment, while the discovery of the squatting body of an animal corresponds to a wing fragment found in earlier excavations, and the two indicate that the temple was adorned with two sphinxes. The sculptural decoration of Prinias Temple A has previously been compared to Neo-Hittite reliefs and Egyptian monuments, but a recent study draws closer comparison with the EIA temple of ‘Ain Dārā; in North Syria (Yalçin 2020), a monument that was destroyed by airstrikes during the Turkish invasion of Syria in 2018. Another site of EIA cult activity at Prinias Patela is indicated by the discovery of terra-cotta figurines and sculptural finds in the area of the Hellenistic fortress (Biondi 2020).

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6.8. Late Archaic–Early Classical relief pithos from Arkalochori. © K. Galanaki. Photo by Y. Papadakis-Ploumidis.

Finds from the excavations of 1969–78 at the EIA necropolis of **Prinias Siderospilia** are reported in numerous papers in *AEK* 4, in Stampolidis and Giannopoulou (2020) and in the 12th Cretological conference. This literature covers the development of the cemetery, the human bones from inhumations, the pottery, the bronze vessels, the jewellery, and the evidence for contact between the site and the Aegean and Near East. In anticipation of the forthcoming final publication of the cemetery, I single out a diachronic analysis of human activity at Siderospilia and of the typology of the tombs (Rizza 2019) and the study of several huge, pedestalled kraters with figural decoration from the eighth century BC (Pautasso 2018). Two dozen pieces of EIA pottery from the site, including one of the kraters in question, were explored by means of chemical analysis, which shed light on local production and identified Attic imports (Pautasso *et al.* 2021: 30–52). A burial enclosure with an enchytrismos and several inurned cremations of the EIA was discovered at **Dodeka Apostoli**, 250m north of Prinias Siderospilia (Biondi 2011), while one or more

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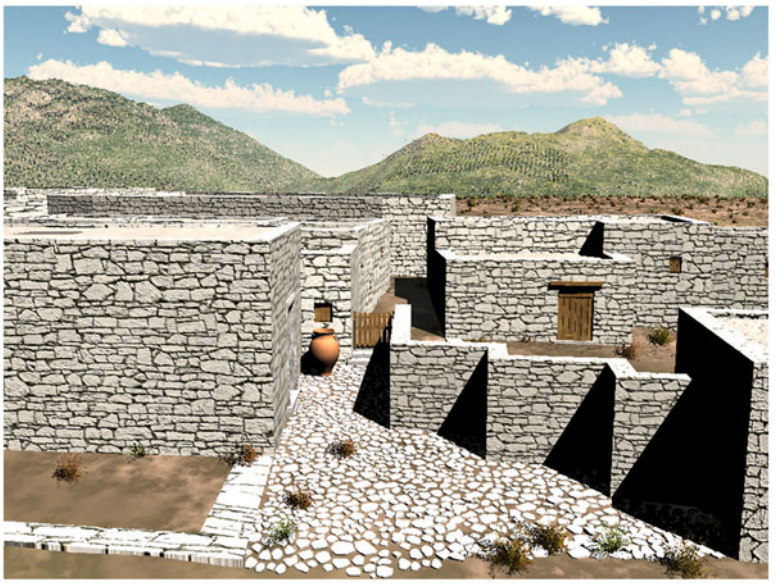

6.9. Prinias Patela: virtual reconstruction of Courtyard AZ and Building C from the south. 3D reconstruction by S. Rizza. © Archive of the Italian Archaeological Mission at Prinias.

burial areas and other locations of EIA activity were identified around Prinias by a recent surface survey (Biondi 2015a).

Varied archaeological activity was conducted in the area of **Krousonas**. Archaic houses overlying LM IIIC layers were excavated on the hill of Koupos-Kastellas, while a LM IIIC tholos tomb was found in the broader area (Kanta and Serpetsidaki 2015: 56). Lastly, a new prehistoric and Classical cave sanctuary identified in the **Kouroupitos Cave** yielded material from different periods, including LM IIIC-Protogeometric pottery and figurines (Darlas 2020: 162; Efstathiou, Kanta and Kontopodi 2020: 64–65, fig. 5).

The archaeology of the Messara and the rest of south-central Crete has been treated in a comprehensive synthesis encompassing the Late Bronze Age and the EIA (Lefèvre-Novaro 2014; also Santaniello 2015a). Italian fieldwork at Gortyn and Phaistos is reported on an annual basis in *ASAtene*, but here emphasis is placed on other publications on material from these sites.

A new monograph provides a comprehensive synthesis of the archaeology of **Gortyn** from the EIA to the Classical period (Anzalone 2015a; see also Santaniello 2013). Recent fieldwork has focused on the EIA settlement on the south slope of the Profitis Ilias hill (**ID1807**, **ID1915**; Allegro 2015; Allegro, Anzalone and Santaniello 2018; Allegro and Anzalone 2020). Traces of activity go back to the 12th century BC, and the site developed into a densely built settlement by the late ninth century BC. It was rebuilt following an earthquake, *ca.* 700 BC. The preserved layout (which comprises five buildings) dates to the seventh century BC, by which time the site covered an area of 15ha. The settlement was abandoned *ca.* 600 BC and its population moved to the plain as part of the urbanization of Gortyn. The clay figurines from Profitis Ilias date from the main period of the settlement (tenth to seventh centuries BC), but also persist into the Classical and Hellenistic periods, probably because a sanctuary was located in the vicinity (Anzalone 2015b). Recent studies also treat a potters' quarter located on the foothills of Profitis Ilias, from *ca.* 600 BC (Santaniello 2011), as well as an EIA to Hellenistic sanctuary on the Armi hill, east of Profitis Ilias, which yielded pottery and clay figurines (Anzalone 2013). Lastly, new excavations targeted the sanctuary of Apollo Pythios through small trials (Bonetto *et al.* 2020; Bonetto *et al.* 2021; see also Bonetto, Bertelli and Colla 2015). This work found that cult activity began in the Protogeometric period and dated the first monumental structure to around the mid-seventh century BC. This structure is reconstructed not as a roofed temple, but as an open-air enclosure with stone steps on which inscriptions were incised. The structure was remodelled during the fifth century BC.

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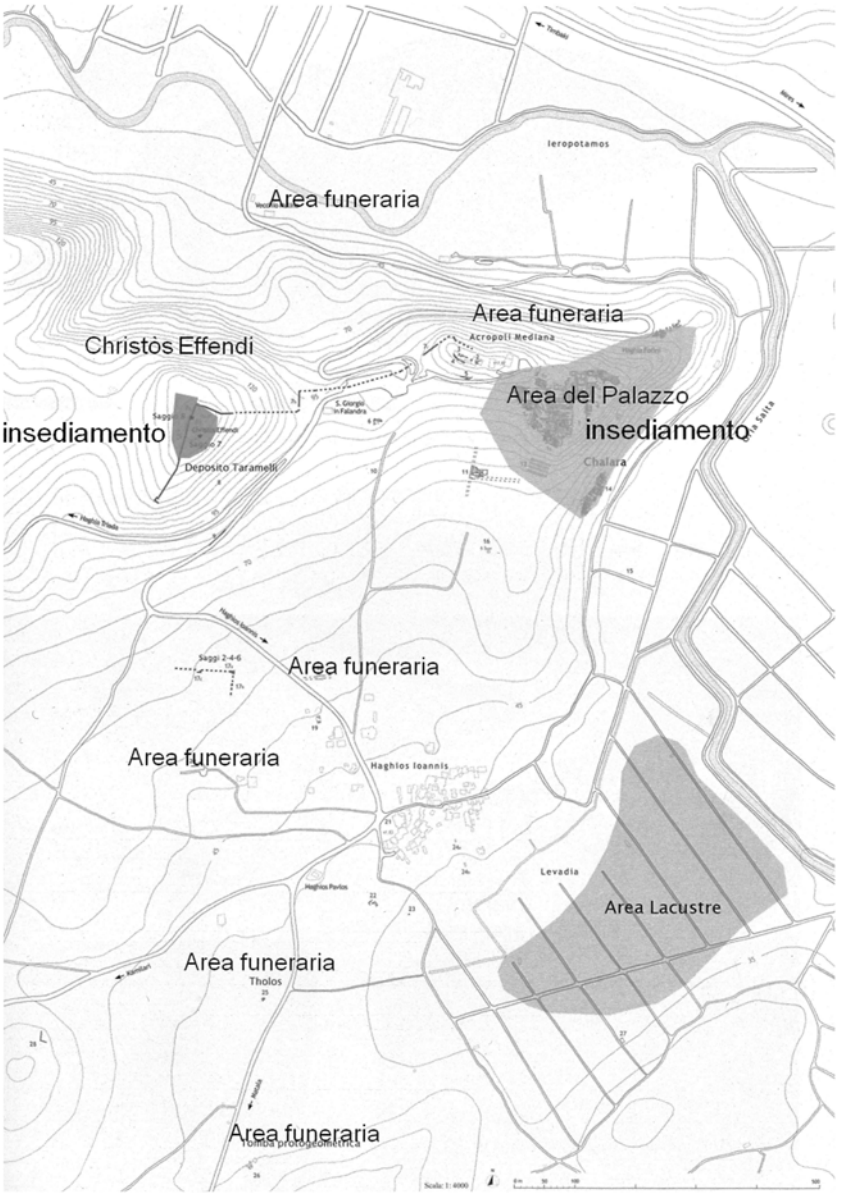

6.10. Plan of Phaistos marking areas of settlement and burial in the Protogeometric and Geometric periods. Settlement areas (insediamento) and burial areas (area funeraria) are marked around the site of the Minoan palace (area del palazzo). © Fausto Longo and Phaistos Project.

In addition to the annual reports in *ASAtene*, numerous papers, especially in *AEK* 3, have reported on excavation and surface survey at **Phaistos**. Novel insights into the period under review are summarized by Longo (2015a; 2015b). They include the identification of a scattered habitation pattern during the EIA (**Fig. 6.10**). A settlement on top of the hill of Christos Efendi with associated burials downhill (on this see also Greco and Betto 2015; Greco, Betto and Giglio 2020: 334–36) broadly coexisted with the 'Geometric Quarter' in the area of the Minoan palace (on which see Carinci and Militello 2020) and with EIA burials found northwest and southwest. The scant Protogeometric and Geometric remains from Haghia Photini are hard to interpret (Di Biase 2020: 379–80 and 383). Surface survey of the underlying plain yielded poor evidence for habitation from the EIA to the Classical period (Santaniello 2015b), but further settlement and burial areas were identified within a radius of a few kilometres. The Archaic and Classical periods are poorly attested, but a Classical sanctuary may have existed on Christos Efendi, as

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deduced from an inscription to Athena(?) rendered before firing on a ceramic piece (Greco and Betto 2015: fig. 5; Longo 2015a: 179 pl. VI,4). Archaic architectural materials also come from the area east of Christos Efendi. The fortification walls probably date from the fourth century BC or later, and earlier dates previously proposed cannot be confirmed. Likewise, the 'Temple of Rhea' is now dated after the Archaic period (Iannone 2020), although Carinci and Militello (2020: 305–06) seem less certain on the dating.

Recent publications have revisited EIA pottery from **Kommos**. This includes an analytical project on the Phoenician transport amphorae (Gilboa, Waiman-Barak and Jones 2015) and a new interpretation of a local seventh-century BC cup, which carries the most complex and multifigured scene on any Cretan ceramic vessel to date (Kotsonas 2019b).

Sporadic news comes from the southeastern part of the Heraklion district. After a demise throughout most of the LM II and III period, the Minoan peak sanctuary of **Kophinas** recovered in LM IIIC and attracted material throughout the EIA (Spiliotopoulou 2014: 170; 2015: 285–86). The publication of a selection of old finds from the Minoan to Roman cave sanctuary at **Inatos** (Tsoutsouros) includes an impressive range of EIA terracotta figurines and numerous faience figurines from *ca.* 600 BC, some of which illustrate scenes of childbirth or kourotrophic figures, suggesting that the divinity worshipped was Eileithyia (Kanta and Davaras 2011; Kanta, Davaras and Betancourt 2022; the publication of the Egyptian-type artefacts from this site has also just appeared: Hölbl 2022).

New studies summarize old and new evidence from **Rotasi** (ancient Rhytion), with emphasis on the discovery of five inurned cremations of the Geometric and Protoarchaic periods, which yielded ceramic and metal finds, as well as an early sixth-century BC inscribed gravestone (ΣΤΑΣΙΟΣ EMI) and two Archaic decorated stelai (Galanaki and Papadaki 2011; Galanaki *et al.* 2017). Two late seventh–sixth century burials excavated at **Afrati** Orthi Petra in 1975 were published recently (Biondi 2015b). The earlier burial was an inurned cremation, the later burial was in a clay sarcophagus, and both were found in a poorly explored area southeast of the ancient settlement. Additionally, **Katofygi-Erganos**, on the western foothills of the Lasithi mountains, yielded a Subminoan pithos burial (Mavraki-Balanou 2008b).

Lastly, several new publications present the archaeology of the sanctuary of **Syme Viannou**, which now boasts the longest publication series of any Greek archaeological project in the country. One new volume treats the roof tiles, which date from the Early Classical to the Roman period (Zarifis 2020) (**Fig. 6.11**). This is the first publication of a sizeable body of roof tiles from Crete and is therefore foundational to any future research on this understudied body of material. Another volume treats the clay anthropomorphic figurines, including figures in the round and in relief, and composite votives from the early second millennium BC to the fourth century BC (Lebessi 2021). This volume (in addition to Lebessi 2018–2019) demonstrates the leading role of Cretan workshops of terracotta figurines in the introduction of different iconographic types and their dissemination elsewhere in the Greek world. Additionally, two new studies present a list of unpublished metal finds from the sanctuary (Muhly and Muhly 2018: 546; Papasavvas 2019: 247) and report on the results of chemical analysis of bronze figurines from the site (Muhly and Muhly 2018: 548–50).

Lasithi district (Map 6.3)

Major final publications of material from east Crete of the period in question focus on LM IIIC sites and assemblages. Indeed, the site of **Karphi** recently received two monographs: one authoritative study on the pottery from the excavations of 1937–39 (Preston Day 2011), and one comprehensive analysis of results from the 2008 excavations (**ID777**; Wallace 2020). This output probably makes Karphi the best published site of EIA Crete. Following suit, the **Kavousi** publication series has expanded through the addition of a new volume on the LM IIIC hilltop village of **Vronda**. The volume discusses the architecture, pottery, figurines, stone tools and other objects, and plant remains (Gesell and Preston Day 2016). A publication of comparable scope focuses on the LM IIIC elite House A.2 at **Chalasmenos** (Eaby 2018). This first volume of the final publication of this site comes only a few years after the end of fieldwork in 2014. A preliminary study also examines a LM III kiln found at Chalasmenos (Rupp and Tsipopoulou 2015).

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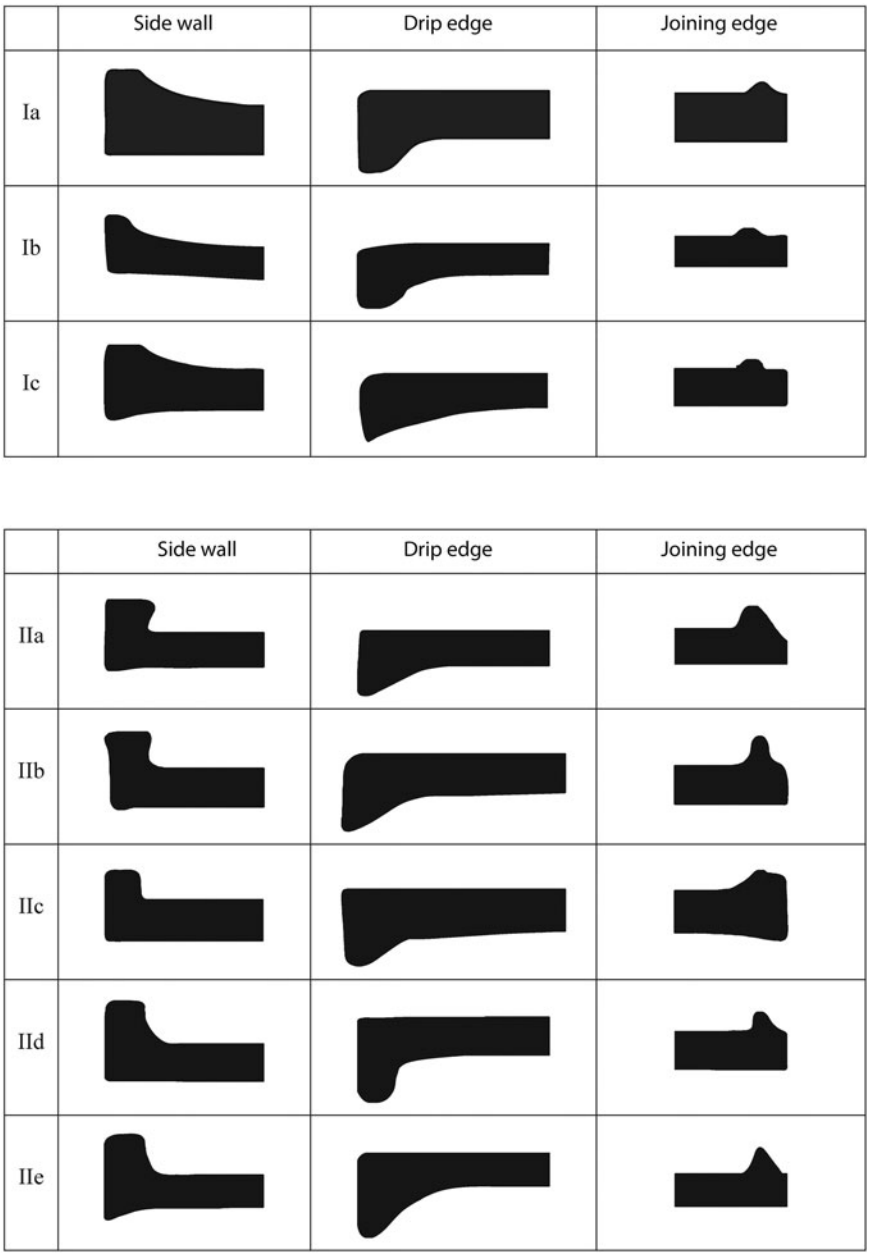

6.11. Typology of roof tiles from Syme Viannou, including type I (sixth to fifth century BC) and type II (fourth to third centuries BC). The columns show – respectively – different profiles of side wall, drip edge and joining edge (from Zarifis 2020: 76, fig. 12). © N. Zarifis.

The region of the Mirabello, from Anavlochos to Kavousi, which has been the focus of an impressive range of excavation and survey projects in the last decades, received a comprehensive study by Florence Gaignerot-Driessen, the excavator of Anavlochos (Gaignerot-Driessen 2016). The study is especially concerned with settlement development, urbanization and the rise of the polis, and includes a catalogue of sites dating from the Postpalatial to the Archaic period.

The ridge of **Anavlochos** controls the Mirabello valley, and thus the route that connects central and east Crete (**ID772**, **ID2769**, **ID4548**, **ID5433**, **ID6195**, **ID6890**, **ID8499**, **ID8615**; Zographaki 2005; 2006; Zographaki, Gaignerot-Driessen and Devolder 2012–2013; Gaignerot-Driessen *et al.* 2016; Gaignerot-Driessen 2019; 2020; 2022) (**Fig. 6.12**). The site was probably established in the transition to the LM

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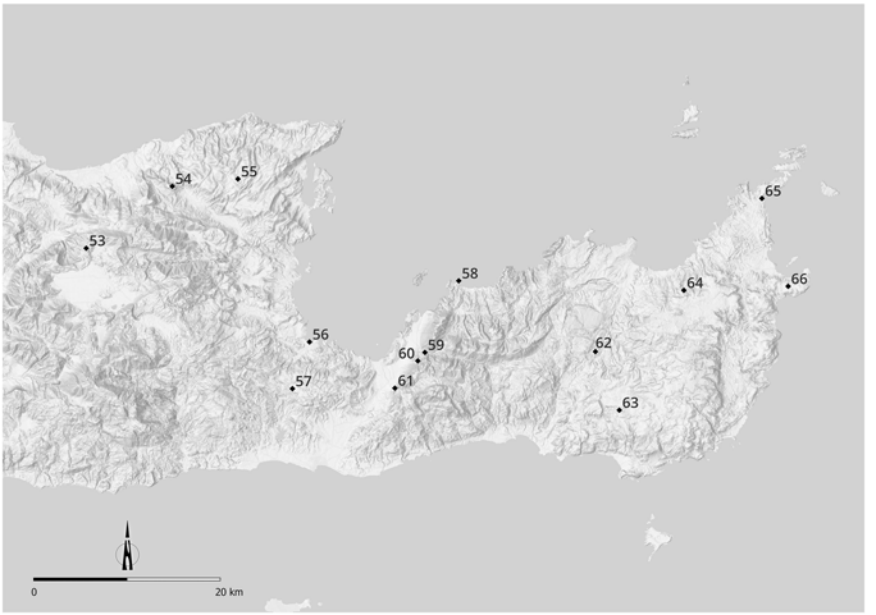

Map 6.3. Map showing sites in central-east and east Crete mentioned in the text: 53) Karphi; 54) Anavlochos; 55) Dreros; 56) Priniatikos Pyrgos; 57) Meseleroi; 58) Mochlos; 59) Azoria; 60) Kavousi Vronda; 61) Chalasmenos; 62) Praisos; 63) Droggari of Ziros; 64) Roussa Ekklesia: 65) Itanos; 66) Cavo Plako. © BSA.

IIIC period, when it was organized in hamlets. Anavlochos underwent a process of nucleation starting in the Protogeometric period. The houses were arranged in terraces and extended over 10ha by *ca.* 700 BC, shortly after which the settlement was abandoned. An extensive burial area with graves dating from the 12th to the seventh centuries BC lies at the north foot of the hill. The most impressive burial monument is a tumulus with a diameter of 15m, which was used in the eighth and seventh centuries BC. Lastly, three deposits of votive material, which date between the LM IIIC and the Classical period, were excavated at Kako Plai, half-way between the settlement and the cemetery (Gaignerot-Driessen 2022).

New fieldwork at **Dreros** was missed in previous overviews of EIA to Classical Crete but deserves considerable attention (**ID1371**, **ID1957**, **ID4081**, **ID8504**, **ID8505**; Zographaki and Farnoux 2010; 2011; 2012–2013; 2014a; 2014b; Farnoux, Kyriakidis and Zographaki 2012; Farnoux and Zographaki 2018). This fieldwork explored different periods of the ancient city, revealing its notable extent in the Hellenistic period. Concerning earlier periods, the fieldwork established that the structure excavated by Xanthoudidis on the west acropolis of the site was a temple (Temple A) (**Figs 6.13–6.14**), as the excavator had assumed, rather than an *andreion*, as others have proposed. Cult activity in the area must have been open-air in the early eighth century BC, at roughly the time the more famous Temple B was erected in the area of the agora. A ritual deposit, which was found below a paved area inside Temple A, was rich in kalathoi and wheel-made figurines dating from the early eighth century BC to the mid- and perhaps the late seventh century BC. Temple A was probably erected in the course of the seventh century BC. The temple remained in use until *ca.* 200 BC, when Dreros was destroyed by Lyktos. The new fieldwork also established that the architecture in the area of the agora is not Archaic, but Hellenistic in date, which does not exclude the earlier use of the same space for civic functions. Remarkably, an Archaic inscription, which mentions a tomb, was found in the area of the agora (Zographaki and Farnoux 2014a: 786, fig. 3).

The **Azoria** project, which completed its second five-year plan in 2013–17, is exploring a hilltop settlement of the poorly understood Archaic period (**ID765**, **ID1700**, **ID2856**, **ID4550**, **ID5576**) (**Fig. 6.15**). Annual reports in the *ADelt* (2006–2015) are too numerous to cite, but longer reports appear in *Hesperia* (Haggis *et al.* 2011a; 2011b) and there are also ample interpretative studies (e.g. Haggis 2014; 2015; Haggis and Fitzsimons 2020). This literature explains how the site was transformed from one of several

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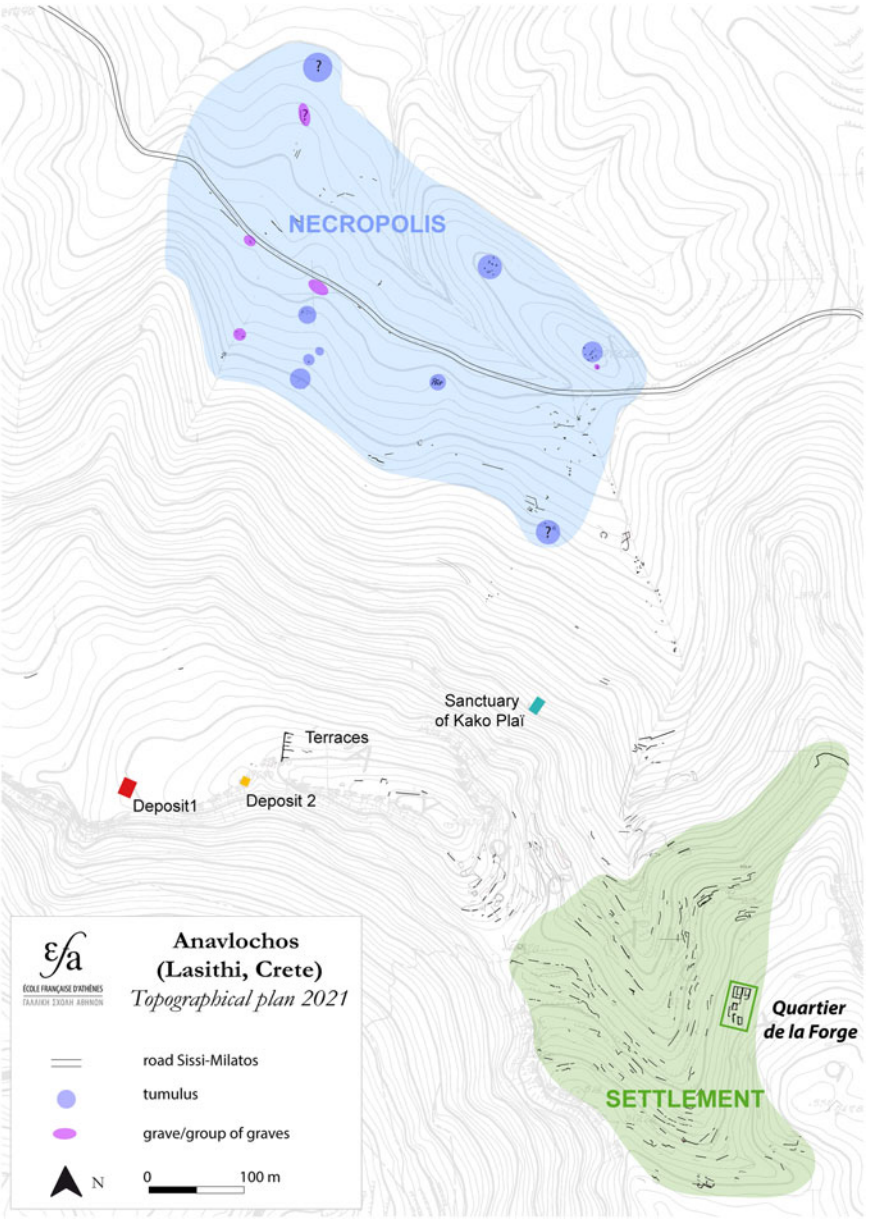

6.12. Plan of Anavlochos. © Anavlochos Project/L. Fadin, F. Gaignerot-Driessen, B. Guillaume.

small EIA villages around Kavousi to an urban settlement of 15ha in the late seventh century BC, when it was radically rebuilt with megalithic, roughly concentric terrace walls, which physically supported the hillsides and notionally tied the community together. The labour and resources invested in creating domestic and communal spaces increased drastically, and new kinds of communal architecture were introduced at this time. This is evidenced especially by the Monumental Civic Building, which is a single large hall with a permanent seating arrangement for assemblies and feasting, and the Communal Dining Building, which is internally differentiated into separate dining rooms serviced by kitchens and storage rooms. The houses around the hilltop are much larger than the Cretan houses of the EIA, and they show notable elaboration and clearly differentiated functional spaces. Judging by their form, their contents, and their relationship to public space, these houses must have been inhabited by elite groups, which maintained privileged access to the community's wealth and power. The systematic archaeobotanical and zooarchaeological research, which is conducted on a scale and intensity that is probably unmatched for Aegean

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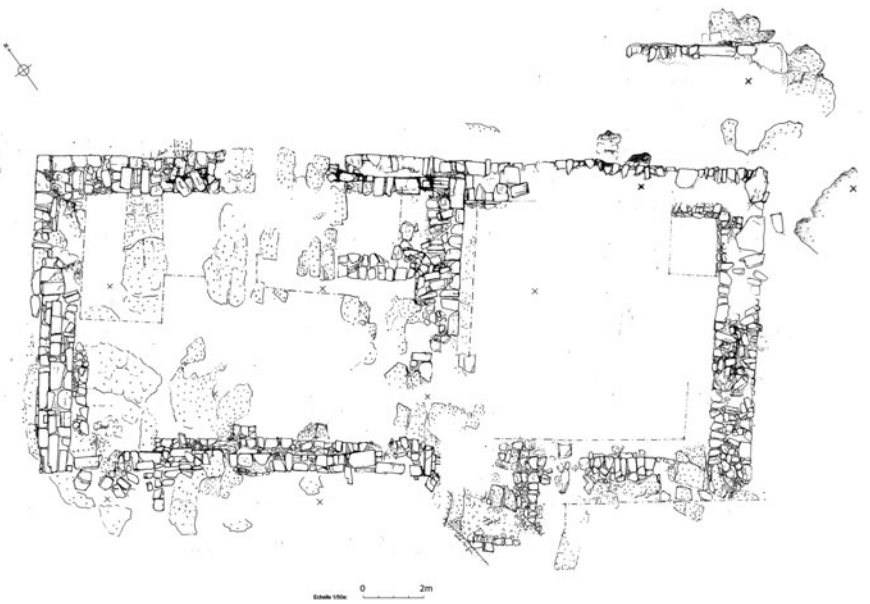
6.13. Dreros, the temple of the west acropolis. © A. Farnoux/EFA.



6.14. Dreros, plan of the temple of the west acropolis. © S. Zugmeyer/EFA.

sites of the historical period, have established that the urban centre of Azoria was mainly a consumption zone, with production and processing taking place in the outskirts of the city and also in outlying farmsteads. The end of fieldwork at Azoria leaves many questions open, concerning, for example, the ancient name and political status of this community (on epigraphic evidence from the site see West 2015), but has already revolutionized our understanding of Archaic Crete and has given the public a sizeable and well-preserved archaeological site, which offers unique insights into ancient society and economy.

Recent work has shed light on Protoarchaic to Classical activity on the island of **Mochlos**, which is better known for its Minoan antiquities. Apparently, the summit of the island, which was previously unoccupied, attracted building activity during the seventh century BC and also at around 400 BC (Vogeikoff-Brogan 2012). The seventh-century BC architecture, which includes a hearth and the pottery found with it, such as a Corinthian Transitional oinochoe (a rare find for Crete) (**Fig. 6.16**), suggest that people from a nearby community sporadically came to the summit of Mochlos to partake in drinking and feasting activities through which they could have promoted socio-political aspirations.

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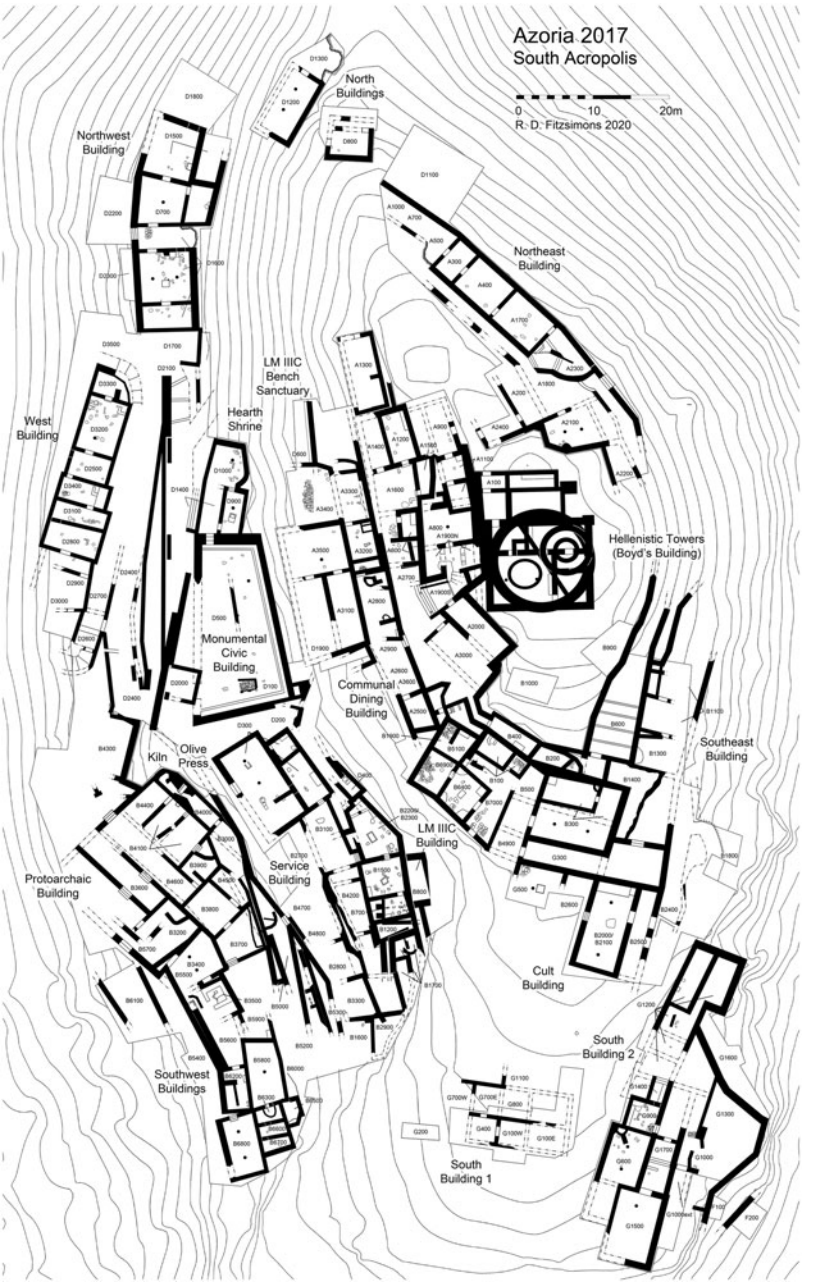

6.15. State plan of Azoria south acropolis (2017). © R.D. Fitzsimons/Azoria Project.

Praisos has received a synthesis of old and new archaeological data in light of broader questions concerning commensality and citizenship (Whitley 2014). The animal bone assemblage recovered from the dump of the old excavations at the so-called *andreion* has generated intriguing insights into feasting and the Cretan polis (Whitley 2018; Whitley and Madgwick 2018).

New work on the north necropolis of **Itanos** has shown that the necropolis was established in the seventh – or perhaps the eighth – century BC. It was arranged in terraces and had a large enclosure; the early burials were in pits and were largely destroyed by later tombs (**ID2822**, **ID5575**; Tsingarida and Viviers 2019) (**Fig. 6.17**). Some 100m north of the necropolis, a cluster of cremation burials from *ca.* 700 BC yielded, among other finds, a few spaghetti-ware aryballoi (which are otherwise rare on Crete) and a pyxis with a battle scene (Sofianou and Saliaka 2011). The seventh-century enclosure was transformed into a new

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6.16. Corinthian oinochoe from Mochlos (P 1613). © Mochlos Excavations. Photo by C. Papanikolopoulos.

architectural complex of 300m^2 in the early sixth century BC, with different rooms dedicated to feasting and storage and involving copious imported drinking vessels. The building was destroyed *ca.* 500 BC, but was reoccupied in the fifth century only to be abandoned in the mid-fourth, around which time burial activity resumed at the site. Surface survey in the territory of Itanos identified only a few Geometric to Classical sites (D'Agata *et al.* 2018), the most notable being a small sanctuary of Demeter at Vamies, which yielded the remains of a rectangular building and ample pottery and figurines from the seventh (and perhaps the eighth) century BC to the late Hellenistic period (Siard and Duplouy 2014).

Following his major study of Crete in the Archaic and Classical periods (Erickson 2010a), Brice Erickson has produced several site-specific publications. These concern a large deposit of the Early Classical period from **Priniatikos Pyrgos** (Istron), the contents of which indicate public feasting (Erickson 2010c), as well as Protoarchaic to Hellenistic finds (mostly pottery and figurines) from the old excavation at the spring sanctuary of **Roussa Ekklesia** (Erickson 2009; 2010b) (**Fig. 6.18**). It appears that the latter site hosted the cult of a goddess responsible for natural fertility and human growth, as well as a male rite of passage.

Other archaeological news from the Lasithi district is limited, but includes the following: the identification of LM IIIC occupation on the **Cavo Plako** promontory near Palaikastro (Sofianou and Thanos 2015); the clandestine excavation of a small tholos tomb of the Subminoan-Protogeometric period at

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6.17. Itanos necropolis: plan of the excavation (2015) of the southern sector (Archaic funerary complex and Hellenistic necropolis). © Archaeological Mission of Itanos/CReA-Patrimoine-Université libre de Bruxelles.

6.18. Terracotta plaques from Roussa Ekklesia, seventh and sixth centuries BC. © B. Erickson.

Droggari of Ziros (Sofianou 2010; **ID8574**); the excavation and prompt publication of the pithos burial of a 'male spinner' from **Meseleroi**, which dates to the late eighth or early seventh century BC (Apostolakou 2007a; Vogeikoff-Brogan and Kirkpatrick Smith 2009–2010); the offering to the Archaeological Museum of Agios Nikolaos of clay and bronze vessels and a few other objects of EIA and perhaps other date from Meseleroi (Apostolakou 2007b).

Museums

The last decade has been a fascinating period for Cretan museums, irrespective of the economic crisis that has swept across Greece. The reopening of the Archaeological Museum of Heraklion is undeniably the most prominent development. However, the archaeological museum of Sitia has also reopened and that of Agios Nikolaos is being refurbished. New museums opened at Chania, Eleutherna and Gazi

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(Archaeological Collection of Malevizi), and others will be opening very soon at Rethymnon and the Messara.

The **Archaeological Museum of Heraklion** has a fabulous display of material dating from the historical period (Rethemiotakis 2020; cf. Haysom 2013–2014: 85–86). On the upper floor of the museum are rooms dedicated to the island's settlements, sanctuaries and cemeteries, broadly separating material of the EIA and the Archaic period from the material of the Classical and later periods. The ground floor has a room dedicated to sculpture of the Daedalic, Archaic, and Classical styles. Daedalic art also featured in the exhibition *Daedalus: In the Footsteps of the Legendary Craftsman*, which focused on Minoan material (Mandalaki 2021).

The remarkable collection of the **Archaeological Museum of Sitia** (on which see Haysom 2013–2014: 86) showcases, among other things, material from the newly discovered cremations at Itanos and a range of Archaic vessels with relief decoration originating from ritual deposits from the area of modern Sitia. The display at the **Archaeological Museum of Agios Nikolaos** is designed to include a section that covers east Crete from the 10th century BC to the fourth century AD, including settlement development (with emphasis on Kavousi Kastro and Azoria), sanctuaries (at Anavlochos, Sitia, Azoria, Dreros) and burials (from Sitia and Ierapetra) in the region. The treatment of the east Cretan city states (Latos, Olous, Dreros, Istron, and – to a lesser extent – Hierapytna, Praisos, and Itanos) covers the economy, everyday life and religion, and focuses on Hellenistic and later finds (Zografaki and Zervaki 2020: 243–46).

The concept and structure of the display at the new **Archaeological Museum of Chania** are discussed in Papadopoulou and Tzanakaki (2013; 2015). Concerning the period discussed in this review, the display covers the following: the stories for the foundation of west Cretan cities in the EIA and the legendary figures who held key roles in these stories; the development of major settlements and city states; the archaeology of Kydonia, Aptera, and other west Cretan cities; economy and trade (including the import and imitation of Attic vases and the circulation of coins); households; sanctuaries and cult; death and burial.

An **Archaeological Museum** and an associated park in **Eleutherna** was inaugurated in 2016 (Stampolidis 2018: 156–63; 2020a). The museum showcases spectacular finds from over three decades of excavations of the University of Crete at the site. Particular attention is given to the finds from the EIA cemetery of Orthi Petra, which are wide-ranging in form and material, and include copious imports from different parts of the Eastern Mediterranean. The branding of the display under the label 'Homer in Crete' is unnecessary, since Eleutherna was apparently unknown to Homer and the Homeric tradition. The relevance of Homer to ancient Crete can best be approached in the light of current interpretations of the formation of the epics and the archaeological record (Kotsonas 2018b; 2019b).

The **Archaeological Collection of Malevizi** opened at Gazi in 2011 and includes finds from the prehistoric and Classical periods (Kanta and Serpetsidaki 2015: 54–55). Most of the objects on display come from the former Metaxas collection, but 30 objects are from the area of Gazi.

The scope of the new **Museum at Rethymnon** ranges from deep prehistory to the foundation of the Greek state in 1830; indeed, this is celebrated as the first fully diachronic museum on Crete (Gavrilaki *et al.* 2015). Concerning the period discussed in this review, the display covers the settlement pattern that emerged at the end of the Bronze Age, and the transition from refuge settlements to cities, including foundation myths, writing, and the introduction of coinage.

The chronological scope of the **Archaeological Museum of Messara** extends from the prehistoric to the Byzantine period (Sythiakaki 2020: 22–23).

Conclusion

In the past decade, archaeological research in Crete of the EIA to Classical period has flourished in many respects, except for final publications of large bodies of material, which remain uncommon. Excavations continued at the sites of Chania, Eleutherna, Prinias, Gortyn, Phaistos, Azoria and Itanos, and new fieldwork commenced at Anavlochos, Dreros, and most recently Lyktos. Active surface surveys remain limited

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in comparison to previous decades, but the urban surveys at Knossos and Phaistos are generating important new insights into diachronic occupation at these two major sites. Additionally, as many as eight archaeological museums have recently been opened, reopened, or are about to open. This floruit of Cretan archaeology comes despite the challenges created by the international financial crisis and its harsh impact on Greece, and, more recently, the constraints posed by the global pandemic (including the decline in construction and thus in rescue excavations).

While archaeological research in Crete is thriving, it is often treated as relatively marginal, and – arguably – rather inconsequential to the bigger narratives of Greek history, art, and archaeology. Revising the current paradigm of the study of ancient Greece into one that is more accommodating to regional trajectories is probably the greatest challenge for the archaeology of Greece in the 21st century; the thriving research in Crete can lead the way, as evidenced especially by the emphasis it receives in the recent discourse on the importance of context for Classical archaeology (Osborne 2015; Whitley 2017b; Haggis 2018).

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