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Socializing Architecture:  
(Monumental) Architecture and Social Interaction in Minoan Society

With a Main Focus on the Minoan Palaces in the Neopalatial Period  
(1700-1450 BC)

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## Short Abstract

Every society designs specific types of built spaces suitable for structuring a complex web of social relationships and interactions.\* Permanently interacting, space and society have a strong reciprocal relationship. Scholars in a number of related scientific fields such as anthropology, sociology, and behavioral sciences, have come to recognize the importance of the built environment to the social lives of people. Because of their highly compartmentalized nature, buildings have the power to structure movement, encounters, and social interaction between different users. Architecture sets the stage for certain activities to happen at the expense of others. In the process of place-making, the investment in a useful design and elaboration of the built environment throughout the stages of the Pre-, Proto-, and Neopalatial periods on Crete were major tools that aided the emerging and finally well established Minoan elites in making sense of their world. This dissertation adopts an integrative approach to the Minoan built space to investigate the ways in which the Minoan elites employed (monumental) architecture and performance as a means of advancing their socio-political power during the Pre-, Proto-, and Neopalatial periods. In order to do so it synthesizes most of the ongoing discussions in past and recent publications on Minoan architecture and society in an all-compassing diachronic perspective - from the Prepalatial Tholos and House tombs to the Proto- and Neopalatial Minoan Palaces - and highlights 'how' and 'why' these monumental building structures played profound roles as active media in the structuring of Minoan communities.

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\* This book is the edited version of my PhD dissertation (2012) *Socializing Architecture: (Monumental) Architecture and Social Interaction in Minoan Society*, written under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Panagiotopoulos at the University of Heidelberg.

## Preface

This dissertation is the result of the input and inspiration of many people that have crossed my path in the past three years. First I would like to thank *the Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften* and the *WIN-Kolleg* for their interest in my project the past three years. Without their funding and support this project would not have been possible. Many thanks to Prof. Dr. Sebastian Schmidt-Hofner, Dr. John Dillon, Dr. Camille Lecompte, and Dr. Claus Ambos for sharing their comments and critiques on so many topics of this study. All of you were prepared to read the entire draft of this dissertation more than once, which speaks for the fact that we were a close working interdisciplinary research group and became in the end also very good friends. Special thanks goes to Prof. Dr. Schmidt-Hofner, speaker of the WIN-project *Raumordnung: Norm und Recht in historischen Kulturen Europas und Asiens* who motivated and believed in me during the whole process. You were apart from a colleague a great friend to have around and I thank you for your patience and willingness to read numerous drafts of my articles and lectures I had to prepare in the past years.

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## Table of Contents

<b>SOCIALIZING ARCHITECTURE:</b> .....	<b>1</b>
SHORT ABSTRACT .....	2
PREFACE .....	3
LIST OF FIGURES .....	7
<b>PART 1</b> .....	<b>10</b>
ABSTRACT .....	11
CHAPTER 1.1.    MINOAN PALACES AND MINOAN SOCIETY .....	12
1.1.1. <i>The Dichotomy between Traditional and Recent Scholarship</i> .....	12
1.1.2. <i>More than one way to Study a Minoan Palace: Past and Recent Approaches</i> .....	26
1.1.3. <i>Conclusion</i> .....	39
CHAPTER 1.2.    PROBLEM DEFINITION, RESEARCH DESIGN, AND STRUCTURAL OVERVIEW .....	40
1.2.1. <i>Problem Definition and Research Design</i> .....	40
1.2.2. <i>Structural Overview</i> .....	42
<b>PART 2</b> .....	<b>44</b>
ABSTRACT .....	45
CHAPTER 2.1.    THE FORMULATION OF A METHODOLOGY TO THE STUDY OF THE BUILT SPACE .....	46
2.1.1. <i>Architecture and Power: Setting the Terms</i> .....	46
2.1.2. <i>“Why” Architecture? A Sociological Perspective On Buildings and Boundaries</i> .....	49
2.1.3. <i>Spatial Analysis: Is Access Analysis the Good Way to Go?</i> .....	59
2.1.4. <i>Buildings and Meaning – From Ordinary Spaces to Meaningful Places</i> .....	65
2.1.5. <i>Performative Theory</i> .....	68
2.1.6. <i>Conclusions</i> .....	75
<b>PART 3</b> .....	<b>76</b>
ABSTRACT .....	77
CHAPTER 3.1.    THE CONCEPTUALIZATION OF THE MINOAN BUILT-ENVIRONMENT IN THE PREPALATIAL PERIOD: THE FUNERARY LANDSCAPE AND SOCIAL COMPLEXITY. ....	78
3.1.1. <i>Introduction</i> .....	78
3.1.2 <i>The Minoan Tholos Tombs: An Architectural Survey</i> .....	84
3.1.2.1.    Past and Recent Discussions .....	84
3.1.2.2.    Settlement versus Burial Site .....	85
3.1.2.3.    Diachronical Changes in Terms of Layout and Design .....	88
3.1.2.4.    EM II – EM III – MMI: Is it all about the Communal? .....	92
3.1.2.5.    Tholos Tombs: Built Space, Performance and the Establishment of Social Complexity .....	95
3.1.3. <i>The Case of the House Tombs</i> .....	105
3.1.3.1.    Diversity and Similarity with the Tholos Tombs .....	105
3.1.3.2.    A Case Study of the Mochlos Cemetery .....	108
3.1.3.3.    A Case Study of Myrtos-Pyrgos .....	118
3.1.3.4.    House Tombs: Built space, Performance and the Establishment of Social Complexity .....	119
3.1.4. <i>The Funerary Landscape and Monumental Tombs as a Locale for Social Display</i> .....	120
CHAPTER 3.2.    THE URBAN LANDSCAPE IN THE PRE-, PROTO-, AND NEOPALATIAL PERIOD: A PROCESS OF GRADUAL TRANSFORMATION. ....	123
3.2.1. <i>Introduction</i> .....	123
3.2.2. <i>Social Complexity and Urbanism in the Proto-and Neopalatial period</i> .....	124
3.2.2.1.    Streets – Walkways – Open Air Spaces .....	126
3.2.3. <i>The Prepalatial period: A Time of Gradual Transformation and Formation</i> .....	130
3.2.4. <i>Shifting Worlds: From Funeral to Urban - Minoan Urbanism in Retrospective</i> .....	134
<b>PART 4</b> .....	<b>139</b>
ABSTRACT .....	140

CHAPTER 4.1	DECONSTRUCTING THE MINOAN PALACES: A LABYRINTH VERSUS A CLEAR	
CONCEPTUAL DESIGN.....		141
4.1.1.	<i>The West Court (fig. 17, 18, 19)</i> .....	141
4.1.2.	<i>The Kouloures (fig. 17, 18, 19)</i> .....	145
4.1.3.	<i>Theatral Areas (fig. 17, 19)</i> .....	145
4.1.4.	<i>The Central Court</i> .....	147
4.1.5.	<i>Orientation</i> .....	148
4.1.6.	<i>The Magazines (fig. 17, 18, 19, 20)</i> .....	158
4.1.7.	<i>The Reception Halls and Residential Quarters (fig. 17, 18, 19, 20)</i> .....	161
CHAPTER 4.2.	AN ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS OF THE NEOPALATIAL PALACES: A QUALITATIVE	
DISCUSSION OF THEIR SPATIAL CONFIGURATION AND CIRCULATION PATTERN.....		172
4.2.1	<i>Spaces (Places) for Occasions in Context – Mapping Movement and Social Interaction</i> .....	172
4.2.2.	<i>The Palace of Knossos: Internal Venues for Occasions and Description of the Palace</i> .....	176
4.2.2.1.	Chronology of the Site and some Issues on the Dating of the Frescoes.....	176
4.2.2.2.	The Domestic or Residential Quarter and the Upper Hall in the East Wing.....	180
4.2.2.3.	The West Wing: The Throne Room Complex and Tripartite Shrine.....	183
4.2.2.4.	Courts of the Palace of Knossos.....	190
4.2.2.5.	The Knossian Entrance- system.....	192
4.2.3.	<i>Malia: Internal Venues for Occasions and Description of the Palace (fig. 26)</i> .....	198
4.2.3.1.	Chronology of the Site.....	198
4.2.3.2.	The Minoan Hall or Residential Quarter in the West Wing.....	199
4.2.3.3.	The Pillar Crypt Complex in the West Wing.....	200
4.2.3.4.	Sanctuary Complex at the South Entrance.....	201
4.2.3.5.	The Loggia.....	202
4.2.3.6.	The Hypostyle Hall at Malia, Complex XXVIII and the North Wing.....	202
4.2.3.7.	The Hall and Other Units in the East Wing at Malia.....	205
4.2.3.8.	Courts of the Palace.....	206
4.2.3.9.	The Malian Entrance-System.....	209
4.2.4.	<i>Phaistos: Internal Venues for Occasions and Description of the Palace (fig.27)</i> .....	212
4.2.4.1.	Chronology of the Site.....	213
4.2.4.2.	The North Minoan Hall System or “Residential Quarter”.....	217
4.2.4.3.	The Minoan Hall System in the East Wing.....	218
4.2.4.4.	The Propylaeum and the West wing.....	219
4.2.4.5.	Courts at Phaistos.....	222
4.2.4.6.	Entrance System at Phaistos.....	225
4.2.5.	<i>Zakros: Internal Venues for Occasions and Description of the Palace (fig.28)</i> .....	225
4.2.5.1	Chronology of the Site.....	228
4.2.5.2.	The Royal Living Quarters and Cistern in the East wing.....	229
4.2.5.3	The Hall of the Ceremonies and the Banquet Hall in the West Wing.....	231
4.2.5.4.	The Hypostyle Hall at the North Wing.....	234
4.2.5.5.	Activities in the South Wing.....	235
4.2.5.6.	Entrance-system at Zakros.....	236
4.2.6	<i>Access Maps and Patterns of Movement and Circulation at the Minoan Palaces</i> .....	237
4.2.7.	<i>The Minoan Palaces: An Alternative to the Traditional Inside-Outside Dialectic Model</i> .....	267
<b>PART 5.....</b>		<b>276</b>
ABSTRACT.....		277
CHAPTER 5.1.	PERFORMANCES AND (MINOAN) PALATIAL CONTEXTS.....	278
5.1.1.	<i>On the Functionality of Monumental Frescoes and Processions</i> .....	278
5.1.1.1.	Crete.....	278
5.1.1.2.	The Greek Mainland.....	284
5.1.1.3.	Conclusions.....	287
5.1.2.	<i>Miniature Frescoes: Performative Events: Dancing and Social Occasions</i> .....	288
5.1.3.	<i>Conclusions</i> .....	294
CHAPTER 5.2.	THE MINOAN PALACES AS PERFORMATIVE SPACES: BRIDGING BETWEEN INDIVIDUAL AND	
COLLECTIVE IDENTITY - A CASE STUDY OF THE PALACE OF KNOSSOS.....		298
5.2.1.	<i>Introduction</i> .....	298
5.2.2.	<i>Knossos Through the Lens of Phenomenology and Performative Theory</i> .....	303
5.2.2.1.	The Outer West Court at Knossos.....	304

5.2.2.2.	The Monumental Western Façade.....	312
5.2.2.3.	The Central Court: The Heart of the Minoan Center.....	314
5.2.3.	<i>Knossos and The Minoan Palaces: Architectural and Ideological Narratives</i> .....	326
<b>PART 6</b>	.....	<b>338</b>
ABSTRACT	.....	339
CHAPTER 6.1.	SYNTHESIS, MAIN FINDINGS AND RELEVANCE OF RESEARCH.....	340
6.1.1.	<i>Synthesis and Main Findings</i> .....	340
6.1.2.	<i>Sociological and Anthropological Relevance and Future Possibilities</i> .....	346
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES</b>	.....	<b>347</b>

## List of Figures

### Part 3

- Figure 1 Distribution of Tholos Tombs and Cemeteries in the Mesara Region (EM-MM).
- Figure 2 Settlement Location Relative to Tombs (Based on data from Branigan 1998, table 2).
- Figure 3 Settlement Location Relative to Tombs (Based on data from Branigan 1998, table 2).
- Figure 4 The Diachronic Evolution at Lebena Yerokambos.
- Figure 5 The Diachronic Evolution at Agia Kyriaki.
- Figure 6 The Situation of Altars Inside and Outside the Burial at Apesokari I.
- Figure 7 The Cemetery at Koumasa with the Large Paved Area at the East.
- Figure 8 Examples of Blocked Axis of Tomb Doorways at (Top to Bottom) Platanos B, Apesokari I, and Kamilari A (after Branigan 1998, fig. 1.5.).
- Figure 9 Diachronic Chart of The Evolution at Some Tholos Tombs/Cemeteries
- Figure 10 Topographical Map of Mochlos and Stone Plan of Tomb IV/V/VI, after Soles 1992, fig. 20 and plan 3 modified).
- Figure 11 and 12 Top: Detailed Presentation of Tomb IV/V/VI; Right: Paved Avenue of Approach throughout the Cemetery to Tomb IV/V/VI.
- Figure 13 Possible Procession Routes Throughout the Cemetery at Mochlos, after Vavouranakis 2007, 107, fig. 5.14.
- Figure 14 Aerial Photo of Myrtos-Pyrgos, after Cadogan 1977-78, fig. 3.
- Figure 15 The House Tomb at Myrtos-Pyrgos, after Cadogan 1977-78, fig.5 (modified).
- Figure 16 Paved Walkway at Myrtos-Pyrgos.

### Part 4

- Figure 17 Plan of the Palace of Knossos.
- Figure 18 Plan of the Palace of Malia.
- Figure 19 Plan of the Palace of Phaistos.
- Figure 20 Plan of the Palace of Zakros.
- Figure 21 The Concept of the Square based on Preziosi 1983.
- Figure 22 Knossos with North Entrance in Line with the Juktas Sanctuary.
- Figure 23 View to Juktas from Central Court at Knossos; South Porch Entrance in right Corner.
- Figure 24 Geospatial Relationships between the most prominent Natural Features on Crete and the biggest Minoan Palaces (Doxtator 2009, 11, fig.9).
- Figure 25 General Plan of Neopalatial Knossos.
- Figure 26 General Plan of Neopalatial Malia.
- Figure 27 General Plan of Phaistos.
- Figure 28 General Plan of Neopalatial Zakros.

- Figure 29 General Circulation map of the Palace of Knossos with all Entrances considered.
- Figure 30 Circulation map of the Palace of Knossos starting at the West Entrance.
- Figure 31 Circulation map of the Palace of Knossos starting at the North Entrance.
- Figure 32 Map of Knossos: The Concept of Centrality explained.
- Figure 33 General Circulation map of the Palace of Phaistos with all Entrances considered.
- Figure 34 Circulation map of the Palace of Phaistos from the West Entrance Corridor.
- Figure 35 Map of Phaistos: The Concept of Centrality explained.
- Figure 36 Circulation map of the Palace of Malia with all Entrances considered.
- Figure 37 Map of Malia: The Concept of Centrality explained.
- Figure 38 General Circulation map of the Palace of Zakros with all Entrances considered.
- Figure 39 Circulation map of the Palace of Zakros from the North Entrance.
- Figure 40 Circulation map of the Palace of Zakros from the South Entrance.
- Figure 41 Map of Zakros: The Concept of Centrality explained.
- Figure 42 Map and Circulation Pattern of Tylissos C.

## Part 5

- Figure 43 Plan of Knossos.
- Figure 44 The Procession Fresco, after Siebermorgan 2001, 78.
- Figure 45 Detail of the Procession Fresco. Elevation Marked in Blue.
- Figure 46 The Procession Fresco at Pylos. TOP: Reconstruction by Lang 1969; DOWN: Reconstruction by McCullum 1987.
- Figure 47 The Sacred Grove and Dance Fresco, after Graham 1987, fig. 7.
- Figure 48 The Grandstand Fresco, after Evans 1930, plate XVI.
- Figure 49 The West Facade at Knossos as seen from the West Court.
- Figure 50 Detail of the West Facade at Knossos. Mark the Large Ashlar Blocks separated by the Horizontal Bands.
- Figure 51 Plan of Knossos. Theatral Area in Blue; Walkways in pink.
- Figure 52 the Royal Road of Knossos (Author's picture).
- Figure 53 The Theatral Area of Knossos (Author's picture).
- Figure 54 Sketch of the Theatral Area, after Evans 1928, 579.
- Figure 55 Plan of Knossos with western entrance marked in red. A) Bull Fresco, B) Procession Fresco, C) Priest-King Fresco.
- Figure 56 Reconstruction of the West Entrance, after Evans 1928, 675.
- Figure 57 Detail of Procession Fresco, after Siebermorgan 2001.
- Figure 58 West Entrance at Knossos: Guardrooms in front, West Facade on the right.
- Figure 59 Priest-King, after Evans (1928), plate XIV.
- Figure 60 Reconstructions of the Priest-King, after Siebermorgan, 69.
- Figure 61 Plan of Knossos. Orientation North Entrance to Juktas marked by Green Line.



- Figure 62 The North Entrance Passage, After Evans 1935, fig. 3.
- Figure 63 Palace of Knossos.
- Figure 64 Knossos: West Side Central Court with Tripartite Shrine, after Siebermorgan 2001, 62.

# Part 1

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## General Project Outline

## Abstract

This part provides a general introduction to the major theme of this dissertation: the Minoan Palaces. Following the overview of past and recent approaches to the Minoan Palaces, the need to establish and present an integrative approach by means of which archaeologists can analyze the relationship between the built environment and human behaviour is further highlighted. Finally, the specific aims of this study are presented as well as the research designs and a structural overview in which the topics on which this dissertation is based are succinctly introduced.

## Chapter 1.1. Minoan Palaces and Minoan Society

### 1.1.1. The Dichotomy between Traditional and Recent Scholarship

At the outset of this introductory paragraph, it should be underlined that from the moment of their discovery onwards the Minoan Palaces – at least those of the “well known” Proto-palatial and Neopalatial periods (1900 BC to 1450 BC) - were perceived as the major seats and physical embodiments of sovereign power.<sup>1</sup> The paradigm that connects the Minoan Palaces to the existence of a central authority is the result of a top-down approach to the archaeological data and finds its origin in the influential theories of Arthur Evans.<sup>2</sup> Strongly concentrating on the creation of typological and chronological classification, studies have emphasized a formal approach of analysis in order to suit a worldwide comparative scheme and, finally, these studies have concentrated strongly on the aesthetic of monuments that were of interest to a contemporary audience. This typological-aesthetic approach, appearing from the mid-eighteenth century onwards, has also provided the basis for the first scholars who studied Minoan architecture, primarily dealing with functionalist approaches towards buildings and focusing on establishing typologies of ground plans and different types of decoration and objects.<sup>3</sup> Palatial and non-palatial architecture, among the most important starting points for the scrutiny of political and social organization, were studied by this typological-aesthetic approach,

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<sup>1</sup> Childe 1950; Renfrew 1972, 367-369; Warren 1985, 94; Cherry 1986, 19-45; Manning 1994; Barrett 1998, 254-257; Warren 2002; Betancourt 2002.

<sup>2</sup> Evans 1921, 26.

<sup>3</sup> McEnroe 1982; Shaw 1973a; Schoep 2004, 243–244; There is a wide range of literature about specific architectural features, see for example Driessen 1982; Driessen 1989-1990; Marinatos and Hägg 1986; Palyvou 1987; Donald Preziosi (1983) has applied a modular approach to Minoan architecture with significant results; The round table held at Sheffield “Urbanism in the Aegean Bronze Age”, edited by Branigan (2001a), comprises numerous articles in which scholars attempt to find new approaches to infer socio-political structure from the distribution of artefacts and architecture within the Minoan built-environment; Hitchcock (1999; 2000) applied contextual analysis to the Minoan built space; Palyvou (2002; 2004) approached Minoan architecture from the perspective of accessibility and circulation, an approach upon which has been further elaborated by Letesson (2005; 2008; 2009) who looked for the architectural genotype in terms of circulation within Neopalatial architecture by the application of space-syntax theory.

which was translated in a rigid classification of these forms into categories like the Minoan Palace, the Minoan villa, and smaller houses.<sup>4</sup>

Previous research has interpreted the archaeological data from a top down perspective: it defined a palatial style architecture and from the presence-absence of elements in the other buildings<sup>5</sup>, it deduced a hierarchical society in which there was at the top a central authority, possibly a “Priest-King”, who organized all aspects of society at the intra-site and regional level.<sup>6</sup> However, one question remains: “Do we have any direct evidence pleading for the existence of Minoan kingship, apart from our general common sense?” If we look at the historical evidence and contextualize Minoan society within the framework of other contemporaneous societies in the eastern Mediterranean, it would be strange to assume that among these societies Late Bronze Age Minoan Crete was the only example that was not organized in a more or less pyramidal structure. Evans’ model of a Priest-King was born out of the desire to enhance Crete to the status of a culture competing with the great civilizations of the Eastern Mediterranean. As a consequence, Evans adopted the vision of the Palace as the residence of a ruler. Given the lack of independent religious buildings, the religious sector of society has been defined as interwoven with the political and thus all layers of Minoan society were housed under one single authority living inside the Palaces: a resident Minoan Priest-King, which is a construct unique within the entire Eastern Mediterranean.

Evans’ model still has several followers today, such as Betancourt, who concluded in his review of the administrative data of Minoan Crete that “The evidence indicates that Cretan Palaces had strong direction and the most likely situation requires a central political leader, which we would call King. No other system can adequately explain the scale of the evidence for social and economic advancement over a period of several centuries within a peaceful landscape”.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Graham 1962; 1987; McEnroe 1982, 3-19; Hägg 1997.

<sup>5</sup> Driessen 1989-1990, 3-23.

<sup>6</sup> Evans 1935, 960; MacGillivray 2001, 204.

<sup>7</sup> Betancourt (2002, 211) quoted in Marinatos 2010, 13-14. For other scholars that concur with Evans’ model see Day and Relaki (2002) with references.

What material evidence corroborates the thesis that all spheres were centralized under the reign of one single ruler? Or otherwise formulated: which types of material culture reflect the rule on Crete of a Minoan King controlling the political, religious, and social sections of Minoan society? Arthur Evans also struggled with this question and in his quest to prove the hypothesis of Minoan kingship he tried to capture every possible glimpse of royal ideology in both iconography and palatial architecture. It should be noted that Evans' reconstructions are sometimes very subjective and therefore, to this date, it is not always certain whether or not his reconstructions constitute an archaeological reality. What Evans found at Knossos was a palatial type of architecture with several rooms with a religious character, comprising shrines, lustral basins, etc., all combined with ritual iconography such as double-axe symbols and horns of consecration on the walls. For Evans, the fresco of 'the Grandstand' with its tripartite shrine showed strong resemblances with the inner western façade of the Knossian Palace and led to the identification of the central court building as a Palace-Temple.<sup>8</sup> According to Evans, the rich religiously colored archaeological evidence led to only one conclusion: in Minoan society there was a strong alliance between politics and religion and both domains were supposedly centralized at the Palaces.<sup>9</sup> Obsessed by the Knossian-centric model Evans portrayed Knossos as the residence of a Priest-King, in this role installed in the Throne Room complex with his disciples in the anteroom and on the benches next to the throne. To quote Evans: "The whole of the excavations at Knossos has emphasized the fact that the "House of Minos" was a sanctuary quite as much as a Palace. It was in fact a home of a succession of Priest-Kings."<sup>10</sup> Although Evans' idea of the central court buildings was strongly influenced by the ideology his time, one cannot deny that there are some iconographical resources speaking in support of some form of royal authority. The major iconographical candidate corroborating the existence of a Priest-King ruling Minoan society is the so-called "Prince with the feather crown", executed in three-dimensional plaster relief. This fresco is still today the subject of controversy. Evans reconstructed together with Gilliéron a male striding figure with naked torso, carrying a feathered

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<sup>8</sup> MacGillivray 2001, 192 and 207.

<sup>9</sup> Schoep 2010, 221-222.

<sup>10</sup> Evans 1935, 960.

crown with lilies, which he named the Priest-King.<sup>11</sup> Evans wrote the following about the fresco: “We have here surely [...] a Priest-King after the order of Minos. In other words we here recognize Minos himself in one of his mortal incarnations”<sup>12</sup>. It was Evans’ belief that the place where the fragments were found was once a corridor that was connected to the Corridor of the Procession. In this corridor, the Priest-King was striding in direction of the central court, a situation comparable with the processing figures depicted on the walls of the Corridor of the Procession.<sup>13</sup>

Over time, Coulomb and Niemeier have criticized the reconstruction made by Evans and Gilliéron.<sup>14</sup> After close examination of the evidence Coulomb argued that the feathered crowned head and the rest of the body could not belong to the same person and suggested that the Priest King was probably a boxer.<sup>15</sup> Niemeier retakes the analysis by Coulomb and agrees with the separation of the head from the body, however, he turned down the reconstruction of a boxer,<sup>16</sup> arguing that the separate fragments of the relief must belong to more than one individual, particularly since the crown was of a type normally worn by female figures.<sup>17</sup> Niemeier defined the figure as a Minoan god with long hair, which is standing still and holding a staff and probably was part of a larger pictorial scene, the feathered crown most likely belonging to a sphinx or priestess.<sup>18</sup>

Despite all the controversy on the matter, Shaw believes Evans’ original interpretation was largely right and that the fresco fragments depict a ‘Young Prince’ or future Priest-King.<sup>19</sup> However, it must have been said that Shaw doesn’t discuss the difficulties regarding the reconstruction of a feathered crown on the head of this figure. Additionally, there is a close parallel to the “Chieftain’s Cup” from Haghia Triada named after the eponymous young male figure holding a scepter-like staff in front of him and which has

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<sup>11</sup> Shaw 2004, 65.

<sup>12</sup> Evans 1928, 779.

<sup>13</sup> Evans 1928, 762.

<sup>14</sup> Coulomb 1990; Niemeier 1988.

<sup>15</sup> Coulomb 1979; Coulomb 1981, 36; Coulomb 1990, 101-102.

<sup>16</sup> Niemeier 1988, 238.

<sup>17</sup> Shaw 2004, 65.

<sup>18</sup> Shaw 2004, 70-71.

<sup>19</sup> Shaw 2004, 73 and 82.

been interpreted as a young prince who holds authority over the entire island.<sup>20</sup> In this dissertation, we will reconstruct the presence of a Priest-King fresco in the south corridor, which would have been the main access route to the central court because it was connected to the Corridor of the Procession at the “West Porch” entrance. As we will see later on, such a reconstruction means that the Minoan visitor entering the Palace from the Corridor of the Procession would have been interacting with specific iconographical themes, closely related to the ideology of the Palace and its controllers.

Especially seals with epiphany depictions of male or female deities holding scepters in the same manner provide interesting illustrations of the connection between the staff and authoritative behavior. A first good example is a seal found in the Palace Shrine at Knossos, depicting the “Mother of the Mountain” holding this kind of scepter standing on a peak guarded by lions while a person venerates her.<sup>21</sup> Because of the importance of peak sanctuaries in Minoan religion and the unusual size of the votary person depicted to the right of the Goddess, Evans pointed out that this person could only be the Knossian ruler himself in adoration of the Mother Goddess.<sup>22</sup> The depiction on the left, which is decorated with horns of consecration, could represent the Knossian Palace, as these horns stress the political and religious connection to the Palace, in accordance with the real physical link between the Palace of Knossos and Mount Juktas. A final example we would like to discuss is the seal impression of a large gold ring dated to LM I which is referred to in literature as the “Master Impression” of Khania, which depicts a male figure standing on top of building that is situated on a mountain top. The male figure has the same characteristics as the female figure on the Knossos impression, however she is oriented differently. Hallager argued that the Master Impression of Khania displays a clear representation of supremacy and authority through the image of the scepter and the monumental representation of the person holding it.<sup>23</sup> Krattenmaker argues that the iconographical evidence of the seal of the Mother of the Mountain or the Master

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<sup>20</sup> Niemeier (1988, 238) talks about a gesture of command, thus legitimizing his identification as a young ruler.

<sup>21</sup> Krattenmaker 1995, 50.

<sup>22</sup> Evans 1921, 809: fig. 528.

<sup>23</sup> Hallager 1985, 19.



Impression does not provide us with clear evidence to identify the Minoan ruler with certainty. Instead of the real representation of a King or a Queen we are most probably dealing with a God or a Goddess who passes on the object of authority (the sceptre) to the ruler, which is definitely supported by the gesture of devotion made to the female central figure on the Knossos sealing.<sup>24</sup>

The examples above provide good evidence allowing for the interpretation of the depiction of the scepter in combination with prominently portrayed persons as a link between the human and the divine and therefore as a medium through which the legitimacy of Minoan kingship could have been transferred to the human domain.<sup>25</sup> Or in Krattenmakers' words: "Although it still does not seem possible to identify the Minoan ruler with certainty, the ultimate identification of the figures on the two sealings examined here does not affect their message, which is one of legitimized rule".<sup>26</sup>

Although Evans' discourse was strongly influenced by the ideology of his time, one cannot deny that there are indeed several iconographical records speaking in favor of some form of royal authority.

Over the past years, several scholars have emphasized that Evans has exaggerated the nature of Minoan authority and that the kingship model should be re-assessed. Among these scholars, Koehl addressed the question of Minoan kingship arguing that quite plausibly Minoan Crete had a number of equally important aristocratic elites, controlled at the top by a chief. The power and authority of these elites were spread over the other most important palatial and non-palatial settlements.<sup>27</sup> Koehl also came to the conclusion that these chiefs were regarded within the palatial and non-palatial communities rather as *primi inter pares* than as absolute monarchs. The primary distinction of these chiefs lay in their authority as the highest ranking local prelate. Davis finds herself somewhere in between the proposition made by Koehl and the one originally made by Evans. She argues: "I find it difficult to conceive a major civilization in the Mediterranean Bronze

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<sup>24</sup> Krattenmaker 1995, 57.

<sup>25</sup> Krattenmaker 1995, 56-57.

<sup>26</sup> Krattenmaker 1995, 58.

<sup>27</sup> Koehl 1995, 35.

Age without a male ruler or rulers”<sup>28</sup>; which means that she keeps at least the possibility open that Minoan society had a more dynamic socio-political system with different highly ranked chiefs. Thanks to Branigan, Driessen, and others, attention has been paid to contextualize the palatial buildings within their urban setting in order to understand the political, social and/or economical relationships between various groups (tiers) of people, often referred to as elites and non-elites.<sup>29</sup>

The rejections above have major implications for the reconstruction of the socio-political landscape and the dynamic between the different palatial and non-palatial settlements on Crete. However, these refutations should not be seen as a true breach with past scholarship, but rather as a gradual evolution. The publication of the volume, *The Monuments of Minos*, illustrates intelligently the continuing search of different scholars towards a re-definition of the true nature of the Minoan socio-political fabric. In the aforementioned volume, Schoep stresses that the material record shows an overall picture of homogeneity in architectural forms and administrative practices, which have been interpreted as an indication of a large, island-wide integrated political structure with a dominance of Knossos spanning the entire island.<sup>30</sup> After the publication of Graham’s investigations, it became clear that all Minoan Palaces shared a number of functions.<sup>31</sup> However, the strong difference in scale, monumentality and elaboration between Knossos and the other Minoan Palaces supports the view that Knossos was the typeset settlement for the entire island, whereas all lower order centers copied the shape and form of the building.<sup>32</sup> Driessen and Vansteenhuyse discussed the existence of different site hierarchies across the island, with the outcome that Knossos again came forward as the mightiest political center.<sup>33</sup> The uniqueness of Knossos has led some scholars to argue

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<sup>28</sup> Davis 1995, 18.

<sup>29</sup> See the papers in the volume edited by Branigan 2001a.

<sup>30</sup> Schoep 2002, 22; Knossos is among the palatial settlements the only site with clear traces of human activity dated to as early as the seventh to the fifth millennium BC and becomes already from EMII on the largest site on Crete. Knossos did not control the island at this point, but it has been argued that a central authority inside the settlement organized the EM II building program, see Tomkins 2007 and especially Wilson 2008, 88.

<sup>31</sup> Graham 1962; 1987.

<sup>32</sup> Schoep 2002, 22; Hamilakis 2002, 182.

<sup>33</sup> Vansteenhuyse 2002, 243.

that Knossos was the “cosmological center” with cultural and ideological supremacy over the entire island.<sup>34</sup>

However, the same authors try to nuance their statements since by means of different integrative approaches they simultaneously attempt to challenge the Knossian-centric model. Of major importance was the acknowledgement of a wide range of regional phenomena that occurred outside direct Knossian control.<sup>35</sup> A re-examination of the existing material culture, which was traditionally interpreted as emphasizing the Knossian dominance, does not yield the same homogenous picture as has been assumed to date. By looking at both sides of the fence, the material evidence shows some homogenous tendencies across Crete, whereas at the same time regional differences cannot be ignored.<sup>36</sup> In her analysis of the Proto-and Neopalatial Palaces, Schoep deconstructs the similar timeframe for the construction of each of the Minoan Palaces. She convincingly argued for example that the first real Knossian Palace was built slightly later than the Malian one.<sup>37</sup> Such observations illustrate that Knossos did not necessarily constitute the actual type-site from which the palatial building form originated. The palatial form is rather the result of different regional processes that occurred on the island, such as a continual process of innovation, social complexity and competition between different sites, which eventually resulted in the regionally spread phenomenon of the Minoan Palace across Crete.

Additionally, recent discoveries illustrate that the Minoan villas are not really isolated entities in the landscape, but rather integrated as urban centers, which means that they should not be perceived as traditional country houses of the palatial elite, but rather as central places within distinctive communities.<sup>38</sup> Furthermore, the fact that the number of palatial and palatial-like buildings rose considerably on the island, and that most of the palatial buildings had non-elaborated predecessors led to the rejection of the Minoan Palace as the residence of a single ruler and the interpretation of the Minoan Palace as a

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<sup>34</sup> Soles 1995.

<sup>35</sup> Schoep 2002, 23.

<sup>36</sup> Schoep 2002, 23.

<sup>37</sup> Schoep 2004, 244-245.

<sup>38</sup> Hamilakis 2002, 183.

ritual center.<sup>39</sup> These arguments have underlined the idea that social and political structures in the Neopalatial period were not as pyramidal and rigid as previously assumed, but instead were more subject to change.<sup>40</sup> In order to re-define these socio-political dynamics, the archaeological data of the Neopalatial period was analyzed through the theoretical frameworks of hierarchy, heterarchy and factionalism, by means of which scholars attempted to identify the different social tiers in Minoan society and redefine the political and social landscape.<sup>41</sup> The above has led to a distinct preference in Minoan research to consider Neopalatial Crete as a heterarchically organized political structure.<sup>42</sup> In this kind of model, power and authority are not necessarily in the hands of one person, for example a King, but can be controlled by different persons, as power and authority is rather decentralized.<sup>43</sup> One should question why the models of hierarchy and heterarchy are treated separately from each other, instead of as constituent parts of the same social system.<sup>44</sup> They can perfectly exist next to one another, with different elite levels operating next to each other. In a truly hierarchical system these levels should be centralized within the authority of one person, e.g. a King.

It becomes clear that recent scholarship favors a rather dispersed system of authority, which immediately brings into focus another concept which has been popular in recent scholarship - the notion of “competition”.<sup>45</sup> Several papers in *The Monuments of Minos* take this concept as a starting point and theorize Minoan culture through the concept of factional competition. Factions are different from class- and interest groups, in that they are vertical divisions that focus around a leader or group of leaders, but also include other social actors of lower rank and limited access to resources, often in a patron/client relationship. In that sense factions form a corporate identity, which focuses on the differences between the individual factions rather than on differences between their

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<sup>39</sup> Driessen 2002.

<sup>40</sup> Adams 2004, 192-194.

<sup>41</sup> Crumley 1995, 1-5; Hamilakis 1998; 2002.

<sup>42</sup> Crumley 1995, 3; Adams 2004, 192-193.

<sup>43</sup> Parkinson and Galaty 2007, 116.

<sup>44</sup> Schoep 2002; Schoep and Knappett 2005, 23.

<sup>45</sup> Brumfiel 1995, 129; Brumfiel 1994; Hamilakis 2002.

respective members.<sup>46</sup> Therefore, this approach should be seen as a more “democratic” approach towards the Minoan period.

To recapitulate, the discussion above shows that the nature of socio-political structure in the Neopalatial period is still a matter of debate. Within the volume *the monuments of Minos* several scholars share the tendency to reject the traditional Kingship model of a centralized political authority residing within the Palaces and inside this new framework the most important agents for Minoan community life resided outside the Minoan palaces. In such a non-palatial model, the palaces were not interpreted as residences of a ruler or ruling group, but as a large communal building for the execution of rituals and ceremonies<sup>47</sup>, organized by the ruling factional group or political leaders and involving all layers of the social fabric.<sup>48</sup> Paul Halstead already suggested at a very early stage that the Minoan Palaces are multi-functional and could have integrated the roles of Buckingham Palace, Westminster Abbey and Wembley Stadium under one and the same roof.<sup>49</sup> It is within the light of this new theoretical framework that studies which perceive buildings as theatres for social discourse are becoming more common.<sup>50</sup> Within this interpretation, the events that took place within these monumental buildings, whether administrative activities or religious rituals, are seen as being central to the maintenance of elite power. Hosting such festivals was essential to the ruling elite in the process of legitimizing their power and authority.<sup>51</sup> The Palaces were the common arenas for social and political display and formed a striking focal point within the urban landscape, to the extent that many roads ultimately led to them.<sup>52</sup>

One should not overemphasize the importance of group competition within Minoan communities. Inter-group competition was not necessarily a dominant element in the socio-political fabric of Minoan Crete. Minoan elites used a wide variety of resources to stress a sense of community as much as a sense of inequality. The one balances the other

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<sup>46</sup> Hamilakis 2002, 186.

<sup>47</sup> Gesell 1987.

<sup>48</sup> Hamilakis 2002; Schoep 2002; Schoep 2006; Driessen 2002; Warren 2002; Betancourt 2002; Day et Relaki 2002; Vansteenhuyse 2002; Borgna 2004.

<sup>49</sup> Halstead 1981, 201.

<sup>50</sup> See Letesson and Vansteenhuyse 2006.

<sup>51</sup> Hamilakis 1998, 48; Hamilakis 1999; Hamilakis 2002.

<sup>52</sup> See Driessen (2009, 44-51) who came carefully to such conclusions.

out. Keeping the continuing tradition and past memory in place was maybe even more important than the reign of one group over another.

Especially interesting in this perspective is a study carried out by Adams (2004), who, in her analysis of power relations in the Neopalatial period, emphasized the need to contextualize the palaces within the entire settlement in order to understand the complex dynamics between various elites and non-elites inside the community. Although Adams mentions the concepts of heterarchy and factional competition, she prefers to model Minoan community life through a sophisticated variant of hierarchy in order to explain the power relations existing between different socio-political tiers. Through differences in size and the distribution and presence/absence of artefacts, categories and architectural features, Adams was able to identify for example the different social tiers living within Knossos and Malia. What Adams discovered was a far-reaching formalization of ceremonial activities throughout several buildings within the settlements, which may show a form of emulation of the Palace's architecture, and competition among those responsible for commissioning, possibly living within these buildings.<sup>53</sup> Adams' analysis shows that 'elite' architectural and archaeological material was only to be found in very specific buildings, which could betray elements of their exclusive use. Further, access to and participation in ceremonial activities within such buildings was reserved to a select group of people.

The town of Knossos appears to have been divided in different clusters of buildings with at the very top the Palace, followed by the mansions or villas, specialized buildings and non-elaborate houses.<sup>54</sup> Similar observations could be made for Malia as well and might be illustrative for different social tiers living within the settlement; a complex dynamic between the true elites in control of and maybe living at the Palace, the second tier and the ones below.<sup>55</sup> In such a situation, material culture and architectural elaboration became essentially important to negotiate and downplay status and authority, not only for the Palatial elite, but also among the other tier groups.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Adams 2004, 210.

<sup>54</sup> Adams 2004, 208 – 211.

<sup>55</sup> Adams 2004, 211-213.

<sup>56</sup> Adams 2004, 213.

Adams does not elaborate whether or not the actual elite resided within the Palaces, however, Schoep, who in a recent article made very similar observations, clearly states that the palaces were not inhabited and should be perceived as the main religious venues for the execution of ritual performances.<sup>57</sup> According to Schoep, the main people behind the construction of these central court buildings should be found living ‘outside’ these monumental complexes.<sup>58</sup>

Schoep made a critical assessment of the traditional Palace-Temple model of Evans bringing forward that Evans’ highly unusual model of a Priest-King residing in a Palace-Temple consciously breaks with the traditions of the Eastern Mediterranean, expressing Evans’ Creto-centrism.<sup>59</sup> Further, she argues that the large number of archaeological evidence compared to the time of Evans pleads for a different function of the central court buildings in that they only functioned as the main religious venues for the performance of specific rituals and ceremonies, the actual main seats of political power to be located outside the court buildings. The ruling group resided in what she refers to as ‘the high profile buildings’ within the settlements, such as the urban mansions which are typified by a strong presence of elite culture, in line with what has been attested at the central court buildings.<sup>60</sup> Such a reconstruction follows closely the vision of a decentralized system of authority since the publication of *The Monuments of Minos*.<sup>61</sup>

In light of the discussion above, it seems necessary to express some personal nuances as regards the duality of kingship versus group factionalism. Since both factionalism and authoritative rule can exist simultaneously, one might find it hard to reject the existence of a central political authority at the intra-site level of Minoan society, especially for the palatial sites. On the other hand, it is very unlikely that an architectural concept as the palatial form comes forward in a socio-political climate of shared political power among rivaling social groups. Notwithstanding that competition among rivaling groups could have been an important drive for the political economy of Bronze Age groups, the building of a mega structure like a Minoan Palace could better be explained as an

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<sup>57</sup> Schoep 2010, 232.

<sup>58</sup> Schoep 2006, 57.

<sup>59</sup> Schoep 2010, 222-225.

<sup>60</sup> Schoep 2010, 232-233.

<sup>61</sup> Schoep 2010, 236.

example of cooperation, a collective investment of the community. Expanding the view to different contemporaneous societies in the Eastern Mediterranean, similar buildings were erected for the benefit of sovereign authority often executed by a single monarch.<sup>62</sup> This of course, does not entail that a King also ruled Minoan Crete, but, until the opposite has been proven, to me the hypothesis that the Palaces were at least controlled by a group of people constituting the highest elite remains valid. This would also imply that one might find it still necessary to consider Minoan society as hierarchically structured rather than heterarchically. Nevertheless, there is no denying that both systems existed simultaneously and functioned together as one undivided whole.

The nature of the Minoan Palaces is widely debated, however, the *communis opinio* holds that during the Middle and Late Bronze Age Minoan Crete was divided in several polities of a certain status, at the center of which was a Minoan Palace.<sup>63</sup> Other flourishing non-palatial settlements such as Pseira and Palaikastro were intrinsically different from the palatial settlements. They had well-constructed elite buildings with several elite features, well-formed street systems, but did not necessarily possess central buildings or “Palaces”.<sup>64</sup> In the Neopalatial period the number of peak sanctuaries decreases but those which continued to be used for ritual practices, show a strong elite presence and energy investment in the site’s elaboration.<sup>65</sup> The number of ritual caves also flourished. How should one understand the function of the Minoan Palaces within the Minoan communities? At the current state of research, this question cannot be answered in a straightforward manner, however, it becomes clear that although the central court buildings did not necessarily have a residential function, they still play an essential role in Minoan community-life.

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<sup>62</sup> I especially want to thank Prof. D. Panagiotopoulos here, since these nuances have been strongly inspired on several short discussions with him. Such an observation closely aligns with the views of Evans, Betancourt, and others as outlined above.

<sup>63</sup> Vansteenhuyse 2002, 243; Cherry 1986; Cadogan 1994; Bennet (2007, 184): “It is likely, at least in the first half of the second millennium, that each Minoan Palace was politically independent”.

<sup>64</sup> Cunningham 2001; Adams 2010, 22.

<sup>65</sup> Peatfield 1994.



The different approaches outlined in this chapter enabled us to locate more clues regarding the socio-political climate of Crete, however, they all offer little insight of how the central court buildings were actually perceived and experienced.<sup>66</sup> Leaving aside the question whether one deconstructs the view of the Minoan palaces being elite residences or favors the view of the Minoan palaces being large communal buildings within the Minoan community; these reconstructions do not give a sufficient explanation to the questions 1) ‘why’ these buildings were built in these particular ways; 2) What could have been the social strategies underlying their construction and 3) how these buildings and the performances executed could have been actively used to structure human relations and interactions – a social construct in which human experience was essentially important.

This dissertation tries to reach beyond the discussions above and wants to elaborate on all of these questions, trying to understand the social dimension of these constructions, in order to shed light on the importance of the central court buildings as integrative devices within Minoan communities, which can only be clarified by focusing on human experience. An assessment of the physical layout and architectural elaboration, as well as a thorough discussion of the performative events organized at the central court buildings seems therefore well in place. It invites to test the interpretation of the Palaces as settings of elite performances, which would add a separate form of data and a different approach to the ongoing discussions and helps us to elucidate the way in which these buildings were used as meaningful media or representational spaces within the process of community building.

In order to do so chapter 2 presents a methodology that builds on social theory and phenomenology. Such an approach offers the possibility to read some of the most important monuments of Minoan society as socially constructed entities.

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<sup>66</sup> Adams (2007) is one of the first scholars who tried to reconstruct Minoan experience, focusing on how the specific nature of different types of entrances at the Minoan palaces affected Minoans, each of them creating a very unique experience for people. In her article, Adams only focused on the entrances themselves, which invites us not to focus solely on the importance of entrances, but rather assess to what extent the entire architectural layout of the Minoan palaces was part of a unique social experience.

### 1.1.2. More than one way to Study a Minoan Palace: Past and Recent Approaches

In studying prior publications as regards this topic, it has become clear that it is rather difficult to review all approaches that were taken to the study of Minoan architecture from the genesis of the discipline onwards. In general, these past approaches comprised the following: scholars have studied architecture through the lens of evolutionary change, focused on the creation of typological and chronological classification, building materials and techniques, have emphasized a formal approach of analysis and the presentation of the material and, finally, some attention has been paid to the semiotic and experiential aspects of Minoan architecture.<sup>67</sup> The publications of the volumes *The Function of the Minoan Palaces*<sup>68</sup> and *The function of the Minoan Villa*<sup>69</sup> clearly indicate the growing need for a satisfying explanation and interpretation of the social reality behind these monumental forms of architecture. However, the variety of approaches brought together in these volumes suggests that there is no consensus as to which approach is the most successful. It seems that there is more than one way to study a Minoan building. McEnroe constructed a typology for Late Minoan architecture by a checklist of 32 architectural and non-architectural features and divided Late Minoan buildings in three distinctive types. Type 1 was closely related to the Minoan Palaces, which McEnroe describes as “polite architecture”, implying a certain Minoan design canon. Type 3 had the least common features and were poorly built houses, called “vernacular architecture”.<sup>70</sup> However, a study by Hitchcock reveals that the checklist and typology created by McEnroe is more fiction than reality and holds several discrepancies. In order to create a more reliable checklist, Hitchcock reviewed, modified and updated both the checklists of McEnroe as well as the one by Preziosi and created a checklist of approximately 60 typological features.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> Graham 1962; 1987; McEnroe 1979; 1982; 1990; Shaw 1973a; 1973b; Marinatos 1984; Sanders 1984; 1990; Palyvou 1987; 1989; 1990; 2000; 2002; 2004; 2008; Preziosi 1983; 2003; Hitchcock 1999; 2000; Letesson and Vansteenhuyse 2006; Letesson 2005; 2008; 2009.

<sup>68</sup> Hägg and Marinatos 1987.

<sup>69</sup> Hägg 1997.

<sup>70</sup> McEnroe 1990, 195.

<sup>71</sup> McEnroe 1979; Preziosi 1983, 148-157: table II.6; Hitchcock and Preziosi 1994.

With regard to the Minoan Palaces, what exactly constitutes a “Minoan Palace” is heavily debated.<sup>72</sup> However, there are no difficulties in describing their form, which is completely separate from their actual function as economic, religious, administrative or political “Royal” residences. In the early years of the Minoan discipline, scholars believed that the Minoan Palaces, in strong contrast to the sophisticated architecture of Egypt and Classical Greece, were disorganized, chaotic, and labyrinthine structures with different distinct functional zones, clusters or “insulae” arranged next to each other, but not always in direct communication.<sup>73</sup> The large open-air spaces that are so typical of these complexes, with the central court as the most prominent feature were regarded as the main spaces creating cohesion between the different functional quarters.

In Minoan archaeology, two authors have dealt thoroughly with the study of architectural design and focused extensively on the design and layout of the Minoan Palaces. Graham was the first to carry out a profound study of the principles of Minoan design, trying to understand why these buildings were built in this particular form. Instead of a detailed discussion of all individual buildings and their variability, Graham focused on similarities and shared correspondences between the separate buildings.<sup>74</sup> His approach resulted in a widely disputed basis for further comparison with the monumental architecture of other contemporary cultures. In his study of the Minoan Palaces Graham tried to move away from the traditional “insulae” hypothesis since one of his primary aims was to find enough evidence to prove that a functional planning was at the basis of their construction. Graham concludes: “It [...] seems evident that considerable planning must have preceded the actual construction of these buildings. It also seems evident that the focal point of the plan was the central court, and around this and facing on it most of the quarters were built”<sup>75</sup>. For him, the Minoan Palaces were built according to a very specific normative design principle: “the guiding principle in this planning of the quarters about the central

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<sup>72</sup> See various contributions in Hägg and Marinatos 1987; Schoep 2002, 18-19; Driessen 2002.

<sup>73</sup> Evans 1921, 203; Pendlebury 1933.

<sup>74</sup> Graham 1962; 1987.

<sup>75</sup> Graham 1987, 237.

court was not aesthetic – there is no attempt to arrange them symmetrically, for example-but practical”<sup>76</sup>.

As compared to contemporary scholarship, Graham’s analysis may be referred to as progressive in that it stipulated the hypothesis that the Minoan architects made use of a measuring system, referred to as the Minoan foot.<sup>77</sup> Graham departed from the assumption that the Classical Greeks inherited many elements of the Minoan culture with the Mycenaean Greeks as intermediators. Therefore, Graham’s investigation of Minoan architecture was primarily directed by comparison with the innovations occurring on the Greek peninsula. Investigation of houses of fourth and fifth century Olynthos showed that in the construction of the houses two different foot-lengths were used.<sup>78</sup> Graham discovered in Minoan architecture also a “Minoan foot” of 0.3036m, largely based on a detailed analysis of the western façade of the Palace of Phaistos.<sup>79</sup> His evidence was corroborated by proving that this unit also occurred in the layout of the west wing of the Palace, the central court, and the northern façade facing the central court.<sup>80</sup> Graham even attempted to reconstruct the manner in which the architect of Phaistos proceeded in designing the Palace.<sup>81</sup> Graham further investigated Knossos and Malia and proved, although in these cases the evidence was less clear, that a Minoan foot was used as a standard length in the design of the Palaces, which made him conclude that “the principal dimensions of large and important buildings (the Palaces) should often have been laid out in round numbers, when not restricted by particular physical circumstances such as the topography of the site or the presence of pre-existing structures”<sup>82</sup>.

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<sup>76</sup> Graham 1987, 238.

<sup>77</sup> Graham 1960.

<sup>78</sup> Graham (1960, 335): “Some quarter of a century ago when studying the foot lengths [...] I found that there were two reliable types of evidence: round numbers of feet in long dimensions [...] and whole foot-lengths in short dimensions recurring in series – the three-foot intervals between the vertical incised lines on carefully decorated stuccoed walls.”

<sup>79</sup> Graham 1960. In his analysis of the northern façade facing to the central court of Phaistos he concluded that the façade had a total length of 80 M.ft., divided in two distinct parts of 40 M.ft, the middle formed by the northern entrance. Another example is the central court that measured north-south 170 M. ft. This can be divided in 70 M. ft. from the northern façade up to the south end of corridor 7 and a 100 M. ft. from that point up to the south end of the central court.

<sup>80</sup> For detailed results, see Graham 1960, 339.

<sup>81</sup> Graham 1960, 340.

<sup>82</sup> Graham 1960, 341.

Cherry pointed out in an article that the Minoan foot of 0.3036m as proposed by Graham did not occur as a standard to the degree which has been traditionally assumed. By simulating the measurements of Graham in a statistical program, he had to conclude that not Graham's foot is the most recurrent unit of length, but another one. Therefore, we do not have to consider this length as a given certainty.<sup>83</sup> This on the other hand does not take away the fact that the design process behind the Palaces was most probably extremely controlled and that a measuring system was used. It would be strange to think otherwise.

Preziosi also has substantially contributed to the field of Minoan archaeology.<sup>84</sup> He did not deny the existence of the Minoan foot, but stressed that the geometry of the building was at least as important in the layout of the Palaces. Preziosi argues that in Minoan times a modular grid was used to design the Palaces.<sup>85</sup> According to Preziosi the Minoans used two different types of foot-lengths, a shorter and longer Minoan foot, of respectively 0.270 and 0.340 m in length.<sup>86</sup> The central court and the west wing form the actual core of a Minoan Palace. The square formed by both parts of the Palace is literally cut in two equal pieces by the eastern façade of the west wing.

Although the use of a metrical system might be disputed, both authors aimed to prove that Minoan architecture, and especially the Minoan Palaces, consisted of planned constructions built according to metrical standards and well-defined proportions. Supposedly, the architect's major objective was to design the building in different quarters, each with its own specific function.

Additionally, there is another trend in Minoan archaeology, in which scholars tend to look towards the semiotic and experiential side of Minoan architecture. They have dealt with specific questions such as circulation patterns, the distribution of room types throughout the building, the experience of monumentality, size, and decoration, as well as

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<sup>83</sup> For more information about the method, see Cherry 1983, 52-56.

<sup>84</sup> Preziosi 1983.

<sup>85</sup> Preziosi 2003.

<sup>86</sup> Preziosi 1983, 486; In fact, he argues that the Minoan builders used several standards ranging between 0.270 and 0.350m. Although, he states clearly that there are two clusters, one at 0.270 and one at 0.340m.

the internal and external orientations of the different units inside the Palaces proper.<sup>87</sup> One of the most innovative approaches to Minoan architecture was developed by Sanders, who studied building block B in the early settlement of Myrtos by means of an integrative approach.<sup>88</sup> His study builds upon an approach merging the fields of semiotics, behavioral sciences, and archaeology in order to create a methodological model, which should make it possible to trace the reciprocal relationship between behavioral conventions and built space, i.e. “why” people structure the built space in very specific ways. In his work, semiotics and behavioral science are combined with a series of archaeological procedures which include artefact distribution analysis, the study of room layout, etc. Sanders uses a variety of approaches to infer human behavior from the building’s layout. He studies lines of vision from several points within the building, the distribution of specific boundary markers within the building, the circulation pattern, and the orientation of the different units within the building. Although Sanders did not study the Minoan Palaces, his approach has clearly inspired Minoan archaeologists to look beyond mere typology.

In *Minoan Architecture: A Contextual Approach* Hitchcock tries to create a contextual approach to the Minoan built space and more specifically the monumental architecture of the Neopalatial period (Minoan Palaces and Villas) in order to understand in a profound and all encompassing manner the relationship between actual room function and the different socio-political meanings attached to it.<sup>89</sup>

Central to her methodology was the effort to move away from typological approaches to Minoan architecture in which diverse architectural features were studied in isolation and by comparison; instead, Hitchcock emphasized that a room’s function has to be defined in terms of its proper context, i.e. in relation to the entire architectural structure and by taking into account the artefacts and other architectural features found within.<sup>90</sup> In order to examine different room types in ‘context’, Hitchcock does not only focus on the architectural, but also draws attention to the connectivity with and circulation patterns

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<sup>87</sup> Shaw 1973b; Hitchcock 2000; Palyvou 1987; 2002; 2004; 2008; Preziosi 1983; Scully 1962; Marinatos 1934; Marinatos 1984; Sanders 1984; 1990; Goodison 2004; Letesson and Vansteenhuyse 2006; Letesson 2005; 2008; 2009.

<sup>88</sup> Sanders 1984; 1990.

<sup>89</sup> Hitchcock 2000.

<sup>90</sup> Hitchcock 2000, 16.

leading to other rooms and the archaeological objects discovered within. Whenever necessary, Hitchcock considers ethnographic comparison in order to add a complementary form of data to the discussions.

Hitchcock claims that past typologies do not give sufficient explanation for the archaeological data and that similar room types do not necessarily have a single shared function or similar functionality across different sites. On the contrary, they can have an entirely different functionality depending on the context they were found in. A logical outcome of this approach would be that a room's function is never fixed and should be determined in terms of its architectural context. At specific times and within particular contexts, the same room could have served a different purpose. In this respect, a dining area can turn into an audience hall and even a kitchen can turn into a reception area whenever necessary. Room function changes according to particular occasions and contexts.

The book consists out of four different chapters, of which the first immediately is the most distinctive and useful one. Before turning to the different architectural features found at the Minoan palaces and villas, the first chapter of the book contains a historiographical overview of past approaches to Minoan architecture and material culture going back to as early as the first emergence of the Minoan discipline, ranging from morphological and typological studies, to more recent approaches that try to blend in semiotics or human experience with the Minoan built space.<sup>91</sup> It provides the reader with clear information of how the Minoan discipline evolved over the past 100 years, clearly showing how past and recent scholars were demonstrably influenced in their writings and interpretations by the socio-political time they lived in. This comes clearly forward in Hitchcock's review of past publications of the main Palace sites. Hitchcock emphasizes for example the problematic use of past interpretations given to and the terminology created by Evans for the description of several room types at Knossos and their negligence of labelling structures found at other palace sites, clearly influencing the ways in which scholars interpreted the material evidence.<sup>92</sup> However, it has to be noted that Hitchcock also retains much of the terminology proposed by Evans throughout the

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<sup>91</sup> Hitchcock 2000, 13 – 61.

<sup>92</sup> Hitchcock 2000, 28, 30, 60 – 61.

entire book, which leads me to question her intentions in foregrounding the issue. The discussion could emphasize the very subjective nature of interpretation within the Minoan discipline and of past reconstructions regarding Minoan society and even beyond (see for example Blegen's reconstructions of the palace of Pylos in Mycenaean Greece).<sup>93</sup> What follows in the next three chapters is a discussion of specific architectural features at the Minoan palaces and villas of the Neopalatial period: courts, cults and entryways<sup>94</sup> (chapter 2), storage areas and workshop spaces<sup>95</sup> (chapter 3) and Halls in Minoan Buildings<sup>96</sup> (chapter 4).

Particularly promising in the light of this dissertation are chapters 2 and 4. Chapter two "Courts, Cults, and Entryways" contains a thorough discussion of the west- and central courts of the Minoan palaces and the several unique architectural features connected to them. Hitchcock's analysis of the west courts underlines degrees of variation between the different palace sites, possibly reflecting different social and ritual practices carried out within them.<sup>97</sup> Hitchcock stipulates the possibility that the architectural variation at each of the palace sites was linked to the adoration of different deities, each with a unique set of ritual activities carried out at the Palace's proper: the adoration of the bull or a deity comparable to Zeus at Knossos, a water deity equal to Poseidon at Zakros, and a nature deity at Malia and Gournia.<sup>98</sup> Although these observations are interesting, one cannot deny the very subjective nature of her interpretations, which are in fact fully suggestive and based on no clear archaeological evidence of any kind.

Hitchcock's examination of the central courts follows almost exactly the same structure as for the west courts.<sup>99</sup> After a thorough discussion of the archaeological evidence, Hitchcock focuses on different architectural features such as the Horns of Consecration and Tripartite Shrines in order to understand their functionality.<sup>100</sup> Hitchcock stipulates that the central courts could have been used for the execution of ritual performances (she

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<sup>93</sup> Hitchcock 2000, 40 – 42.

<sup>94</sup> Hitchcock 2000, 62 – 125.

<sup>95</sup> Hitchcock 2000, 126 – 156.

<sup>96</sup> Hitchcock 2000, 157 – 191.

<sup>97</sup> Hitchcock 2000, 62 – 97.

<sup>98</sup> Hitchcock 2000, 89; the bull at Knossos see Hitchcock 2000, 92-94; Poseidon see Hitchcock 2000, 94 – 97; Gournia and Malia see Hitchcock 2000, 97.

<sup>99</sup> Hitchcock 2000, 98 – 120.

<sup>100</sup> Hitchcock 2000, 98 – 109.



refers to them as social dramas), however, she does not take the time to reconstruct the specific nature of the activities carried out within, nor does she question what role the central court played in the case of a large social event, which are issues covered within this dissertation. Remarkable is her exhaustive focus on the question of whether or not the central courts were used as an arena for bull games<sup>101</sup>, which is an issue that has travelled well in past research as is her remark that the central court's primary function was to facilitate the connection and circulation to the other units inside the building.<sup>102</sup>

All the more interesting is Hitchcock's discussion of the Minoan Halls (Chapter 4), in which their form, complexity, accessibility, decoration and archaeological remains are considered in order to come to a more profound understanding of their function.<sup>103</sup>

Throughout the discussion the entire chapter foregrounds Hitchcock's belief that in general all Minoan halls functioned as important gathering places within the buildings and were used for ritual, ceremonial, or administrative purposes.<sup>104</sup> However, she fails to explore the way in which the buildings were used and why they were elaborated in order to become representational spaces within a context of social interaction, elements which are highlighted in the present dissertation.

Generally speaking, Hitchcock's monograph provides a good synthesis of the publications on each of the room types and architectural features - the diverse halls, courts, storage rooms, etc.- found within the monumental structures of the Neopalatial period. Notwithstanding that her intentions are promising, one cannot put aside the overall impression that she does not provide an alternative reading to the archaeological evidence presented to us today.

Firstly, it might have been all the more interesting to discuss the archaeological material diachronically, allowing to identify significant changes within the Minoan built space over time and more specifically throughout the stages of the Pre-, Proto-, and Neopalatial period. Secondly, such an approach would help us to pinpoint 'when' and theorize 'why' built spaces became more and more complexly organized, reaching their culmination point in the Late Bronze Age. A theoretical framework that builds upon social theory and

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<sup>101</sup> Hitchcock 2000, 115 – 120.

<sup>102</sup> Hitchcock 2000, 124.

<sup>103</sup> Hitchcock 2000, 157 – 191.

<sup>104</sup> Hitchcock 2000, 190 – 191.

human experience would allow us to reflect on the way in which such complexly organized built spaces came into being and focus on the importance of structured built spaces for Minoan communities and deal with the question why such processes became so essentially important for Minoans, all circling back to a diachronic perspective on changing built environments throughout all periods of Minoan history.

The core of this dissertation builds upon these insights, allowing us to reflect more profoundly on the social dimension underlying a buildings' structure and how the entire layout of such buildings with several units suitable for social interactions could have been used simultaneously as a setting for social display through which different social tiers could be interacting with each other in socially and significantly meaningful ways.

Not until recently scholars pointed out the importance of a diachronic perspective to material culture and more specifically the Minoan built space. In 2010, Mc Enroe published a monograph that provides an overall discussion of Minoan architecture and highlights how from as early as the Neolithic to the very end of the Bronze Age Minoans created specific built forms 'through which humans shape their identities and present themselves to others'.<sup>105</sup> The book starts with a brief discussion of the concept of 'identity'<sup>106</sup> and although Mc Enroe claims that the issue of identity is crucial, it becomes immediately apparent that the concept is not dealt with thoroughly. Most striking is the absence of a clear theoretical framework that builds on various insights taken from the social sciences. One gets the impression that all topics discussed throughout the different chapters do not extend beyond the mere description of different forms of architecture and the changes and innovations that occurred throughout the Minoan Bronze Age. As a result, at the very end of each chapter, Mc Enroe touches only very briefly on the issue of identity and the role of architecture in its establishment. Thus the issue of identity moves automatically to the background.

In my view, *Architecture of Minoan Crete* does not read as a book about Minoan identity; Mc Enroe's main objective rather seems to have been to synthesize most of the conversations on Minoan architecture that have gone on since the very beginning of the

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<sup>105</sup> McEnroe 2010, vii.

<sup>106</sup> McEnroe 2010, 5.

discipline ‘for scholars who are not necessarily specialists in the Aegean Bronze Age’.<sup>107</sup> This corresponds to the structure of the chapters in which several issues regarding funerary, domestic, and palatial built forms are discussed. Further, Mc Enroe’s work is of great value when it comes to the diachronic approach taken to the archaeological material emphasizing the birth of different architectural features in the Minoan built-environment<sup>108</sup>, and illustrating an increasing complexity that reached its culmination point in the Late Bronze Age<sup>109</sup>. These phenomena are also highlighted in this dissertation, and argued to be closely connected with the arising need of more complexly organized built forms in order to structure relationships between different groups of people within these communities.<sup>110</sup>

This dissertation covers both of Mc Enroe’s objectives, i.e. a diachronic approach to Minoan architecture and a focus on synthesizing past and recent discussions with regard to Minoan built spaces, however, we plead for the implementation of a well-formulated and well-founded methodology that builds on social theory in order to reach a more thorough understanding of the social meaning of architecture and the ways in which these buildings could have been actively used as chief media in structuring interactions, groups of people, and relationships throughout Minoan history. What distinguishes this dissertation from Mc Enroe’s work is the formulation of a clear theoretical framework (Part 2 this dissertation) in order to understand more thoroughly the deeper meanings of architecture in which we turn away from the descriptive architectural level and try to describe and visualize more explicitly the power of the built space in structuring peoples and interactions when they were actively used (Part 3, 4, and 5).

Palyvou focused strongly on the structuring principles of architecture and studied the architecture of Akrotiri through a number of interesting research angles. In her early work she studied the buildings at Akrotiri by a typological approach and tried to define recurrent patterns in the layout and design of the buildings.<sup>111</sup> In order to define such

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<sup>107</sup> McEnroe 2010, vii.

<sup>108</sup> McEnroe 2010, 9-69 (Chapters 2 to 6).

<sup>109</sup> McEnroe 2010, 69-133 (Chapters 7 to 10).

<sup>110</sup> See especially Chapter 3.2 of this dissertation.

<sup>111</sup> Palyvou 1987; 1989.

building conventions, she focused on the placement of entrances and exits, the distribution of light and ventilation, the distribution of rooms and their connections, the circulation pattern within a building, etc. Further, she showed that structural conventions were not only recognizable inside the houses, but also in the layout of the town, which is indicated by the indentations of the streets that ran throughout the town.<sup>112</sup> Recently, Palyvou also addressed the question of patterns of circulation in Minoan monumental architecture.<sup>113</sup> Concerning the form, functioning and significance of architectural types, Palyvou examined the Minoan hall systems, central courts and west courts in order to discuss patterns of circulation and especially the way in which the configuration of these buildings filtered accessibility and human traffic within palatial settings.<sup>114</sup> In this series of articles, she illustrated convincingly that the Minoan Palaces possess a sophisticated system of circulation, which could provide a hierarchy of movement according to the identities of the users. What is missing, however, is a vivid reading of the Minoan Palaces and a true focus on the way in which these buildings, together with specific performances, acted as active agents or chief media in structuring social interaction and social relationships within Minoan communities. Thus, Palyvou's studies will be explored further in this dissertation with a strong focus on the reciprocal relationship between built space and human performance as integrating devices for the production and reproduction of Minoan community life.

Also Letesson dealt thoroughly with the importance of structure, the subdivision of space and their implications for social interaction.<sup>115</sup> The major contribution of Letesson's work is that he goes beyond the traditional issues of form and function and focuses on the identification of a set of underlying principles within Minoan architecture, referred to as a spatial genotype.<sup>116</sup> Using space syntax, Letesson is able to identify the importance of a fundamental shift in the ways Minoans dealt with the organisation of the built space, as from the Protopalatial through to the Neopalatial period. Throughout his work it becomes clear that in the majority of the Minoan buildings there has been a shift from an

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<sup>112</sup> Palyvou 1987.

<sup>113</sup> Palyvou 2002; 2004; 2008.

<sup>114</sup> Palyvou 2002, 167-177.

<sup>115</sup> Letesson 2008; 2009; 2012.

<sup>116</sup> Letesson 2009.

agglutinative to an articulated mode of organising space. The increased segmentation of space within buildings over the course of the Proto-and Neopalatial period shows the growing importance of structure in Minoan architecture and illustrates that the complexity of a building's configuration may betray elements of the social dimension that lay behind it. Furthermore, such changes in configurational thinking throughout the Proto- and Neopalatial periods resulted in the appearance of a wide range of indoor and outdoor gathering spaces in the Neopalatial period, which gives the impression that people wanted to categorize and structure people and their activities more strictly and efficiently.

In his paper *From Party to Ritual to Ruin*, Letesson (2008) shows specifically that the Minoan palaces of the Neopalatial period showed a strong program, in which the close interplay of a series of courts, internal and external transition spaces and a wide range of indoor gathering spaces created a very structured environment with the potential to structure interactions between different groups of people more strictly and efficiently. Central to this paper is the synthesis of the main syntactical properties of the Minoan palaces. What is lacking however, is a reconstruction of the actual nature of these interactions and the way in which the entire spatial setting could have been experienced as a meaningful environment for social interaction.

In a recent contribution to the volume *Aegis 5* Letesson (2012) applies the method of space syntax to a series of Cretan case studies in order to investigate the distribution of fresco iconography and the syntactical properties for each of the spaces where frescoes were found inside these buildings. Letesson emphasizes that from the Neopalatial period onwards architectural suites decorated with monumental frescoes generally tend to be the most segregated spaces within the configuration, which implies that these were the most inaccessible spaces where very few people gathered hidden away from the eye of the public. However, the Palace of Knossos does not fit in entirely with these conclusions since it has several monumental frescoes in areas which were easily accessible to and/or perceived by the public, which suggest that its function was far more complex than the other case studies Letesson examined in this article, issues we will return to in Parts 5 and 6 of this dissertation.

What is generally missing in Letesson's approach is very similar to what has been suggested above for the contributions by Hitchcock (Hitchcock 2000) and Mc Enroe (2010), i.e. a focus on the actual nature of the interaction within these spaces, the actual experience of the people moving through these spaces and their interaction with the physicality of the built space and the people present within. Letesson thoroughly demonstrated the representation and quantification of these patterns of structure and circulation within Minoan monumental architecture and identified some recurrent circulation patterns or typologies (structures), but only deals very shortly with their sociological relevance or the social dimension that lay behind these changes, partly because the core of his dissertation focused on testing the usefulness of the application of the method of space syntax in Minoan archaeology.<sup>117</sup> Such an approach requires distancing oneself from the numerical access analysis and to focus on the real physicality of the built space instead. It is only by taking into account a broad spectrum of archaeological data that one can shed light on the actual experience people had when interacting with these spaces and the people within. Such a vivid reading of the Minoan built space in which one tries to understand the ways in which the space itself and its elaboration were chief media in structuring and building relationships and interactions can only be instigated by considering the archaeological material through the lens of social theory and phenomenology which will be discussed and incorporated in a well formulated methodology developed in Part 2 of this dissertation.

Letesson and Vansteenhuyse applied visibility analysis to the Minoan Palaces and tried to reconstruct the main thresholds of vision and the way groups of people were zoned according to differences in sight.<sup>118</sup> Taken further Hägg's reconstruction of a window of appearance in the western façade of the Palace of Knossos, which formed the focal point for the people that gathered within the west court, they uncovered a clear zoning of

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<sup>117</sup> Letesson (2009) criticizes the flows in his own method and argues the need to look towards other theoretical approaches to the Minoan built space. Space syntax analyses forms the core of Letesson's dissertation, whereas the present study only implements the method as a descriptive tool for mapping circulation patterns within the Minoan Palaces.

<sup>118</sup> Letesson and Vansteenhuyse 2006, 101.

groups of people.<sup>119</sup> The further one was situated from this window, the blurrier the viewer's vision and less intimate the interaction would be with the one appearing in the window.<sup>120</sup> Such an approach shows that not only access and non-access were crucial in forming social relationships, but that also other experiences such as vision and non-vision should be reconsidered in a study of Monumental architecture.

Apart from internal design and structural issues, several scholars tried to define the relationship between internal layout and the buildings' orientation to its urban and natural surroundings. Thanks to these scholars, one can conclude that there is now accumulating evidence that the Palaces were deliberately oriented towards astronomical events and sacred mountains, many of them having an important peak sanctuary or sacred cave on top of them.<sup>121</sup> Proper orientation was key-important in the construction of the Minoan Palaces. Because the element of orientation is so important in the design and further layout of the Minoan Palaces, this matter will be discussed into more detail in section 4.1.5 this dissertation.

### 1.1.3. Conclusion

It has become clear that several approaches to Minoan architecture and especially the Minoan Palaces, ranging from typological studies, circulation patterns, building materials and techniques, to building design and orientation, exist next to one another. The studies mentioned above clearly illustrate that, although archaeology has its own methods and approaches, one should bear in mind that if these are considered without recourse to other evidence or theoretical frameworks contextualizing the archaeological material in a broader perspective, they can only make a limited contribution to a better understanding of spatial behavior. What misses in all these approaches is a vivid reading of the Minoan built space in which one tries to understand the ways in which the space itself and its elaboration were chief media in structuring and building relationships and interactions.

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<sup>119</sup> Hägg 1987, 132.

<sup>120</sup> Letesson and Vansteenhuyse 2006, 107.

<sup>121</sup> Marinatos 1934; Scully 1962; Shaw 1973b; Preziosi 1983; Goodison 2001; 2004; Blomberg and Henriksson 1996; 2001; 2005; 2006; 2008; 2010; Doxtater 2009.

This critique stresses the need to think of new integrative approaches to study the interrelationship between human behavior and the built-environment; something that can only be instigated by considering the archaeological material through the lens of social theory and phenomenology, discussed and incorporated in a well formulated methodology developed in Part 2 of this book.

## Chapter 1.2. Problem Definition, Research Design, and Structural Overview

### 1.2.1. Problem Definition and Research Design

The conclusion of the previous chapter has emphasized the limitations of archaeological methodology and further underlines the necessity of developing an interdisciplinary approach to the investigation of interrelationships between human behavior and the built-environment.

In the previous chapter, we argued that within traditional and recent scholarship the Minoan Palaces were perceived as the primary foci of elite power. Within this interpretation, the events that took place within these monumental buildings, whether administrative activities or religious rituals are considered central to the maintenance of elite power and the Minoan Palaces were just a passive backdrop or container for human activity. In the analysis of Minoan socio-political structures, it has been illustrated that most studies focus on empirical data and inscribed administrative tablets and combine these approaches within the theoretical frameworks of hierarchy, heterarchy and factionalism, emphasizing administrative and political systems. However, architecture is much more than a passive backdrop for human activity. Little attention has been paid to the way in which these buildings together with the performances performed within these settings played a major role in the formation of specific contexts for social interaction, through which social status, elite power, and identity was produced, negotiated, and maintained. Only recently, scholars expanded the view of Minoan architecture beyond this simple function. However, they did not focus extensively on the socio-political function of Minoan performances.



The study of architecture and human performance is particularly important in understanding socio-political dynamics during all periods of history. Architecture and iconography possess a silent voice and the active roles of these layers in the development of socio-political difference should not be underestimated. Furthermore, human performance in Minoan archaeology (such as dances, processions, bull-leaping, etc.) have been identified and studied since the beginning of the discipline. However, such performances have been almost exclusively linked to the ritual sphere of Minoan society. Although it is legitimate to assign a ritual function to human performance, it should not be forgotten that performance also executes important socio-political functions as it is an important agent in community building. Performative events held at specific architectural settings can have an impact on many other levels within communities.<sup>122</sup>

This dissertation tries to tackle these shortcomings by examining some of the true hallmarks of Minoan culture – particularly the Minoan Palaces, the Tholos tombs and the House tombs – through an integrative framework in order to highlight the use of Minoan monumental architecture and performance as chief media in the integration of Minoan communities. Secondly, this methodology and especially when it is brought within a diachronic perspective should make it possible to reflect upon the endured importance of built-space and performance to the social lives of Minoan people in structuring social relationships and interactions throughout the stages of the Pre-, Proto-, and Neopalatial periods on Crete.

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<sup>122</sup> See section 2.1.5 this dissertation for detailed bibliography and discussions.

### 1.2.2. Structural Overview

Part 2 of this dissertation presents an integrative approach by means of which archaeologists can analyze the relationship between the built environment and human behavior in ancient societies, not only the Minoan one. The integrative approach reflects upon the ways in which Minoan architecture and performance actively staged and structured social encounters. Further, it highlights the use of these performative spaces as contexts for large performative events through which socio-political structures are created, transformed and reproduced. Through this approach, one can shed light on the active use of the layers of architecture, iconography and performances by the Bronze Age Minoan elites in the creation of meaningful contexts of social interaction through which group identity and group differences were negotiated.

Part 3 is designed to situate the emergence of the Minoan Palaces within the past and contemporary socio-political and economic processes occurring on Crete over time. This part discusses the period before and the transitional period leading up to the emergence of the Proto- and later Neopalatial Palaces, which will be discussed later in Parts 4 and 5. This contextualization is crucial in order to understand the close relationship between the emergence of the monumental Minoan Palaces and the socio-political developments on Crete. Their construction may be interpreted as the material expression of gradually changing power relations over the course of the Prepalatial, Protopalatial, and Neopalatial periods. Although a prequel, this part draws partly on the methodology of part 2 and focuses on the interrelationship of built spaces, performance and social structures in the Prepalatial period. The major case studies are the Tholos tombs and the House tombs cemeteries.

Part 4 starts with a deconstruction of the architectural form of the best-known Minoan Palaces of Knossos, Malia, Phaistos, and Zakros. It has to be noted that these Minoan Palaces share as much similarities as differences. This part aims to describe the Minoan Palaces without simultaneously effacing the strong individuality of each of these buildings. The study of the circulation system throughout the building together with the

presence of physical boundaries within the built space illustrates the uniqueness of the Minoan Palaces as performative spaces. The unique architectural layout and circulation pattern created a sophisticated environment for structuring social interaction and relationships.

The fifth part starts off with a short discussion of the pictorial evidence from Minoan Crete outside the palatial context, which not only illustrates that performative events occurred at these places but also legitimates the straight correlation between the Minoan Palaces and large-scale performative activities involving all social tiers of the respective communities. In the first part it became clear that the precise nature of the palatial complexes and of the elites using them is widely debated over the years, however, these new approaches invite to test the interpretation of the Palaces as settings of elite performances. This would add a separate form of data and a different approach to the ongoing discussions, which helps us to elucidate the way in which these buildings were used as meaningful media or representational spaces within the process of community building. By way of example, the Minoan Palace of Knossos will be read as a setting of performances. In the end, we will synthesize the data from Knossos with regard to the other Minoan Palaces by means of the concept of the “architectural narrative”, in order to create a general overview of how the Minoan Palaces and the performances conducted within these settings functioned together as vehicles for the expression of normative notions of power and authority in each of their respective communities.

In Part 6 the main findings of all distinctive parts will be generalized in a short conclusion about the ways in which the built space functions as an active media in a discourse of social interaction in the Pre-, Proto-, and Neopalatial period.

# Part 2

An Integrative Approach to the Minoan Built Environment

## Abstract

The integrative approach outlined in Part 2 begins with a discussion of theoretical approaches to the meaning of architecture and the role of performance in the structuring of societies.

It combines contemporary social theory with an examination of how buildings encode meanings that are nonverbally communicated and visually perceived by inhabitants (controllers) and visitors, potentially influencing their actions and interactions. Architectural settings can serve as the contexts for interactions through which socio-political structures are created, transformed and reproduced. A short discussion of past approaches to Minoan performance illustrates the strong focus on the “image” of performance and the “religious” character of Minoan performances. This dissertation moves away from such approaches and focuses on the active and real life importance of performative events (feasts) within the process of community building and a discourse of power, status, and identity.

## Chapter 2.1. The Formulation of a Methodology to the Study of The Built Space

### 2.1.1. Architecture and Power: Setting the Terms.

Architecture can affect how people interact, and thus plays in particular situations a major role in social ordering. The physicality of the built-space has the possibility to control people's interactions in a very sophisticated way. This dominant aspect of architecture in that it has the power to structure human interactions, has intrigued researchers for many years. Numerous scholars in the fields of sociology, anthropology, and psychology have dealt with the question of the role that the built space plays in a context of social interaction and especially how it is actively used as a physical medium to express normative notions of power and authority as an actual part of people's identities.<sup>123</sup> For the architect Markus buildings are classifying mechanisms, which reproduce social order through the structuring of social interactions.<sup>124</sup> In *Buildings and Power*, Markus was intrigued by the co-relationship between architecture and the exercise of power and highlighted how the structured built spaces of institutional buildings such as schools, prisons, hotels, etc., were designed to control and discipline people.<sup>125</sup> He defined power in terms of surveillance, monitoring and control of social interactions. Throughout the work, Markus provides us with significant detail on how buildings embody asymmetries of power and contain a set of rules through which the freedom of actors - i.e. for example movement, their visual freedom, and social encounters in general – can be strongly controlled.<sup>126</sup>

Recently, the contemporary architect Dovey built further on the work of Markus and reflected thoroughly on the reciprocal relationship between architecture and power and his work is particularly helpful and very comprehensive in order to understand how

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<sup>123</sup> Simmel 1969; 1995a; 1995b; Bourdieu 1973; 1977; 1984; 1987; 1990; 1991; 1991a; Giddens 1979; 1984; 1987; Lefebvre 1991; Gieryn 2002; Löw 2001.

<sup>124</sup> Markus 1987.

<sup>125</sup> Markus 1993.

<sup>126</sup> Markus 1993, 23-25.

people use architecture to create the most suitable environment to enhance their status, influence and power. Dovey argues that “power is not embedded inertly in built form”<sup>127</sup>. Instead, power is actively mediated through it and expressed in several dimensions. In this dissertation, the following dimensions are of particular interest:

- 1) *Segregation/access*: boundaries and pathways can segregate places by status, gender, race, culture, class or age, creating privileged enclaves of access, amenity and community.
- 2) *Publicity/privacy*: built form can segment space in a manner that places certain kinds of people and action under conditions of surveillance while privileging other kinds of people and action as private.
- 3) *Identity/difference*: places can symbolize socially constructed identities and differences of individuals, cultures, institutions and nations.
- 4) *Dominant/docile*: a dominant built mass or volume signifies control over resources necessary to its production. Relative scale in mass or volume cannot be divorced from discourses of domination and intimidation.
- 5) *Place/ideology*: the experience of place has the capacity to move us deeply, to ground our being, to open the question of spirit. Yet the very potency of place experience renders its particularly vulnerable to the ideological appropriations of power.<sup>128</sup>

Although Dovey opens up a completely new mode of thinking about the reciprocal relationship between architecture and power, one has to add to this list of points an extra dimension, namely the notion of *proximity/distance*. As these notions are strongly connected with the concept of boundaries, this element is discussed under the next heading. The role of power within a context of social interaction should be interpreted as the power of one individual (or one group) over the other and as an atmosphere in which the distinctions between two or more groups are expressed, negotiated, and accepted, which all can eventually result in the legitimation of the supreme status and authority of

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<sup>127</sup> Dovey 1999, 15.

<sup>128</sup> All these points and many more can be found in Dovey 1999, 15-16.

one group over the others.<sup>129</sup> The built space can be used in several ways to achieve this mode of interaction. A network of walls and doors for example creates and enforces spatial exclusion within specific social events and the large energy investment in strongly elaborated built environments not only shows the need in a particular society to express the supreme status of those that controlled the resources for the building project, but also leads to an acceptance of the inferior position of potential visitors of the complex.<sup>130</sup> Built space therefore can be used as an active medium to stabilize and legitimize the authority of the ruling elite through its symbols, which are eventually culturally embedded.

However, it is not only the built space that mediates power and authority. Specific performances, such as rituals and ceremonies (processions) are often important strategies to produce and reproduce authority inside communities. Such performances are characterized by a very important duality, in that they both express social inequality and solidarity simultaneously, creating a sense of community.<sup>131</sup> Buildings, especially in prehistoric societies, are often closely connected with such events. Power in a context of social interaction should be defined as power over others and in order to achieve this, both the structuring of the built space and the performances inside these settings led to the acceptance of normative notions of power and authority inside communities.

The presentation of a methodology, which helps us to study the ways in which power relations are mediated through a combination of spatial programming and human performance will be further developed throughout the following chapters of Part 2. This will allow for a detailed analysis of the way in which the Minoan elite used both the built space and performance in the creation of asymmetrical power relations.

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<sup>129</sup> Dovey 1999, 9-11.

<sup>130</sup> For a good example of the role of elaboration and structure in the negotiation of identities, see Wallace-Hadrill (1994) with an analysis of the Roman house.

<sup>131</sup> On the meaning of performances and feasts, see various contributions in Dietler and Hayden 2001; Wright 2004a; Nordquist 2008.



### 2.1.2. “Why” Architecture? A Sociological Perspective On Buildings and Boundaries.

Buildings, as an architectural construct, are in a functionalist point of view nothing more than boundaries, since they physically separate the interior from the external surroundings.<sup>132</sup> The distinction between the inside and the outside implies that the distinction between who was in and who was out reflects at its most basic level a social actor model with two sorts of users; visitors and inhabitants. In Minoan research we do not have studies that explicitly deal with these different kinds of social categories, but in classical research the works of Grahame and Wallace-Hadrill are important to our understanding of the nature of interactions between visitors and inhabitants and the role of architecture and spatial layout in these interactions.<sup>133</sup> Visitors, or as Grahame calls them, “strangers”<sup>134</sup>, are by definition those who are “out”. When they want to enter the building, they claim right to be present in a specific space.<sup>135</sup> The questions “how” they were received by the inhabitants (those with the same right of movement in the house), and in which rooms they were allowed to enter is difficult to grasp in archaeology, since it depends on the personal relationships between the specific visitor and the inhabitants. Recent research has convincingly argued that buildings are arranged and elaborated logically in a way which best suits the users’ economical, political and social needs and that people aim at creating the most suitable environment to enhance their status, influence and power (reproduction and legitimation).<sup>136</sup> Wallace-Hadrill tried to make a clear distinction between private and public for the Roman house.<sup>137</sup> He formulated the thesis that the Roman house articulates the need of the Roman upper class to negotiate their identity, power, and status within society.<sup>138</sup> In order to do so, Roman houses had a

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<sup>132</sup> Pellow 1996, 1.

<sup>133</sup> Grahame 2000; Wallace-Hadrill 1994; Wallace-Hadrill 1988.

<sup>134</sup> Grahame (2000, 21) speaks about strangers and inhabitants, both defined as the users of the building.

<sup>135</sup> Grahame (1999, 59) : “Inhabitants have preferential rights to use the particular spatial domain defined by the architecture of the house whereas Strangers do not. The identities of ‘inhabitant’ and ‘stranger’ are both constituted and reproduced through practices which routinely include individuals while simultaneously excluding others.”

<sup>136</sup> This assumption is generally corroborated by studies of the Roman house, see Wallace-hadrill 1994; Grahame 2000; Laurance 1994; Lawrence and Low 1990.

<sup>137</sup> Wallace-Hadrill 1994, 17-37.

<sup>138</sup> Wallace-Hadrill 1994, 4-8 and 12.

very specific spatial programming in terms of design and decoration, with more public reception spaces for gatherings, and more private spaces that respected the privacy of the household. The decoration and elaboration of the rooms within the house were a major medium through which visitors knew which spaces one was allowed to enter: strongly elaborated spaces were public for the visitor, whereas less elaborated were more private.<sup>139</sup> Although the work of Wallace-Hadrill is very interesting, one should remember that in Minoan Crete the situation could be slightly different in terms of the placement of decoration within units (see Part 4 and 5 for some remarkable differences). However, this does not mean that there is any correlation between the work of Wallace-Hadrill and the Minoan periods.<sup>140</sup> One major problem of Minoan archaeology, and especially regarding the Minoan Palaces, is the question whether or not they were in fact “inhabited”. Therefore, we prefer not to use the term “inhabitants” in this dissertation, but rather the term “controllers”, as the latter represent the group of people that controlled access and circulation throughout these complexes in the case of large public events. The architectural setting and more specifically the subdivision of space has a strong communicational and determining value, in that it regulates interaction and communication between people.<sup>141</sup> Lavin elaborated the idea of behavioral regulators or physical boundaries in the built environment and looked at architecture as an outcome of behavioral decisions prior to the actual constructional phase. These regulatory systems or physical boundaries act as a means to control the amount and type of interaction that occurred between individuals, groups, and between people and architecture itself.<sup>142</sup> The latter observation is interesting as in connection to buildings. More specifically for boundaries inside the interior space of the building, the reason underlying the

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<sup>139</sup> Wallace-Hadrill 1994, 38-61.

<sup>140</sup> Wallace-Hadrill 1988; 1994; One should remember that such differences in elaboration and decoration and the notions of public and private spaces are context specific and therefore different for every society. The general insights of Wallace-Hadrill’s work are very interesting and thus deserve to be reconsidered in this dissertation, all the more since decoration and elaboration in this work also are of major importance for the Minoan elites as media for expression; See Grahame (1997) for an alternative discussion.

<sup>141</sup> The basics that are presented here in this chapter are the result of contemporary studies and theories of space in sociology, anthropology, and psychology. See Lawrance and Low 1990; Grahame 2000, 1-23; Sanders 1990, 48-51; Specific archaeological studies to the built-environment see Blanton 1994; Kent 1990; Parker-Pearson and Richards 1994; Locock 1994.

<sup>142</sup> Lavin 1981.

construction of boundaries is the partitioning of space in such a way that a variety of activities may be practically organized by those making use of it.<sup>143</sup> A driving force for such divisions is that, for instance, as far as the interior of the palatial building is concerned, people can use the built space to regulate social interaction by making some spaces easily accessible, less accessible, while closing off others, by means of doors, corridors, vestibules, stairways etc. This implies that buildings constitute good instruments for the study of people's behavior and actions. Buildings were main actors within the process of social interaction between humans. They are the settings through which social relationships are constantly formed.

In all societies *proximity and distance* play an important role in the intensiveness of interaction and communication between people.<sup>144</sup> In his proxemic theory, Hall studied the nature of interpersonal and intergroup interaction and defined eight personal space zones in which people interact in very different ways. He defined an intimate, personal, social and public level, each with two sub-zones.<sup>145</sup> The zoning of people and the differences in distance between people affects the direct involvement in social interaction and contributes to the creation of social difference between the members of the community. However, the process of zoning is not the only aspect that has an impact on people. Altman argues that the physicality of the built space, such as physical boundaries, etc., comprises important elements of non-verbal communication, which offer the possibility to transfer meaning and contribute to a feeling of social distance.<sup>146</sup> Especially for prehistoric societies one could argue that there is a strong relation between actual physical distance and social distance. In terms of crossing boundaries, it should be acknowledged that it is not only the physical distance that is essential, i.e. whether or not interaction can take place. As important is the difficulty in crossing the number of boundaries placed between them.

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<sup>143</sup> Anderson 2004, 146.

<sup>144</sup> Hall 1959; 1966; 1974; Sanders 1984, 132.

<sup>145</sup> Hall 1966, 113-120.

<sup>146</sup> Altman 1975, 66-101 and 103-145; Sanders 1984, 140.

Barth argued that boundaries literally divide objectively at ground level and more abstractly set limits demarcating social groups.<sup>147</sup> People conceptually create boundaries and on the basic level of the concept, boundaries are assumed to separate what they distinguish. Where people invest in physical boundaries, these are most strongly intertwined with conceptual processes in the human mind.<sup>148</sup> The two-sided nature of boundaries was emphasized by Wallman (1978), who suggested that boundaries have two kinds of meaning. The first is purely structural: boundaries are the meeting places of contiguous social systems or systems of organization and significance. The second, however, is particularly interesting in this dissertation, as it refers to the way in which boundaries define members and non-members of particular groups: “us” versus “them”, inside and outside.<sup>149</sup> During the process of creating a building, its builders conceptually create boundaries before these are physically represented in the built environment. The main assumption here is that the number of physical boundaries and the difficulty of crossing them resulted in an enforced feeling of distance between people. Physical boundaries, as reflections of conceptual considerations made by humans, create a physical setting that allows control over the interaction and communication between the different users.<sup>150</sup>

When visitors move through a building, they will notice that several transition spaces - such as corridors, stairways, doors, vestibule halls, etc. - form the link between the shallow spaces closely situated to the outside and the regions that lie deeper inside the complex. These transition spaces gave the controllers the choice to maintain a distance or to move into convergence interacting with the visitor, eventually inviting them into the deeper parts of the complex. The combination and orientation of internal and external transition spaces and the ubiquity of doors and thresholds resulted in a configuration in which access and movement could be easily controlled, structured and organized. This enabled a dynamic, and clearly structured control of the interactions within these buildings, since the number of physical boundaries and the difficulty of crossing them

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<sup>147</sup> Barth 2000, 17.

<sup>148</sup> Barth 2000, 27-28.

<sup>149</sup> Wallman 1978, 200-217; Mullin 2011, 6.

<sup>150</sup> For information about boundaries, see Pellow 1996; Barth 1969; Okely 1983.

resulted in an enforced feeling of distance between people. This model of proximity and distance extends beyond the simple notions of true physical *distance in length*, and instead defines *distance by access*.

Numerous sociologists have been particularly influential for the thoughts outlined above, and they are often cited in numerous studies by those who take an agent-centred approach to understanding the reciprocal relationships between architecture, people, and (social) structures.<sup>151</sup> Of the classical sociologists, Georg Simmel is by far the most important author to promote our understanding of the concept of space and its relation towards the social. The texts that are of primary importance for this research are *Die Soziologie des Raumes* and *Über räumliche Projektionen sozialer Formen*, both written in 1903.<sup>152</sup> Although his theories have been written during the first decade of the previous century, it must be acknowledged that his work still offers a strong framework for the study of complex societies. The most interesting aspect of Simmel's work is that he doesn't define space as a pre-existing given, but that space is formed through social operations and actions. Space is therefore not a pre-existing subsistence, but should always be interpreted as something social constituting space and this formed space in turn influences the social.<sup>153</sup> Crucial in his work is that social action forms space, but that formed space (the physical) reflects on the social, and can reinforce the social through its physical presentations.

For Simmel, who was of great influence to Giddens, the investment in physical boundaries in the built environment was a major human act. He refers to the "Zerlegbarkeit und Begrenzung des Raumes", the partialism of space in individual pieces "die als Einheiten gelten und [...] von Grenzen gerahmt sind"<sup>154</sup>, that are defined by boundaries. For social groups or individuals, boundaries or "Grenze" have the same functions as the wooden frame of a painting. In their most basic objectification they isolate/protect from the outside, and act inclusively/collectively towards the inside. Borders/boundaries are, according to Simmel, artificial; they are the result of social

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<sup>151</sup> Simmel 1969; 1995a; 1995b; Giddens 1984; Bourdieu 1977; Gieryn 2002; Löw 2001.

<sup>152</sup> Simmel 1995a, 132-183.; Simmel 1995b, 201-220.

<sup>153</sup> Schroer (2006, 60-65) gives a good overview of Simmel's theories.

<sup>154</sup> Simmel cited in Schroer 2006, 68.

action and interaction. Delineating the opposite is according to Simmel a major social practice.<sup>155</sup> It is very important to note that for Simmel the boundary does not have to be physical, but when it is, it reinforces the difference between the opposites.<sup>156</sup> Investing in material reflections that emphasize inequalities or difference through boundaries is in this view to be seen as the installment of stability, social differences and a clear overview between the different social tiers. Since boundaries are ‘set’ or ‘created’ by human actions they are, therefore, normative in character and constitute a normative foundation for the structuring of the living space, and play an essential role in the production and reproduction of social relationships.

These kinds of thoughts and a particular focus on human action become apparent in the works of sociologists during the last half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and especially in the works of Pierre Bourdieu and Anthony Giddens.<sup>157</sup> Core topics within their works are the relationships between agency (human action) and social structure. In his *Structuration Theory* Giddens attempted to develop a theoretical approach with a strong focus on the duality of structure. By actively engaging into different social practices and behaviors, agents produce and reproduce social structures.<sup>158</sup> According to Giddens, structures have a ‘virtual existence’ and are not material as they are always appropriated by the mind and/or behavior of the agent: ‘they only exist as memory traces orienting the conduct of knowledgeable human agents and as the instantiation of rules in the situated activities of agents’.<sup>159</sup> Essential in the work of Giddens is that people are knowledgeable agents, who have certain motivations to engage into the action, who think rationally by constantly making choices and who are aware of the consequences of their actions.<sup>160</sup> For Giddens, architecture (physical space) plays, similar to Simmel, an essential part in social interaction. Architecture offers the possibility to create and reproduce social relationships

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<sup>155</sup> Simmel cited in Schroer (2006, 69): ‘Die Grenze ist nicht eine räumliche Tatsache mit soziologischen Wirkungen, sondern eine soziologische Tatsache, die sich räumlich formt.’

<sup>156</sup> Simmel cited in Schroer (2006, 69): ‘Durch die Investierung in einer Linie im Raum gewinnt das Gegenseitigkeitsverhältnis nach seinen positiven und negativen Seite eine Klarheit und Sicherheit.’

<sup>157</sup> Bourdieu 1977; 1990; Giddens 1979; 1984; A thorough discussion and comparison between the theories of Bourdieu and Giddens can be found in Perales Perez 2008: [http://www.essex.ac.uk/sociology/student\\_journals/grad\\_journal/2008\\_2009/paco%206.pdf](http://www.essex.ac.uk/sociology/student_journals/grad_journal/2008_2009/paco%206.pdf)

<sup>158</sup> Giddens 1984, 21; Giddens 1979, 69-70.

<sup>159</sup> Giddens 1987, 21.

<sup>160</sup> Giddens 1984, 41-45.

between people. With the concept of the *locales* Giddens illustrates the active use of the physical environment in a context of social interaction, in which physical space transforms into place, i.e. meaningful centers of human life.<sup>161</sup> Locales are the main settings for social interaction. Giddens: “A setting is not just a spatial parameter and a physical environment, in which interaction occurs: it is these elements mobilized as part of the interaction. Features of the setting of interaction, including its spatial and physical aspects ... are routinely drawn upon by social actors in the sustaining of communication”<sup>162</sup>. Architecture plays an important part in defining the manner in which social interaction takes place and the significance it would have had for the agents involved.<sup>163</sup> Essential to social interaction is the element of co-presence, which means that several human agents are present inside these spaces. Giddens borrowed the concept of co-presence from the sociologist Goffman, whom we will turn to later.<sup>164</sup> Gieryng also reflected on the relationship between space and society and was strongly influenced by Giddens in that he argued that architecture is a medium in which social relations not only take place but through which they are created, reproduced and altered.<sup>165</sup>

Pierre Bourdieu’s *Theory of Practice* can be regarded as the major alternative to Giddens’ *Structuration Theory*. Bourdieu developed a set of concepts around which society and human actions should be explained. In his writings, he puts constantly the focus on the concepts of ‘habitus’, ‘fields’ and ‘capital’. Habitus is a set of inner subjective constructs, a personal reference scheme through which an individual examines, judges, synthesizes and eventually acts in the social world at all times.<sup>166</sup> A person’s social background, his education, etc. all contribute to person’s individual habitus.<sup>167</sup> Bourdieu conceptualizes the world in which we live in terms of different independent fields (i.e. the fields of politics, the field of work or the field of arts), in which individuals compete and struggle

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<sup>161</sup> Giddens 1984, 118.

<sup>162</sup> Giddens (1979, 206) quoted in Tilley 1994, 19.

<sup>163</sup> Tilley 1994, 19.

<sup>164</sup> Goffman 1963, 18-24.

<sup>165</sup> Gieryn 2002, 37.

<sup>166</sup> Bourdieu 1977, 83.

<sup>167</sup> Bourdieu 1984, 170.

over capital.<sup>168</sup> Capital (i.e. economic, symbolic, and social capital) in Bourdieu's social theory are different significant types of resources in one or more of the various 'fields' which constitute the social world. Individuals use this capital in order to negotiate their social positions. Physical and Social space are very closely related for Bourdieu. Human agents are like things *locus bounded*. The locus or *topos* as he calls it, "can be defined as the site where an agent or a thing is situated, as a location, or as a position, as a rank in an order"<sup>169</sup>. Further he states "social space is an invisible set of relationships which tends to retranslate itself, in a more or less direct manner, into physical space"<sup>170</sup>. This means that the physical properties attributed to an individual is an indication of his or her position in social space.<sup>171</sup> Where peoples' interactions are concerned, the differences in material properties strengthen the differences and inequalities among them. Material possessions and social practices not only constitute social space but also become real symbolic differences and constitute a language to negotiate, maintain and improve the normative order in society.<sup>172</sup>

When it comes to the reciprocal relationship between people and architecture, the work by the sociologist Martina Löw adds much to the discussion. Martina Löw describes space as a relational ordering of living beings and social goods<sup>173</sup>: "Raum ist eine relationale (An)Ordnung sozialer Güter und Menschen (Lebewesen) an Orten"<sup>174</sup>. People are part of the entire set of elements of spatial construction and they have the power to position and reposition themselves through their actions, which brings us to the first major element of Löw's theory, i.e. the process of spacing or "das Platzieren von sozialen Gütern und Menschen bzw. Positionieren primär symbolischer Markierungen, um Ensembles von Gütern und Menschen als solche kenntlich zu machen"<sup>175</sup>. Spacing includes, according to Löw, a wide range of topics, such as the establishment of computer

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<sup>168</sup> Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, 97.

<sup>169</sup> Bourdieu 1996, 11.

<sup>170</sup> Bourdieu 1996, 12.

<sup>171</sup> Bourdieu 1991, 30-33; Also Bourdieu 1991a.

<sup>172</sup> Bourdieu 1996, 17.

<sup>173</sup> Löw 2005, 3.

<sup>174</sup> Löw 2001, 224.

<sup>175</sup> Löw 2001, 158.



networks to transcend national borders, the construction of buildings, but also, and this is of major importance to this dissertation, the positioning of people in relation to other people.<sup>176</sup> This means that the constitution of spaces involves positioning, with the result that group differences and the negotiation of power relations are a logic outcome of the process.<sup>177</sup> Further, Löw states that the constitution of space requires “synthesis, that is to say, goods and people are connected to form spaces through processes of perception, ideation, or recall”<sup>178</sup>. In order to investigate the relationship between people and architecture, one first has to scrutinize the importance of human action in Löw’s theory of space. To Löw, human action is central to the constitution of space. People actively shape space through their actions, and through the process of social interaction people get connected with other people or groups of people.<sup>179</sup> Buildings can become institutionalized tools within communities for the expression of different positions between groups of people and therefore have a very strong synthesizing effect. They are on one hand a result of human action but on the other their institutionalized forms can reflect on the people, and thus inform them about their place within society. Human actions shape space and these spaces in turn reflect on the people. The institutionalized or normative character of the built space, i.e. the rights and privileges you have to enter certain places or not, are a straight reflection of a person’s position within society. Through specific cues encoded in the built environment people were informed about normative and appropriate behavior within specific environments.<sup>180</sup> Buildings and the interactions within them can therefore be important mechanisms to downplay social differences between different individuals and groups of people.<sup>181</sup>

The significance of the Minoan Palaces, the most monumental structures of the Late Bronze Age on Crete, lies in the existence of both shared and different elements in the habitus of all persons inside these communities. It is through the process of continual social interaction within these communities that these buildings become meaningful

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<sup>176</sup> Löw 2005, 3.

<sup>177</sup> Löw 2005, 3.

<sup>178</sup> Löw 2005, 3-4.

<sup>179</sup> Löw 2005, 1-3.

<sup>180</sup> Rapoport 1990, 87-122.

<sup>181</sup> Maran 2006a, 75-76.

entities as such. Architecture plays a central role in social interaction by delineating physical and social boundaries between interacting agents.

The sociologist Goffman has reflected extensively on the necessary components for social interaction.<sup>182</sup> One such essential component to create a state of social interaction is *co-presence* between individuals or groups of people. In his work *Behavior in Public Places* Goffman distinguished three types of co-presence: a) a ‘gathering’, b) a ‘situation’ and c) a ‘social occasion’.<sup>183</sup> Of essential importance to this dissertation is the “social occasion”, which is likely to involve a large number of people and happens in a particular setting, which is characterized by a typical elaboration and/or special equipment essential to the occasion. The type of social interaction at a social occasion is “focused” when there is a clear focus of attention, when people show active engagement and when people “sustain a special type of mutual activity”<sup>184</sup>, which can be for example the execution of group ritual. Goffman’s theories are essential to every work that deals with social interaction: at particular social occasions, which involve different peer groups, a specific architectural setting could have been created suited to the objectives of the hosting group. As the context for these interactions, architecture may have been used during these events as a physical setting to negotiate social status, power, and identity and to structure social relationships.

What connects all these sociologists is not only the active role of architecture in the shaping of social interaction, but the importance of social interaction itself in the creation of society. They all plead for an approach that aims to bring back to life past actors. Although social theory is a good step forward in order to create a theoretical frame, it must be acknowledged that these theories have been constructed on the basis of the authors’ real life observations. We first have to find analytical methods that help us to infer the nature of social interaction through the analysis of the architectural traces which have been transferred in the archaeological record.

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<sup>182</sup> Goffman 1959; 1963.

<sup>183</sup> Dynel 2011, 455; Goffman 1963, 13-22.

<sup>184</sup> Dynel 2011, 455; Goffman 1963, 24; Goffman 1963, 83.

### 2.1.3. Spatial Analysis: Is Access Analysis the Good Way to Go?

In past and recent archaeological investigations, scholars have argued that one such analytical method is access analysis, an approach that has also already found its way to Minoan archaeology.<sup>185</sup> The background of this approach is space syntax theory. Access (or gamma) analysis as developed by Hillier and Hanson assesses the articulation of spaces within a typical building, and their link with each other.<sup>186</sup> Therefore, this model is often called a theory of circulation that tries to move away from typological considerations of buildings based on their ground plans, reintroducing the movement and circulation of people in the center of research. Through this method, one can very easily assess the ease with which one space in the building can be accessed from another. Access analysis permits “the representation, quantification and interpretation of spatial configurations in buildings and settlements”.<sup>187</sup> Because the method has been already applied and explained in detail in several other archaeological studies, we will only give a short introduction to the method and focus only on those elements that are crucial for the present research.<sup>188</sup> Access-analysis begins with the creation of an access-map.<sup>189</sup> All spatial units, including open-air spaces such as courtyards or transitional spaces such as corridors, stairs or hallways, are presented by dots (circles) with lines that connect these units when there is a clear connection (permeability). This network of dots and lines forms an unjustified access map. The exterior (or the carrier) space is represented by a circle with a cross through it. It is important to note that since the exterior marks the space outside the boundary of the architectural complex it should always be integrated in the analysis and that each building can only have one exterior. After the access map has been created, it may be justified by making the exterior (carrier) the ‘root’ of the

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<sup>185</sup> Letesson 2005; 2008; 2009; For Mycenaean archaeology see Thaler 2005; 2006.

<sup>186</sup> Hillier and Hanson (1984) refer to it as gamma-analysis where the built space of buildings is concerned; Grahame (2000) refers to the method as access-analysis; Further reading on space syntax and its applications see Hanson 1998; Hillier, Hanson, and Graham 1987; Foster 1989; Cutting 2003; 2006; Putzeys 2007.

<sup>187</sup> Hillier, Hanson and Graham (1987, 363) quoted by Grahame 2000, 29.

<sup>188</sup> The discussion here mainly follows Grahame’s (2000) and Putzeys’ (2007) refined versions of access analysis. They applied the method to the Roman sites of Pompei and Sagalassos.

<sup>189</sup> Hillier and Hanson 1984, 147-148.

system.<sup>190</sup> From this justified access map or “j-graph” different topological properties for each of the units within the building can be calculated.<sup>191</sup> Additionally, one could model the ways in which the building “structures” interaction between those who controlled access to the building (“the controllers”) and potential visitors. An important element in order to define the interaction potential of spaces is the “depth” to which visitors are permitted to penetrate into the structure. When the assumption that inhabitants will primarily only admit visitors in the rooms close to the exterior is accepted, this provides a possible indication of which rooms are crucial in the interaction between inhabitants and strangers. The more boundaries that have to be crossed from the outside, the smaller the chance that those who were out will be allowed to enter the space. Based on the depth from the exterior, the mode of interaction between strangers and controllers may be assessed and the places of most possible interaction between them identified. The positions of power increased according to the depth one was allowed to penetrate inside the structure.<sup>192</sup> The deeper the room was situated, the harder it is to reach from the people outside. In most cases, rooms are situated deep inside the structure if the controllers want to limit access to them. The depth at which the inhabitant was situated provides the main indication for status, and the depth to which visitors were allowed to penetrate the building (the closer one could get to the culmination point) also indicated their status.<sup>193</sup> However, caution needs to be preserved in considering the situation in such an oversimplified way. Not only the depth within the configuration is important to assess accessibility. A physical boundary renders units situated in depth levels closely to the exterior as inaccessible to visitors as those situated in the deepest levels of the building.<sup>194</sup> We will therefore focus both on the distribution of physical boundaries in the built space and the distinctive depth levels. Regarding status and power, Markus has

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<sup>190</sup> Grahame 2000, 29-30; Putzeys 2007, 34.

<sup>191</sup> Putzeys 2007, 35.

<sup>192</sup> Dovey 1999, 22; Putzeys 2007, 35-36.

<sup>193</sup> Putzeys 2007, 36-42; Apart from the depth, several other syntactical properties can be calculated such as control value, mean depth, relative asymmetry, and real asymmetry.

<sup>194</sup> One should, however, not over-emphasize the predictability of access analysis in real active contexts of social interaction. The presence of real physical boundaries in the built space and the distribution of physical boundaries are at least as important in considering whether or not a unit is accessible or non-accessible within the building. This has the result that even those units situated in depth levels relatively close to the exterior could be “inaccessible” to visitors because access and visibility was strongly controlled and filtered by a physical boundary.

argued that buildings are not only a tool for classifying classes by restraining interaction and drawing clear boundaries between different groups of people. Based on the nature of a buildings' syntax the structure itself can create an atmosphere of bonding between various groups of people.<sup>195</sup> Later this dissertation it will become clear how and why both the mechanism of classifying and bonding play such important roles within social interaction (see Part 4 and 5 this dissertation).

Apart from the quantitative approaches outlined above and their positivist application by Letesson to Minoan archaeology, there is a trend in archaeology to implement the method of access analysis as a qualitative rather than a quantitative method for analyses. In some cases, the poor quality of the archaeological record led the complete dismissal of the method<sup>196</sup> or, at least, instigated serious reservations to its application.<sup>197</sup>

Marion Cutting (2003; 2006), who conducted a qualitative access analysis involving the prehistoric sites of Çatalhöyük and Hacilar in Anatolia, provided archaeologists with a clearly defined set of parameters to be taken into account in order to identify whether or not the application of space syntax analysis might be useful. According to Cutting, the usefulness of space syntax analysis as a quantitative method in archaeology is site specific and limited depending on the amount of archaeological data available for investigation. What the archaeologist needs is 1) a minimum level of information regarding the internal subdivision of space by means of walls and ideally completely excavated buildings, 2) a clear view of the connections between the inside and the outside of a building and the location of all entry points; 3) complexly structured spaces because multiple room buildings bring forward more informative numerical information than small buildings; and 4) knowledge of the layout of the upper level(s) of a building, which are almost never preserved archaeologically. In this case, the archaeologist needs to find the connection points between the ground floor and upper levels, often identified by the location of staircases.<sup>198</sup>

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<sup>195</sup> Markus (1993, 25) cited in Dovey 1999, 24.

<sup>196</sup> Bernbeck 1997, 201.

<sup>197</sup> Cutting 2003, 15-16.

<sup>198</sup> Cutting 2003, 18.

When one of these parameters is almost entirely missing, one should be cautious in applying access analysis as a quantitative technique. When a considerable amount of the required information is missing, access analysis becomes less informative and secure. Given that the nature of spatial data available is sometimes very unclear, one might even ask oneself why so many archaeologists have been attracted to space syntax analysis in the first place and why these numerical approaches became so popular in Minoan archaeology as well? In his monograph, Letesson argued, and we have discussed this thoroughly elsewhere, that the material record of the Neopalatial period on Crete delivered enough representative data in order to apply space syntax analysis as a quantitative method. However, one has to admit that it immediately becomes clear that one of the main motivations of applying the method lies in the desire to describe, define, structure and thus interpret/understand the Minoan past, trying to quantitatively locate supporting evidence in the numerical results to justify interpretations of Minoan social structure. In Minoan archaeology where many key-questions are still left unanswered or a matter of debate, it is very tempting and fully understandable that such alternative methods to increase our understanding of Minoan history are explored.

Although such positivist approaches to the built space are completely reasonable and encouraging, Cutting explicitly argues that the power of space syntax analysis lies in the fact that it could be used as a 'tool to think with'; in a non-quantitative way that "enables the internal layout of individual buildings and the relationship between groups of buildings to be studied and compared in ways that are overlooked by descriptions of room sizes, the distribution of features and the proportion of built to non-built space." Further she argues that "Where the archaeological data are sufficient about room functions, thinking in terms of access analysis can highlight repeated associations between certain activities, access and privacy"<sup>199</sup>.

Such a statement seems comprehensible for a number of reasons and shows that access analysis as a method should not stand on itself but rather should be part of a non-formalized approach to the built space that builds on diverse insights within the social

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<sup>199</sup> Cutting 2003, 18.

sciences and the field of phenomenology. As an archaeologist, one often has to deal with poor archaeological data: upper floors are often missing and some of the spaces within a building are not clearly definable in terms of form and interconnectivity with the other units in the overall structure.

Further, access analysis has strong limitations as a method for studying the lived experience of buildings. Since access analysis replaces rooms and doorways with dots and lines, this method does not consider the physicality of the architectural environment, e.g. its layout, size, elaboration (furnishings and decoration), and physical boundaries such as doors or guards facing an entrance - all-important elements that have been brought into display by social actors in order to create meaningful places and which all have a direct impact on the actors' perception.<sup>200</sup> Since these elements have influenced the nature and intensity of social interaction, it is important to further evaluate their meaning. Indeed, social encounters take place in real physical contexts and not in the nodes of the access analysis. With respect to boundaries, in access analysis an immediate continuum of circulation between units is indicated with a line. By contrast, in reality circulation between rooms was most probably not continuous. No account is given of the presence of real physical boundaries such as locked doors or even guards facing the entrance, blocking off or giving access to the adjacent unit.<sup>201</sup> The importance of physical boundaries in a discourse of social interaction should not be underestimated: they have the potential to clear access, but also to close, effectively segregating spaces and controlling the means of access to any particular point.<sup>202</sup> Within a building several transition spaces and physical boundaries, such as corridors, stairways, vestibules, doors, etc., form the link between a certain space and the regions that lie deeper within the complex.<sup>203</sup> These transition spaces gave the inhabitants or controllers the choice to maintain distance or to interact with the visitor, eventually inviting the visitors into the deeper parts of the complex. Doorways play a significant role in all types of Minoan architecture. In the case of the Minoan Palaces entrances to the palatial buildings and the transitions from one unit to the other inside the complex were often marked by doors,

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<sup>200</sup> Ellis 1999, 80.

<sup>201</sup> Ellis 1999, 80.

<sup>202</sup> Foster 1989.

<sup>203</sup> Grahame 1999.

guards, sometimes by large thresholds, and maybe even curtains, which provided the possibility to control movement and encounters between people. The ubiquity of doors inside Minoan buildings, which has often been neglected in research, resulted in a configuration in which access, movement, and interactions within these buildings could be easily controlled, structured and organized.

This enabled a dynamic and clearly structured control of the permeability and the interactions within these buildings. In such an approach, one tries to move away from a mathematical concept of space in which distance is expressed in true length, and rather focuses on the negotiation of access and the way architecture dictated degrees of accessibility and participation on social occasions. Furthermore, access analysis fails to take into account important architectural and symbolic characteristics of the spaces in the building put in place by those living actors who used and transformed the space into a meaningful place for social interaction.<sup>204</sup> The physicality of the built space, however, played an important role in the mediation of asymmetrical relations. In this dissertation we will not use the numerical data as derived from the access analysis: in this case they are not very useful. Caution is heeded in applying a passive, statistical method to reconstruct - as is my purpose - active social behavior in real contexts of social interaction in which the layers of architecture and iconography are actively used as media for expression. However, it may be suggested that the access maps themselves have the potential to reveal the more general properties of centrality, linearity, depth and control in a very illustrative way, especially when they are combined with a physical spatial analysis of the building. Both should be combined since they give the possibility to reveal a deeper structural program within buildings.

In such a model of social interaction, the numerical access analysis itself is not very useful and will be primarily used as a visual tool to illustrate the occasionally very complex circulation patterns in a more comprehensive manner. Since we are dealing with the active use of the built space by humans, we should abandon the dots of the access analysis and redirect focus to the actual physicality of the built space. In Part 4 of this dissertation, we clearly illustrate and prove the usefulness of turning away from the numerical access analysis. To my mind, the use of the access graphs as a visual tool, a

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<sup>204</sup> Markus 1993, 23.



focus on the position of different room types and the placement of physical boundaries inside the built space result in a deeper and more vivid understanding of the underlying principles behind the structure of a building and the active role of these physical features in the structuring and shaping of social interaction and relationships.

It becomes clear that if one decides to use access analysis to explore social processes in Minoan archaeology, it should be used in a rather qualitative manner or as a visual tool within a non-formalized approach to the built environment that finds its inspiration within the field of social sciences and phenomenology.

#### 2.1.4. Buildings and Meaning – From Ordinary Spaces to Meaningful Places

Above, we have attempted to take some first steps towards the formulation of a methodology that gives archaeologists the opportunity to understand the relationship between architecture and society and how buildings function as structuring entities, which could be used as active agents or chief media for the expression of different social relationships. The structuring of different groups of people within the buildings during particular social occasions (events) could be a reflection of the socio-political structure of these communities since they built these structures themselves. We have argued above that access maps of buildings are a good visual illustration when combined with the physical representation of true boundaries in the built space, of the ways in which control of movement and accessibility play dominant roles in producing relationships of power and social inequality. I have also noted that a strong focus on the physicality of the built space is necessary, as access analysis does not take into account the symbolism and meaning of built environments, or how people invest time, effort, and resources in creating meaningful places for social interaction.<sup>205</sup> Attention should be paid to the real architectural and artefactual elements that are brought into display by social actors in order to create meaningful places and transfer messages to their users.

Rapoport's (1980; 1990) study of nonverbal communication dealt with this topic and within this study he argues that architecture creates a physical environment which gives

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<sup>205</sup> Parker Pearson and Richards 1994, 30.

specific cues to users that remind them of socio-cultural rules, norms and conventions and thus educate or instruct them about how to behave in particular contexts. Rapoport (1980, 300): “Buildings and settings are ways of ordering behavior by placing it into discrete and distinguishable places and settings, each with known and expected rules, behaviors and the like ... Built-environments thus communicate meanings to help serve social and cultural purposes; they provide frameworks, or systems of settings, for human action and appropriate behavior”<sup>206</sup>. In order to communicate meaning, it makes sense to assume that also Minoan communities have at their disposal a conventionalized symbol system that was culturally embedded; a series of aesthetic, and architectural cues meaningful for Minoans. These cues can be size and shape of the unit, color, materials, and decoration. Architecture has therefore the possibility to stage human interaction, and dictate some form of expected behavior in and around the structures of the building. The emergence of specific forms of architecture is therefore the outcome of several (continuously) changing socio-political phenomena over time (in this dissertation norms in Minoan life, the builders’ expectations, and the building’s social function). However, the elaboration of the built environment alone is not sufficient to communicate with the visitor. A building needs a clear syntax, a fixed set of syntactic rules created by the builders to construct a building in a way which allows visitors to understand the relationship of each different architectural unit to the whole.

For Rapoport, fixed-feature, semi-fixed, and non-fixed feature elements are used as the major media to communicate meaning.<sup>207</sup> As a Minoan archaeologist the majority of the data exists out of the totality of a building’s structure (fixed feature elements such as walls, doors, porches, Lustral Basins, etc.), and a small portion of portable finds found inside the different rooms (semi-fixed elements such as benches, stands, different ceramics, tablets, etc.). Nonfixed-feature elements that would inform us about the people that dwelled inside these spaces are in most cases entirely lost.<sup>208</sup> In Minoan research this kind of three layered distinction of the built space in fixed, semi-fixed, and non-fixed confronts us with some problems, and this especially as to the role of iconographical

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<sup>206</sup> Rapoport (1980, 300) quoted by Sanders 1984, 124.

<sup>207</sup> Rapoport 1990, 87–101.

<sup>208</sup> See Maran 2006a, 76.

elaboration (wall, floor and –unfortunately hypothetically- ceiling decoration) of these buildings. Although they are fixed in space (on a wall or floor) their appearance may have been modified strongly in time (more quickly than the walls of a building themselves). They may have been non-existent at certain periods and profusely present at another point in history. Thaler has dealt with this problem in his study of the Mycenaean Palaces and has created two different forms of fixed feature elements: “stable” and “unstable”, the latter comprising the different forms of surface treatment and decoration of walls, floors and ceilings.<sup>209</sup> In the further course of this dissertation I will discuss both stable and unstable fixed features together.

If architecture is imbued with meaning and is to be regarded as a medium for communication and for the structuring of social interaction, such places become meaningful settings in a socio-political discourse of power.<sup>210</sup> Meaningful places are places in which builders invested in building resources in order to create an adequate setting that reflected their supreme status inside the community, which in turn resulted in a clear transfer of normative notions of power, authority, and status. In comparison with previous, typological approaches to space that likened space to a container, filled with objects and people, and which formed the background of any action, the more dynamic approach to concepts of space emphasizes the active role of the built space itself in the shaping of social interaction. Both material investments in the built space and large-scale ritual performances were constitutive to the negotiation and transfer of normative notions of power and authority in prehistoric communities without true written resources at their disposal. The appropriation of a specific mode of elite culture within and the monumentality of elite buildings was more than just trying to be fashionable. Accepted modes of representation were primarily used for the expression of power, wealth, and authority. To the elites who built them, these buildings were active mediators in establishing and maintaining their place in the dynamic socio-political realm.

This brings us towards the last part of the proposed methodology, i.e. performative theory, which aims to look at the monumental constructions of the Tholos tombs, the

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<sup>209</sup> Thaler 2006, 95.

<sup>210</sup> Tilley 1994, 20-22.

House tombs, and the Minoan Palaces through the concept of “performative spaces”, originally created by Fischer-Lichte.<sup>211</sup>

### 2.1.5. Performative Theory

In *Mycenaean citadels as performative space*, Maran investigated the performative aspects of Mycenaean citadels in order to understand the close relationship between the physicality of the built-space and the social practices possibly taking place in it.<sup>212</sup> In order to do so, he turned to the concept of ‘performative space’ by Fischer-Lichte, which has the quality of opening up, structuring and organizing possibilities for relations between actors and the audience, for movement and perception.<sup>213</sup> For Maran, the terms performative space and staging are essential in order to understand Mycenaean citadels, whose configuration deserves to be interpreted under the viewpoint of performative aesthetics (i.e. more specifically the connections between the aesthetical, the physical design, the experience of space and the impact of this all on social actors experiencing it). Architectural space needs human agents to become meaningful, i.e. to become a representational space for socio-political display.<sup>214</sup> The analysis of the Mycenaean citadels by Maran shows that movement, architectural cues and access and non-access were important elements in the creation of social differences and were constitutive to the social order of things. In the Mycenaean citadels, the movement of people was determined via a series of architectural (f.e. thresholds) and aesthetic cues, which were considered meaningful to the people when they traversed these spaces.<sup>215</sup> Maran showed exhaustively the social dimension behind crossing a threshold in the Mycenaean Palaces, as it symbolically and physically indicated the transition from one realm into the other.<sup>216</sup> In the same spirit as Maran, this dissertation primarily deals with the question how the multitude of spatial impressions within an architectural setting affects Minoan life and how the human body and all senses experienced such settings.

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<sup>211</sup> Fischer-Lichte 2004, 187.

<sup>212</sup> Maran 2006a.

<sup>213</sup> Fischer-Lichte (2004, 187) quoted in Maran 2006a, 76.

<sup>214</sup> Maran 2006b, 12.

<sup>215</sup> Maran 2006a, 82 and 85.

<sup>216</sup> Maran 2006a, 82.

In *Performance, Power and Art of the Aegean Bronze Age* (2005), German is one of the first scholars to present a thorough study of the depiction of performance in Late Bronze Age society using a well-established anthropological framework that builds upon performance theory. One of the main aims of her monograph was to present the reader with a theoretical framework holding numerous insights about the active role of figurative art and more specifically the depictions of performance in the constitution of Late Bronze Age society in Crete and the Greek Mainland.<sup>217</sup>

What distances German from other scholars who dealt with this topic is that she turns away from previous approaches representing images as passive reflections of status and instead argues that iconographical depictions are active media in the creation of well-defined social relations. Throughout the monograph/book German catalogues the diversity of depictions of performance within the archaeological record and it immediately becomes clear that the majority of these depictions come from glyptic art such as seals, seals impressions, rings and frescoes, and performances including bull leaping and dancing are predominant. Before German attempts to answer the relationship between the image of performance and its wider social meaning, she focuses first on gender related aspects of the human figure (sex, age, and diverse social status) portrayed within these depictions and recurrent characteristics in the figural compositions, such as in case of the frescoes the inclusion of architecture, a paved surface for the event, and an audience observing the event. Her chapter on bull leaping provides a thorough overview of the archaeological evidence in chronological order, and the same is true for the chapter on Dance and Procession, which she argues to be difficult to distinguish from one another in Minoan art. German suggests that the typical locales for both bull leaping and dance/procession activities would be open air courts and theatrical areas. This is not innovative, nor is her discussion of gender related topics which simply echoes past reconstructions. 'Meanings of Performance: Interpreting the Images' is immediately the most compelling chapter in this book. In this section German attempts to answer the relationship between the image of performance and some form of social meaning. German underlines once more that the majority of these images of performance were

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<sup>217</sup> German 2005, 15-16.

depicted on glyptic art and that their appearance should be connected to the palaces, acting as ‘signs of identification for the social authority of the Palaces, first on Crete and later on the Mainland’.<sup>218</sup> These depictions of performance were part of a larger socio-political process in the Late Bronze Age in which such depictions of performance became representational identification devices for larger groupings. When people saw these depictions on a shared medium such as glyptics, these depictions functioned as some form of commemorative “badges” which would not only identify the person as part of this select group, but also their connection to the Palaces.

Although German’s work is interesting and constitutes a major step forward in the study of Minoan performance, the discussion above demonstrates that the objective of her work is entirely different from what will be explored in this dissertation. German dealt exclusively with the question of how Minoans might have perceived the real depiction of performance from the Neopalatial period onwards. In this study, however, we want to question how Minoan perceived the performative event itself. An examination of the archaeological material from the Pre-, Proto-, and Neopalatial periods gives the possibility to reflect on the importance of performance and specific locales for performance in the constitution of Minoan society over time, which contrasts with German who, apart from iconography, did not review any other archaeological material.

In order to understand how performance functioned as an important tool within Minoan society, a first question is what one has to understand under performance and how it could turn into something meaningful within pre-modern and modern societies. It is only recently that the concepts of human experience, movement, and performativity have been truly incorporated into archaeological thought and practice.<sup>219</sup> Inomata and Cohen published an edited volume that tackled the questions of what constitutes performance and how it can be identified in the archaeological record.<sup>220</sup> A wide range of scholars, who draw upon a varied amount of case-studies – Dynastic Egypt, Classic Maya, Inca Empire, etc.– attempt to apply some well-known performance theories to archaeology.

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<sup>218</sup> German 2005, 85.

<sup>219</sup> Bergmann and Kondoleon 1999.

<sup>220</sup> Inomata and Coben 2006.

Some define performance as ordinary and daily actions<sup>221</sup>, while others use the term to refer to large-scale public spectacle.<sup>222</sup> In this dissertation performance should be interpreted as large-scale social events and is therefore closely related to the concept of feasting which became a very popular theme in anthropology and Minoan archaeology.<sup>223</sup> Performance, as Richard Schechner puts it, is ‘an organised human behaviour before witnesses’<sup>224</sup>. However, it is necessary to focus on the social and physical backgrounds behind such organized human behaviors in order to understand the socio-political function of this behavior. The basic hypothesis is that it is possible to analyze performative space to highlight how architecture acts as an active agent on the level of the community in terms of structuring social interaction between different groups of people.

Performance forms apart from architecture a second major component in the negotiation of identity. A focus on architecture and performance within a context of social interaction offers us the possibility to draw some conclusions about the nature of the way in which social structures within a society were negotiated, created, and maintained and especially how people created specific forms of architecture and performative events for these specific purposes. The core of this research tries to evaluate the crucial role of large-scale ritual events performed and organized by the Minoan elites to create and negotiate social status and identity. These events were important devices for the integration of communities and the negotiation, production and legitimization of social differences, status and power<sup>225</sup> and are crucial in the constitution of every pre-modern society<sup>226</sup>. Performance in various cases can mean that both the actual performers and the audience have a physical setting in which to perform, which has been designed in a way which allows for the intended objectives behind the performance to be attained and transmitted

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<sup>221</sup> Hodder 2006, 82.

<sup>222</sup> Connerton 1989, 51 and 87; Inomata and Coben 2006a, 16.

<sup>223</sup> On the role of feasting in the negotiation and establishment of socio-political power see Dietler and Hayden 2001; Various contributions in Hitchcock, Laffineur and Crowley 2008.

<sup>224</sup> Schechner, quoted in Letesson and Vansteenhuyse 2006, 95.

<sup>225</sup> Inomata and Coben 2006a, 12.

<sup>226</sup> Inomata and Coben 2006a, 12; Taylor 2002, 149-169; Inomata and Coben 2006a, 11.

to the audience observing it.<sup>227</sup> The specific architectural contexts for these performative events and the active engagement of people with these architectural spaces transform these particular settings into meaningful places inside Minoan communities. It has to be clearly stated that what is referred to as performative acts, is not the same as normal human behavior in every-day life. In the course of this dissertation I am not interested in random daily behavior, but rather in identifying the performance of large social events and their nature. Victor Turner refers to social events performed on a community level as “social dramas”<sup>228</sup>. Such social events comprise a large number of people which are often brought together within a specific architectural setting and can include a number of different performative acts, such as processions and dancing. Such events are perfect tools to define and maintain social complexes and identities.<sup>229</sup> Several performative acts, like processions and dancing can coexist together as an integrated part of a larger rite. In order to have enough representational power it is important that a large enough number of people, participants and/or spectators are included, in order to create at least the impression that it is a significant event witnessed by a portion of society. This means that the architectural forms used to stage performative events, i.e. the “performative spaces”, had to be spacious enough to include both actors and spectators.<sup>230</sup> The necessity to repeat these events at several times makes them ritualized events, which are ordered, structured, and programmed both in space and time inside these communities. Ritual performances are iterations of events in that they repeat events that happened before and it is only by this clear link to the past that the ritual can become a standardized performance.<sup>231</sup>

Based on the study of Turner (1982) we have strong indications that the organization of large social events gives communities the possibility to reflect about the nature of social complexes, structures of authority and class. These events are organized to address some socio-political issues inside communities, are mostly performed by or for those in authority, and are organized at specific times of the year to negotiate, and probably

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<sup>227</sup> Alexander 2006, 62.

<sup>228</sup> Turner 1974, 23-59; Turner 1982, 92.

<sup>229</sup> Pearson 1998, 33.

<sup>230</sup> Fischer-Lichte 2005, 22-24.

<sup>231</sup> Giesen 2006, 338.



maintain the social boundaries between classes.<sup>232</sup> In this regard, performance is not only a major tool to transmit pre-existing structures, norms, and values towards communities, but also has the power to create, negotiate, and legitimate changes within communities. It is through these events that identities are negotiated, formed, and transformed.<sup>233</sup>

It becomes clear that performance becomes a major form of social display. Architecture (performative space) plays in these events a crucial role in that it influences the event by numerous variations and creative distortions that possibly find their origin in the architectural environment. The architectural environment represents a “set sequence of steps” that have to be completed before the performance is fully executed. If we look at modern times, then the places that would be labelled as performative spaces are those spaces where sports, theater, and ritual are performed.<sup>234</sup> Football stadiums, large churches, and theaters are part of our common sense; nevertheless these spaces are not entirely comparable with the architecture discussed in this dissertation, i.e. the Tholos tombs, House tombs, and Minoan Palaces. However, when an event takes place, all of these spaces are very intensively used as they attract large crowds for the organized event. It is this characteristic, their use as performative spaces, that clearly links the Minoan and modern examples. As to the modern examples Goffmann argued that the performances led to “an expressive rejuvenation and reaffirmation of the moral values of the community in those spaces”<sup>235</sup>. These places promote a social solidarity, not without blurring the social differences between groups of people, but by engaging the whole community in one collective identity.<sup>236</sup> It is on these particular occasions, through the repetition of the traditional rites, that the entire community is regenerated.<sup>237</sup> Performative spaces play a crucial role in structuring performative events and the social identity of people, both performers and audience, who participate in them. A decent spatial analysis of these spaces would include elements such as accessibility and visibility. The concept of visibility closely relates to how physical boundaries are

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<sup>232</sup> Turner 1982, 92.

<sup>233</sup> Pearson 1998, 33.

<sup>234</sup> Schechner 1988, 11.

<sup>235</sup> Goffmann (1959, 35-36) quoted by Schechner 1988, 13.

<sup>236</sup> Dietler and Hayden 2001, 88.

<sup>237</sup> Eliade 1965, 40.

perceived by human actors. To all cultures, the visible is important, and this is no less true for the Minoan culture. Visibility is strongly determined by the spatial context in which we find ourselves. Our field of vision is made by the things we see, its horizon formed by the boundaries of the physical environment that surrounds us. Vision, visibility and their different gradations in a context of social interaction very often lead to asymmetrical relations between people. This makes vision and the amount of visibility important tools of power.<sup>238</sup> ‘To be able to see’ or ‘to be witness of’ what happens at particular places can be considered in specific architectural contexts as a privilege for a select number of people and makes them powerful tools in shaping asymmetric power relations. Today for example, areas sectioned for Very Important People are only accessible for a select number of people, and numerous elements like curtains, walls, doors, elevated stairs, etc., block the direct sight of others wishing to see. Visibility should therefore be perceived in my view ‘as having the privilege to see what occurs on the other side of the fence’ or not, and is therefore an important factor to create social differentiation. Therefore, the recognition of performative events and the active role of architecture within them are a direct reflection of how specific societies deal with the establishment of differing individual and communal identities.<sup>239</sup> This makes a performative approach especially interesting for the study of Minoan society.

In archaeology, several instances of pictorial and architectural evidence can be associated with Minoan performances, such as dancing and processions. Both at the burial sites and within the settlements of the Pre-Proto- and Neopalatial period, structures include paved and non-paved courtyard areas, where dancing and processions could have been performed. Furthermore, pictorial evidence helps us to understand more clearly how and within which architectural contexts such activities should be organized. Architectural and pictorial evidence concerning dancing and processions will be discussed throughout Parts 3, 4 and 5 in this dissertation.<sup>240</sup> However, the main interest of this study does not lie in the pictorial evidence of Minoan performance, but rather the socio-political significance

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<sup>238</sup> See Thompson 2000; Thompson 2005, 31–51.

<sup>239</sup> Inomata and Coben 2006a, 19.

<sup>240</sup> In this dissertation only a selection of archaeological sites, material and pictorial evidences are discussed (Part 3, 4 and 5). For a more detailed overview and discussion of the pictorial evidence regarding processions and dance, I would like to refer to German 2005, 50-71.

of the performative events themselves in the formation of communities.<sup>241</sup> The physical correlates of Minoan performance and especially the functioning of the Minoan Palaces, but also the Tholos and House tombs as active agents within large social events will be a main focus in this dissertation.

#### 2.1.6. Conclusions

In this part we have created a methodology which deals with the reciprocal relationship between built space, performance and Minoan society. Although all these issues were discussed separately, it should be noted that in every day life all these elements were strongly intertwined. Spatial programming and the creation of meaningful places are part of the same cognitive process of its builders. This theoretical framework offers insights into the ways in which we conceptualize ancient built environments and presents a means to examine Minoan architecture as dynamic and experienced places, whereas the study of these environments has largely neglected the centrality of movement and human engagement as integral components to the built environment.

What follows is an examination of the archaeological evidence throughout the Pre-, Proto-, and Neopalatial periods which gives us the chance to reflect upon the nature of the performances executed within particular architectural settings, the function of monumental buildings in structuring social relationships, and to draw some conclusions on the real impact of the performative events in the constitution of Minoan society over time.

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<sup>241</sup> For more on feasting and performance in Minoan and Mycenaean archaeology, see the various contributions in Wright 2004b; Hitchcock, Laffineur and Crowley 2008; Theorizing feasts from an anthropological perspective, see Dietler and Hayden 2001.

# Part 3

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The Establishment of Social Complexity On Crete: a Continual Process of Conceptualization and Innovation. A Survey from the Prepalatial, to the Protopalatial and into the Neopalatial period.

## Abstract

Part 3 discusses the period before and the transitional period leading up to the emergence of the Minoan Palaces, which will be discussed later this dissertation in parts 4 and 5.

Through an analysis of the Tholos tombs and House tombs cemetery sites of the Prepalatial period and the changes within the urban built environment throughout the stages of the Pre-, Proto-, and Neopalatial period, it will be argued that one can see some gradual built-environmental changes within the archeological record, which illustrate a constantly increasing architectural complexity and the growing importance of having specific *locales* for the execution of group performances.

We will discuss the hypothesis that such built-environmental changes were the result of processes of increased social complexity and this tendency towards social stratification resulted and became re-enforced through the construction of monumental building structures and participation in communal performances in and around these settings.

## Chapter 3.1. The Conceptualization of the Minoan built-environment in the Prepalatial period: the Funerary Landscape and Social Complexity.

### 3.1.1. Introduction

The Prepalatial period on Crete covers approximately the period between 3100 BC to 1900 BC and spans the Early Minoan (EM) I, II, III and Middle Minoan (MM) IA periods. The present section succinctly describes the phenomena occurring at the Prepalatial cemeteries and settlements on Crete in order to add to our knowledge of the ways in which Minoans conceptualized their built-environment in this period and how this is connected with changes in the social complexity of the Prepalatial communities. The Prepalatial period on Crete, which essentially comprises the Early Bronze Age, is marked by the absence of large urban centres and mega-structures such as the Minoan Palaces. The Minoan landscape of this period is primarily characterized as a mosaic of agricultural settlements and communities, which grew in size and increased in number and social complexity in the course of the third millennium BC. At the current state of research, information of Prepalatial domestic architecture and the ways in which it was connected to the social is very scarce and limited to a small number of settlements, such as Myrtos-Phournou Koriphi, Trypiti, and Vasiliki.

With regard to social complexity in the Prepalatial period, Myrtos-Phournou Koriphi is still the most informative site so far. Thanks to the excavations carried out by Peter Warren, Myrtos forms the basis for all discussions regarding Prepalatial architecture as well as EM social complexity. Peter Warren pictured the settlement existing out of one single building that was inhabited by a large family or clan of 100-120 people.<sup>242</sup> Tod Whitelaw was one of the first scholars who dealt intensively with the exact nature social relations in Prepalatial Crete. By a study of the material remains of the site of Myrtos-Phournou Koriphi through the concept of the household he proposed an entirely different interpretation to the settlement. A careful analysis of the relative chronology on site and

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<sup>242</sup> Warren 1972, 267; See especially Tenwolde (1992, 1) who defends and retakes Warren's reconstruction of one large extended family at Myrtos-Phournou Koriphi.

the distribution of finds throughout the settlement in each of the architectural layers made him conclude that the basic social unit in the Prepalatial Myrtos was the nuclear family. The entire settlement of Myrtos-Phournou Koriphi was occupied by 5 to 7 nuclear families each with their own cluster of units for daily activities such as food preparation, dining, sleeping, etc. The population of Myrtos would not have been 100-120 people as suggested by Warren, but far less, and only about 25 to 30 people.<sup>243</sup> Building further on Myrtos Whitelaw believes that the household was the basic social unit on Crete in the Prepalatial period.<sup>244</sup> Additionally, Whitelaw identified the same social unit by the analysis of the Tholos tombs, something that contradicts strongly with Branigan's interpretations.<sup>245</sup> For Branigan a larger social unit was involved in the construction, possession, and final usage of the Tholos tombs and he concluded that the extended family or a small clan group would be in possession of them.<sup>246</sup> Whitelaw's final argument in the analysis of Myrtos-Phournou Koriphi, i.e. that the households at Myrtos-Phournou Koriphi were strongly interrelated<sup>247</sup>, favors the hypothesis that larger social ties among people were important social phenomena within Prepalatial communities. In this view Branigan's interpretation of a communal initiative beyond the level of the household for the construction and possession of the Mesera tholoi sounds very acceptable.<sup>248</sup> The level of involvement of different individuals in the construction process of the tomb structures will be discussed into more detail further down this chapter.

Although there is very limited evidence from the settlements, the large numbers of cemetery sites across the island constitute true hallmarks of the Prepalatial period. In this time-span, burial practices show a very strong regional differentiation and include cave

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<sup>243</sup> Whitelaw 1983, 333.

<sup>244</sup> Similar observations can be made for Trypiti. At Trypiti six or seven different houses occupied the site in the Prepalatial period, which suggests a very similar population as at Myrtos, see Vasilakis (2010) for detailed information.

<sup>245</sup> Whitelaw 1983, 333-335.

<sup>246</sup> Branigan 1993, 95.

<sup>247</sup> Whitelaw 1983, 333-334.

<sup>248</sup> Branigan (1993, 84-89) contradicts Whitelaw's assumptions and argues that a group of people larger than the nuclear family should have been in possession of these tholoi.

burials, House tombs and the well-known Tholos tombs, which were communal and used across generations.<sup>249</sup>

Tholos tombs emerge from EM I onwards and are strongly clustered in southern Crete in the region of the Asterousia Mountains and the Mesara valley, whereas the House tomb is the form of burial architecture commonly found in sites in eastern and northern Crete in the close vicinity of the Mirabello region.<sup>250</sup> The archaeological material gives the impression that both regions on Crete are characterized by strong regional differences and each created unique socio-political trajectories. Branigan already pointed out at an early stage that there are some exceptions to the rule.<sup>251</sup> One such exception is the cemetery of Archanes, where Tholos tombs are attested outside the south-central region.<sup>252</sup> Additionally rectangular tomb structures have been found at several Tholos cemeteries in South-Central Crete such as Koumasa, Ayia Triada, and Platanos.

To date, the article by Legarra Herrero (2009) offers the most recent study of the mortuary behavior in the first phase of the Prepalatial period on Crete and in particular focuses on the wide diversity of material assemblages and architectural innovations taking place simultaneously in different regions of the island. Such a focus created the potential to identify differences in the ways Cretan communities dealt with death and afterlife. Moreover, it enabled an investigation of the way in which such cemetery sites became important social *locales* for the negotiation and sustainment of social relationships and whether or not the role of these cemeteries changed diachronically throughout the Prepalatial period.<sup>253</sup> Legarra Herrero (2009) focused mainly if not only on the first part of the Prepalatial period, i.e. from EM I to EM IIB and his analysis demonstrated convincingly that the image of a unified Minoan culture on the entire Island does not coincide with the material evidence at hand, but instead advocating a more realistic picture of heterogeneity and well-defined group differences constituting the mosaic of communities on the Cretan isle.<sup>254</sup> Different regions underwent different processes of change, which suggests that one should not think in terms of island-wide

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<sup>249</sup> Legarra Herrero 2009.

<sup>250</sup> Branigan 1993; Xanthoudides 1924; Seager 1912.

<sup>251</sup> Branigan 1993, 12.

<sup>252</sup> Maggidis 1998.

<sup>253</sup> Legarra Herrero 2009, 33-34.

<sup>254</sup> Legarra Herrero 2009, 34.



models of a monotone and homogeneous Minoan culture, but in terms of differing local trajectories and heterogeneity thus creating a more accurate picture for the social (and political) complexity of Prepalatial communities on Crete.<sup>255</sup>

As early as EM I, Crete could be divided into three distinct regions in terms of mortuary behavior. In the region of the Asterousia mountains a new type of burial came into existence. A round tholos tomb used for communal burial which stands in large contrast with the earlier individual burials in the Neolithic period within this region.<sup>256</sup> Another breach with the Neolithic period was the large quantity of ceramic vessels deposited in and around these communal tombs, indicating the involvement of multiple individuals (possibly the entire community) in social occasions, ceremonies or rituals held at this location, rendering these tombs into socially important *loci* for establishing, negotiating and sustaining social relationships.<sup>257</sup> Another interesting phenomenon can be attested at the North coast in places such as Agia Photia Siteia, Gournes and to a less extent in Pseira, where cemeteries consist of a series of small cist or rock-cut tombs which are often accompanied by Cycladic-style material culture; types typically found in the Cyclades and in particular spots on the Greek Mainland. The fact that such burials are found at these places in Crete illustrates the strong influence of off-island connections on the development of these EBA communities. Additionally, these strong off-island links are good indications that these communities not necessarily shared the same beliefs and social structure as the tholos communities.<sup>258</sup>

The third type of mortuary behavior existed out of the use of cave and rock shelters as a place for burial. This type of behavior was less region-specific and is found on the entire island. It is interesting to note that the number of burials found here was significantly smaller than those found at the tholos tombs and larger than those found within the cist or rock cut tombs along the North coast.<sup>259</sup>

The tholos tomb communities show a very consistent pattern in terms of material assemblages etc., which suggests that they all shared a very similar type of social

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<sup>255</sup> Legarra Herrero 2009, 30 -31.

<sup>256</sup> Legarra Herrero 2009, 34-37.

<sup>257</sup> Legarra Herrero 2009, 34-37.

<sup>258</sup> Legarra Herrero 2009, 37.

<sup>259</sup> Legarra Herrero 2009, 38.

organization and structure.<sup>260</sup> In the North coast, the picture is far from homogenous, pointing towards a strong diversity among the sites and communities.<sup>261</sup>

EMII A and EM IIB each have their own specific characteristics in terms of mortuary behavior. EMIIA generally tends to be seen as the further development of the earlier, existing EM I patterns, whereas EMII B marks a period of strong change on the island, an important turning point in the development of each of the communities in the respective regions.<sup>262</sup> In EM II A, tholos tombs were still mainly connected to the Asterousia region. However, examples also start to appear in the Mesara valley and slight changes in mortuary behavior can be attested in the material record. As early as EM IIA, two-tholoi cemeteries are becoming common, which could point to the fact that during EM II A, these communities underwent a growing social complexity on the level of the community. Off-island material and exotica are often to be found in most of the tholoi.<sup>263</sup> As compared to the Asterousia and Mesara region, the North coast underwent more significant changes. Remarkably, the Cycladic style cemeteries at Gournes and Agia Photia Siteia were abandoned; Pseira grew out to be a real necropolis, which in fact was an example for the development of different new cemeteries on the North coast. Other cemetery sites appeared all over the island, such as the east Mirabello region, with the cemeteries of Mochlos, the North cemetery at Gournia and Palaikastro being the best known examples.<sup>264</sup> Typically for these sites is the presence of the so-called rectangular 'house' tombs. EMIIA shows again a very strong diversity in mortuary behavior on Crete. The Asterousia mountains and Mesara valley kept their homogenous status, whereas the North coast of the island as well as the material assemblages found in the eastern Mirabello region show that these communities were very heterogeneous in nature, as their assemblages show very strong intrinsic differences.<sup>265</sup> EMII B shows very strong differences in terms of the development of mortuary behavior on Crete. The region of the Asterousia mountains and Mesara valley stayed very stable. Many of the tombs, if not

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<sup>260</sup> Legarra Herrero 2009, 39.

<sup>261</sup> Legarra Herrero 2009, 39.

<sup>262</sup> Legarra Herrero 2009, 39- 40.

<sup>263</sup> Legarra Herrero 2009, 40- 41

<sup>264</sup> Legarra Herrero 2009, 44.

<sup>265</sup> Legarra Herrero 2009, 45.

all, stayed in use and this without major modifications.<sup>266</sup> North central Crete, and more specifically the North Coast seems to have undergone a major crisis, as most of the cemeteries were completely abandoned by the beginning of EM IIB. In the Mirabello area, House tombs stay the most monumental burial form and most of the cemeteries seem to have undergone no major changes, with the exception of Mochlos, that showed a continuous expansion throughout the Early Bronze Age, becoming the major necropolis known today.<sup>267</sup>

The vast Prepalatial material available from the cemetery sites to date makes them an interesting case study, not only in terms of diversity and correspondance between burial practices, but especially in terms of the close interplay between the material and the social. In this chapter, it will become clear that several other major changes and innovations occurred outside this timeframe and should be situated later at the end of the EM III -early MMI period. Such observations will further add to those made by Legarra for the earlier periods.

In what follows, we will reflect upon the reciprocal relation between increased social complexity and the emergence of monumental tombs in the Prepalatial period. Such construction processes suggest a very complex socio-political dimension at play behind these architectural forms, and this long before the erection of the Minoan Palaces. We will start with a discussion of the Minoan tholoi and the way the diachronic changes in their architecture and material assemblages are connected with the process of increased social complexity. The second chapter of Part 3 is dedicated to the House tombs and more specifically the cemetery site at Mochlos and the House tomb at Myrtos-Pyrgos.

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<sup>266</sup> Legarra Herrero 2009, 45.

<sup>267</sup> Legarra Herrero 2009, 45.

### 3.1.2 The Minoan Tholos Tombs: An Architectural Survey

#### 3.1.2.1. Past and Recent Discussions

In what follows, we synthesize most of the ongoing discussions in past and recent publications on the function of the Prepalatial Tholos tombs. It highlights the importance of these building structures as active media in the structuring of Prepalatial Minoan communities. In order to do so, one will focus on the changes and innovations that occurred over time, their relationship to the settlements, and their sociological relevance.

Ample of research has been carried out by several scholars towards the appearance and function of the Minoan Tholos tombs on Crete. Xanthoudides first systematically studied the Tholos tombs.<sup>268</sup> Additionally, Keith Branigan's investigations are fundamental to our understanding of these tholoi. Branigan dealt thoroughly with revealing the sociological relevance of the Tholos tombs for Minoan Society in several articles and monographs.<sup>269</sup> In the volume *Cemetery and Society in the Aegean Bronze Age*, Branigan and Murphy discussed the variety of functions of the Tholos cemeteries for the Prepalatial communities.<sup>270</sup> Their primary concern was trying to understand the motivations behind their construction and how their appearance was connected with changes in the social fabric of the Prepalatial period.<sup>271</sup> Murphy's findings are particularly interesting, because her reconstructions make it possible to challenge the traditional egalitarian image so often proposed for the Prepalatial Tholos communities.<sup>272</sup> Elsewhere in this chapter we will suggest to move away from the traditional paradigm and focus upon the hypothesis that

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<sup>268</sup> Xanthoudides 1924.

<sup>269</sup> For Tholos tombs in general see Branigan 1970; 1993; 1998; Murphy 1998; 2000; 2006.

<sup>270</sup> Branigan 1998; Murphy 1998.

<sup>271</sup> Branigan (1998, 13) defined a Minoan Tholos tomb as a "circular, thick-walled, above-ground structure with a single doorway". He is further convinced that at least a part of the tholoi was fully vaulted in stone. Some tombs consist of a complex of rectangular antechambers, others of a single room; some have no ante-chamber at all and a handful has enclosures and/or paved areas in the area in front of the tomb. This makes clear that it is not easy to give a comprehensive description of the Minoan tholoi as an architectural type.

<sup>272</sup> Murphy 2000; 2006; Especially Branigan (1991, 188; 1993, 129-130 and 137) for the traditional perspective.

Prepalatial Crete was already a stratified hierarchical society with well-structured asymmetrical social relations.

As mentioned before, the Tholos tomb is the type of burial mainly found within the Mesara region (fig.1). Currently we have evidence for about 94 existing tombs in this region and it seems that their life span ranges from EM I to MMI, a date that coincides with the construction of the first Palace structures on the island.<sup>273</sup> Compared to the former Neolithic customs in this area, this new type of burial heralds a new era in tomb construction. Tholos tombs were large communal burial sites and a focus for community rituals.<sup>274</sup> Minoan tholoi were situated in close proximity to the settlements, have varying sizes and varied degrees of architectural complexity, were sometimes clustered in groups, housed the collective memory, materialized the ancestral link with the forefathers and simultaneously functioned as a geographical beacon territorializing the land that surrounded the settlement.<sup>275</sup> Tholos tombs were a dominant element in Prepalatial community life, which is not only demonstrated by the large investment of energy and resources, but also by their considerable size and monumentality.<sup>276</sup> The Minoan tholoi were the main social arenas for ritual activities and communal occasions of the Prepalatial community.<sup>277</sup>

### **3.1.2.2. Settlement versus Burial Site**

Minoan tholoi have a very typical positioning in the natural landscape and a look at the topographical and structural properties of the tombs shows that at a very early stage of the Prepalatial period the Minoans already conceptualized the concepts of distance, visibility and orientation as important guidelines to structure in a very sophisticated manner the reciprocal relationship between the funerary landscape and the landscape of the every-day life.

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<sup>273</sup> Branigan 1993, 12.

<sup>274</sup> Branigan 1970, 99; Soar 2009a; Soar 2009b.

<sup>275</sup> Murphy 1998, 30; Branigan 1993, 55-56; Branigan 1970, 28-55.

<sup>276</sup> Murphy 1998; 2000; 2006.

<sup>277</sup> Murphy 2006, 81-82.

Several elements illustrate that the Minoan disposition towards the reciprocal relationship between the world of the living and the world of the dead is a very complex and important matter. Although the physical evidence is rather small to make any generalizations, it seems that Minoan tholoi were located in the close vicinity of the settlement. Many of the Tholos tombs were important landmarks and in almost 75 per cent of the cases a Tholos cemetery site has been associated with a settlement. Branigan's calculations show that many Minoan tholoi were placed no further than 250 m of the settlement and to the east, which proves that one felt the need to place the burial sites close to the settlement to promote accessibility and visibility.<sup>278</sup> Furthermore, Branigan's tabulations of the location of the doorway for 46 investigated Tholos tombs illustrates that a strong tradition existed which preferred an east-facing entrance and an equally strong aversion to the settlement area being situated to the east of the tombs (fig. 2, 3).<sup>279</sup> According to Branigan, such a placement could indicate the requirement that the world of the living should have a direct view to the ancestral burials. At the same time, such a placement could indicate a feeling towards the realm of the dead.<sup>280</sup> Because of this, one conceptualized some interesting contrasts inside the built-environment. On the one hand, they felt the need to place the tombs in close proximity to the settlements; on the other they were anxious to create a direct visible link between both and therefore they placed the doorway of the tholoi away from the settlement, which indicates that they clearly intended to separate the two realms. At all cost, the dead should not be able to "see" the living, and vice versa.

Goodison sees the eastern doorway linked to the rising sun in the east, a similar phenomenon closely linked to what was happening later as well with some spaces in the Minoan Palaces.<sup>281</sup> For this reason, the eastern doorway could have been an important feature in establishing a cosmological connection for the forefathers buried inside the tholoi.

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<sup>278</sup> Branigan 1998: table 1; Branigan 1998,17.

<sup>279</sup> Branigan 1998: table 2; This placement may also be otherwise, such as the orientation towards the rising morning sun in the east, which is often considered as meaningful in "sacred" contexts.

<sup>280</sup> Branigan (1998, 23): "Making the cemetery visible and accessible to the living, whilst ensuring that the dead could not intrude on the everyday life of the community reflects an underlying stress in attitudes to death and the dead in EM society."

<sup>281</sup> Goodison 2001; 2004.

Joan Murphy argued that the placement of the tholoi was strongly connected to the control of surrounding land and economic resources. The short distance between settlement and burial site was a necessity because Prepalatial communities wished to materialize collective memory and an ancestral link with the forefathers.<sup>282</sup> Additionally, the ancestral link functioned as a geographical beacon to territorialize the land that surrounded the settlement, which has led her to argue that: “The presence of the dead in the landscape is a continuum which marks and parallels the perpetuation of the living in the landscape. The act of maintaining these tombs and their visual effect on the landscape mark and legitimize the related community’s right to act as guardians of restricted resources in the vicinity”<sup>283</sup>. The Minoan tholoi acted not only as burial sites, but were also important landmarks which gave each respective community the possibility to claim the area around the settlement and authorize its use of land. In order to illustrate this hypothesis, Murphy stresses the remarkable differences in the construction of both tombs and settlements within this region.<sup>284</sup> A first remarkable observation is the large number of Tholoi found by archaeologists compared with the paucity of settlement remains. Another argument is the large energy and resource investment in the tombs, which are built with considerable size and monumentality and conceived as permanent and durable built features of the landscape.<sup>285</sup> This could point to the fact that Prepalatial communities prioritized the funerary landscape over the daily life and that these places were the main social arenas for communal occasions.<sup>286</sup> Also Branigan comes to very similar conclusions when describing the distribution of the tholoi in the Ayiofarango Valley: “the valley was divided into a number of discrete holdings, each held by one or more clan groups ... each clan group would have its own arable land, fresh water supply, potting clay ... , and on each land holding were built not only the houses of the living but also the tombs for the dead and an open-air shrine.”<sup>287</sup>

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<sup>282</sup> Murphy 1998, 27-28.

<sup>283</sup> Murphy 1998, 30.

<sup>284</sup> Murphy 1998; 2006.

<sup>285</sup> Murphy 1998; 2000; 2006.

<sup>286</sup> This perspective, however, should be nuanced by recently discovered settlement material dating back to the Prepalatial period, which illustrates that similar processes happened within the urban realm as well, see further down this dissertation.

<sup>287</sup> Branigan 1993, 104.

### 3.1.2.3. Diachronical Changes in Terms of Layout and Design

Although Tholos tombs have been used continually throughout the entire Early Bronze Age, it has to be noted that some major changes occurred in their overall design and layout. Especially the transition between the early Prepalatial and late Prepalatial period is interesting, as these changes could indicate that the very nature of the social occasion held at these places gradually became more complex within these communities. Over the course of the Prepalatial period the overall plan of the Tholos tombs gains in complexity, the number of tholoi per unique cemetery increases (two to three tholoi) and by the end of the Prepalatial period (EM III – MM IA) this architectural type becomes the most standardized and widespread phenomenon in the entire Mesara plain (fig. 1).<sup>288</sup> A general trend may be noted in the rise and fall of the Tholos tombs. The Prepalatial period was characterized by a rapid distribution and popularity, which was immediately followed by a strong decline throughout the successive stage of the Protopalatial period (MMIA – MMIB). In some very exceptional cases, the Tholos tombs persisted and were used well into the Protopalatial period and Neopalatial period.<sup>289</sup>

The majority of the Minoan Tholos tombs may be described as organically extended complexes. The earliest Tholos tombs, which were constructed in EM I, all go back to the same tradition and existed of a circular burial in some cases complemented by one anteroom facing the entrance to the tomb. By EMII, however, the layout and design of the Minoan tholoi became more complex. At some tholoi, several annex rooms were constructed in the area in front of the tomb and paved courtyards or enclosed open-air spaces were added. Examples for such “organically expanded” complexes are Lebena Yerokambos (fig. 4) and Ayia Kyriaki (fig. 5). At Ayia Kyriaki, the tomb, the antechamber and a second outer room were constructed in EM I. Afterwards, early in EM II, a third outer room was added to the complex and soon after the construction of the third chamber, the area in front of the tomb was partly enclosed by a wall with a floor in

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<sup>288</sup> Legarra Herrero 2009, 44-48.

<sup>289</sup> See Branigan 1970: appendix 3, for the chronology and usage of all Tholos tombs.



tamped earth. The last feature dated to EM II was a small stone platform laid out immediately outside the third chamber inside this enclosure. Finally, a fourth room was added to the south of the third room, at some point in MM I, shortly before the tomb became obsolete.<sup>290</sup> Added annex-rooms, paved or non-paved courtyard spaces and precinct walls become an integral part of the structure from EM II onwards. Paved courtyards are found at the tholoi of Koumasa, in between Platanos A and B, and Apesokari I and II. Open-air enclosures, which were not paved, were found at Kamilari I, Moni Odigytria and Ayia Kyriaki.<sup>291</sup> At several tholoi (Kamilari I, Lebena, Apesokari I and Ayia Kyriaki) altar-like structures were uncovered, both in the annex-rooms and outside the tomb area (fig. 6).<sup>292</sup> In the transitional period between EM III – MMI Minoans started to reconsider the layout and design of the antechamber complexes in front of the tholoi and this process of innovation led to the creation of a standardized format in the MM I period, in which the picture of grown complexes disappeared and was replaced by clearly designed architectural suites. The process of conceptualization reached its final form in MM I A.<sup>293</sup> The MM I tombs were faced by a rectangular structure with internal partitions, which are characterized by a narrow corridor on one of the sides, an antechamber, and one or two more chambers facing the antechamber at the center of the unit. (fig. 8) The direct linear axis from the tomb to the outside world is in this way intentionally disturbed to prevent a direct link between the dead and the outside world making it possible to obscure the view from the outside to the inner parts of the tomb. Screening of the direct view to entrances to the tholoi within the course of the Prepalatial period points towards intentionally controlled access to the burial. Good examples illustrating this standardization are the tombs of Apesokari I (A) and B, Ayios Kyrillos, Platanos B, Kamilari A.

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<sup>290</sup> Branigan 1993, 17-26; see Blackman/Branigan 1982 for detailed excavation report and description of finds.

<sup>291</sup> Branigan 1993, 127-131.

<sup>292</sup> Branigan 1970, 132-134.

<sup>293</sup> It has to be stressed that the final MM I form is not a creation “ex novo”, but has rather to be seen as an ongoing process of innovation due to changing social/political needs. A good illustration of this is Platanos B since it is the only tomb that shows a rectangular suite in front of it dating to EM II, which shows that already in EM II people were engaged in rethinking the layout and final design of the antechamber complexes.

These diachronical changes indicate that within the course of the Prepalatial period the Minoan communities tried to modify the built space into an environment, which coincides with the purposes and activities that had to be carried out in and around the tombs. Rooms were added, enclosures were built and sometimes the area directly outside the tomb was paved as a court was created or received an open-air gathering space. Such elements were no main features of the Tholos tombs from the beginning and were only developed and introduced gradually by EMII.<sup>294</sup>

This brings us to the socio-political dimension of constructing such monumental building structures. This already starts in the earliest stages, i.e. the moment an individual or group of individuals decides to build something what has to be of great importance: a main locus for social interaction and a representational space within the community. Sponsoring and organizing such a project is already a major social act in which differing relationships among people were formed and downplayed. It implied a high level of organization and involvement as raw materials had to be sourced and transported, craftsman with different levels of specialization had to be hired, etc. The logic result may be that those individuals that sponsored the project were those with the highest authority and acknowledgement within the community. Once the construction was finished, such a building became representative for the sponsors responsible for their construction and at the same time a major element of socio-political display. With this in mind, the structural changes happening at the Tholos tombs over time bear witness to the Prepalatial communities' growing concern for creating an architectural environment in which communal performance could be executed.<sup>295</sup> The large gathering space at Koumasa is an excellent example of this evolution (fig. 7).<sup>296</sup> At Koumasa an eight-meter wall confines a large paved area (50 by 6m) from the actual cemetery. Being gathered within such a clearly defined architectural space would certainly have promoted a sense of community among the participants in the enacted performative events.<sup>297</sup> Branigan suggested that the main activities performed at the Tholos tombs were ceremonial drinking and “circular

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<sup>294</sup> Branigan 1993, 129-130; Soar 2009b, 352.

<sup>295</sup> Branigan 1993, 129-130; Soar 2009b, 352; Soar 2010, 152-153.

<sup>296</sup> Branigan 1998, 21.

<sup>297</sup> Branigan 1970, 138.

dances” in which most members of the community participated.<sup>298</sup> He based his arguments on the discovery of the figurines of the “Kamilari dancers”, which show four people in a circle holding each other by the hands and shoulders.<sup>299</sup> In a recently published article, Soar stressed the importance of such circular dances in Minoan Crete and argued that these dances played an important role in the process of community making.<sup>300</sup> Group involvement in these performances created a feeling of belonging among the participants. Such circular dances thus express unity and equality between all members of the community.<sup>301</sup> The performances executed at the Tholos tombs thus facilitated the enhancement of communal ties within the community.<sup>302</sup> The material evidence indicates that by EMII, Tholos tombs were not only used as a burial place, but also as a major place for public performance between members of the community.

Therefore, when present at the Tholos tombs, it seems that the paved or open-air enclosures were used as communal gathering spaces where the majority of the community was involved in dancing.<sup>303</sup> One can see a clear shift from a simple place for burial towards a place where burial still happened but simultaneously communal performance became essentially important. The construction of all these features shows that its builders carefully planned the final layout of these environments. One has to admit, however, that the Tholos tombs cemeteries look like naturally grown complexes because several rooms and other features were added over time. Every time another feature entered the built space, this must have added a new dimension to the way social interaction was orchestrated.

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<sup>298</sup> Branigan 1993, 135; Branigan 1998, 13.

<sup>299</sup> Branigan 1993, 130; Soar 2009b, 352.

<sup>300</sup> Soar 2010, 149-151.

<sup>301</sup> Soar 2010, 151.

<sup>302</sup> Branigan 1970, 135-138; Soar 2010, 151.

<sup>303</sup> Branigan 1970, 135-138; Soar 2010, 152-153.

#### **3.1.2.4. EM II – EM III – MMI: Is it all about the Communal? Nuancing the Picture of Communality.**

But is it only about the collective? Although the picture outlined above shows that the Tholos tombs evolved and were conceptualized over time as places for communal gathering, there seem to happen from EM II onwards several changes, which could point to the fact that there was simultaneously a growing concern for individualism and group differences, rather than collectivity. Communality can be seen in the architectural complexity of the Tholos tombs themselves. As Tholos tombs were large communal burials, the addition of annex rooms to the Tholos could have happened because of practical reasons, since one had to deal with a lack of space over time. Due to long continuous use, the main Tholos chamber was packed with human bones and these were moved whenever a new dead body had to be carried into the main chamber. Over time, the area of the main chamber became too small, and therefore additional annex rooms were built and bones from the main chamber were removed and stored inside these annexes. At some tholoi, however, the annexes were stacked with cups, bowls, etc. Branigan already suggested very early that this equipment was used for toasting rituals when the body got buried.<sup>304</sup> Such quantities of cups at several Tholos tombs suggest that a rather large number of people were involved in the ritual events. Additionally, Branigan stresses that there is in the period between EMIII-MMI a strong increase in the number of cups at Ayia Kyriaki, which could imply a growing level of involvement of the community and a true focus on the communal.<sup>305</sup> Gathering together within a clearly defined architectural space would have corroborated the communal feeling among the participants.<sup>306</sup> However, this communal aspect should be nuanced, because some very contrasting phenomena are occurring at the Tholos tombs in the period between EM III – MM. Murphy argues that some of the annex rooms did not function solely as storage

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<sup>304</sup> Branigan (1970, 99) argues that the large number of cups at different sites played a part in a toasting ritual when the body was being buried: “I suggest that the nature of the ritual performed in the annex chambers was identical to that which we discussed earlier and which took place inside the tomb – that is, some sort of toasting.”

<sup>305</sup> Branigan 1993, 27-30.

<sup>306</sup> Branigan 1970, 138.

areas for bones and equipment for ritual purposes.<sup>307</sup> She suggests that at some occasions, these small annex rooms could have been used to execute elite ritual, with a limited number of participants and away from the eyes of the community that gathered outside the tomb.<sup>308</sup> The antechambers in direct proximity to the tomb are very small, which means that their simultaneous use was restricted to a very small number of people when a ritual was performed. Such complexly organized built spaces suggest an exclusivity of viewing and participation in ritual. However, one has to admit that the actual evidence for the execution of ritual inside the annexes to the tholoi is very scarce and rather hypothetical. The only true example available is tomb Apesokari I, which has an altar inside the annex (fig. 6). Because of the presence of a second altar outside the tomb area, one can suggest here an attempt to structure social interaction by elite participation in screened off rituals inside the tomb structure. For example, at Lebena Yerokambos (Y2 and IIa) extra rooms have been added to the original tomb chambers somewhere in EM II and some of these annexes (room AN) were used for the deposition of cups, bowls, etc., just as at Ayia Kyriaki room 2. (fig. 4)<sup>309</sup> Apart from the ritual use of the annexes, one can notice an increase in the number of individual burials within the Tholos tombs in pithoi and larnakes, which could signify a growing concern for social differentiation and distinction.<sup>310</sup> Further, it becomes clear that as early as EM I grave goods show a particular interest communicating access to and involvement in long-distance networks of exchange.<sup>311</sup> These exotic goods could function for legitimating power and social status within a burial context.<sup>312</sup> Also among living beings such objects could be important features for social differentiation during particular occasions, for example the execution of group ritual. Worn objects could be used in order to aspire a superior position or status

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<sup>307</sup> See Murphy 1998, 36: Due to the lack of burial remains and the large amounts of cups, vases, bowls and figurines found in some of the annex-rooms, it is most probable that some of the annexes were used for ritual and cult purposes. At Platanos A for example, 300 stone bowls were found and similar finds occur in Aghia Triadha A (room 1), Kamilari I (room B) and in Vorou A (D1, D2). The ritual function of some of the annex-rooms is corroborated by the benches found in both Ayia Kyriaki, room 2, and Lebena II, room AN, which also had a large number of cups.

<sup>308</sup> Murphy 2000, 409.

<sup>309</sup> Murphy 1998, 36.

<sup>310</sup> Branigan 1993, 31; Maggidis 1998, 98.

<sup>311</sup> Schoep 2006, 37; Colburn 2008, 203-206; Legarra Herrero 2009, 43 and 49.

<sup>312</sup> Colburn 2008, 206.

among the members of the group.<sup>313</sup> Such objects became meaningful symbols of social display within these specific contexts of social interaction. They could become a symbol of power and authority, adding to the social status of the owners. Such objects were typically associated with elites and drew a clear distinction between them and the others.

To conclude, the Minoan tholoi were the main places for ritual activities and communal occasions of the Prepalatial community.<sup>314</sup> The evidence listed above clearly suggests the twofold nature of social interaction among the members of the Prepalatial communities. There was the need to express group unity, but on the other hand individuality and social difference equally had to be expressed. There seem to be two contradicting forces at play within the Tholos tomb communities at the same time. From EM II onwards there is a trend towards communal participation and at the same time there is a growing concern for emphasizing social difference and distinction, which could have been exemplified by the restricted access to the annex rooms and the exclusivity of elite ritual. Furthermore, the appearance of a second or a third Tholos at the same location over time could fit within such a hypothesis, and could be a reflection of the changing socio-political structures within the Tholos communities. Warren explains the adding of a tomb as “a branch of the same, but by now much widening clan, extended family or group of related nuclear families”<sup>315</sup>, but does not discuss the element of growing social difference in between the members of this group. Legarra Herrero argues “the more frequent presence of two tholoi situated together may have been derived from significant changes in the relations between social units which could have modified the dynamics of intra- and inter-community relationships. Also, the expansion towards the radically different landscape of the Mesara valley suggests that the use of the Tholos was adapted to new circumstances. The links between tomb, community, kinship groups and landscape use may have been reworked. However, the exact repercussions these changes may have had on the organization of the communities in the region remains unclear at present.”<sup>316</sup> It sounds at

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<sup>313</sup> Haggis (2007, 762-769) identifies seals as another medium of elite display comparable to Minoan pottery.

<sup>314</sup> Murphy 2006, 81-82.

<sup>315</sup> Alexiou and Warren 2004, 192.

<sup>316</sup> Legarra Herrero 2009, 43.

least plausible that the increase in the number of tholoi per cemetery is connected to a phenomenon of increased social complexity. Different groups are starting to challenge each other's status and positions within community life, which asks for slight nuances to the traditional egalitarian image of Minoan Tholos communities.<sup>317</sup>

The question is if such phenomena happening in the period just preceding the emergence of the first Palaces on Crete is purely coincidental? I rather believe not. Such phenomena are only comprehensible as the result of a process of increased social complexity that gradually evolved over time.

### **3.1.2.5. Tholos Tombs: Built Space, Performance and the Establishment of Social Complexity**

The discussion of the archaeological evidence of the Tholos tombs provides the possibility to draw several conclusions. First, their wide spread distribution across the entire region of the Asterousia Mountains gives the impression that the introduction of these burials from EM I onwards were a response of the Prepalatial communities to the changing socio-political dynamics inside each of these communities and especially the need to clearly define the interrelationship between each of these communities. In this view, a pressing need arose to have some kind of territorial claim to the resources that belonged to each of these communities.<sup>318</sup> The shift from the simple duality “single Tholos burial – anteroom” in EM I to a complex spatial design of “(multiple) Tholos burials – sets of annex rooms, paved courts or open-air spaces with enclosures, and sometimes altars” inside one cemetery in EM II and their definitive standardized form in EM III - MM I, not only suggests a shift in the nature and complexity of the established rituals but also an increased social complexity in the Minoan social fabric from EM II onwards, as the Prepalatial communities expanded, grew in social complexity and needed more space to bury the dead as well as a proper architectural environment to structure the rituals executed in proximity of the tombs. (fig. 9)

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<sup>317</sup> Branigan 1991, 188.

<sup>318</sup> Murphy 1998, 30.

Ritual performative events held at these cemeteries had a two-fold nature. First of all, these gatherings, involving the major part of the community, primarily focused on the communal aspect, through which the Tholos communities strengthened the ties between the different social tiers inside their community.<sup>319</sup> Thus, these communal gatherings regenerated a sense of community. The majority of the population gathered in the open paved areas outside the tombs and participated in communal eating and drinking.<sup>320</sup> However, this does not mean that internal differences between people inside the Prepalatial community were not made visible during these events. The way people were dressed, the kind of jewelry they wore, and whether or not they had direct access to the burial and the annex rooms, created an environment suitable for the downplay of socio-political differences in these communities. The increased investment in architectural segregation, the increase in the number of tholoi at several cemeteries and the introduction of individual burials in pithoi and larnakes inside these formerly communal tombs, are elements which render it plausible that the Prepalatial communities became socio-politically more complexly organized. The Tholos communities of southern Crete gradually evolved towards a climate in which social differentiation became as important as the ritual unification of the entire community.

For these reasons I would like to suggest that strong social stratification processes were already in play long before the erection of the Minoan Palaces. With the construction of the monumental tombs such socio-political differences became clearly visible within the Minoan communities. The process of constructing such forms of architecture and the establishment of ritualized performative events at such places led to the creation and legitimization of differing symmetrical and asymmetrical social relations. It becomes clear that the Tholos tombs became real representational spaces for Minoans. Being able to witness or actively take part in such social occasions led to a clear understanding of the complexity of the social fabric within the Minoan communities. The leaders of the different groups within the community used ritual to legitimize their higher status through communally established ritual performances at the respective tombs. The architectural

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<sup>319</sup> Soar 2010, 151; See Wright (2006) on the interrelationship of space, performance and the social.

<sup>320</sup> Branigan 1993, 129.



innovations may in this way reflect major socio-political changes over time, i.e. a major shift from a focus on the communal towards the use of these funerary sites as a medium through which the superior status, power, and authority of the emerging elite, consisting of a very select number of people, could be materialized and legitimized. The way in which the built space was structured provided therefore an important tool in staging social interaction and structuring social relationships. To quote Murphy: “The location of the annex-rooms around the entrance to the tombs is symbolic of the assumption by the chief and his associates of both the physical focus and access to the ancestors [...] In this way the chiefs sanctified their power over that community by claiming a physical and ideological connection to the ancestors.”<sup>321</sup>

The above discussion of the Tholos tombs in southern Crete at least suggests that the Minoan built-environment of the Prepalatial period in the region of the Mesara was dominated by two reference points that were fixed by architecture: i.e. the cemeteries and the actual settlement; the funerary landscape and the landscape of daily life. The different tholoi communities were living in an environment, in which the major axes of Minoan life were dominated by a close relationship between the world of the living and the world of the dead. By the end of MMI there is a rapid decline in the use of Minoan tholoi.<sup>322</sup> Also the late constructed Minoan tholoi such as Kamiliari I and Apesokari I and II go out of use in MM II, which illustrates that the Minoan tholoi were abandoned as places for communal ritual as soon as the Protopalatial period had started.<sup>323</sup>

The main question remains: did the early Bronze Age communities prioritize the funerary landscape over the urban environment in order to form and downplay the tensions between group and individual identity? In this chapter we already demonstrated that some scholars indeed think that this was the case.<sup>324</sup> Because of the scarce material evidence from Prepalatial settlements it is not surprising that the large quantity of funerary data and the strong elaboration of the funerary landscape gives at least the impression that

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<sup>321</sup> Murphy 1998, 38-39.

<sup>322</sup> Branigan 1993, 12.

<sup>323</sup> Branigan 1993, 116-117.

<sup>324</sup> Especially Murphy 1998; 2000; 2006.

these communities in a way prioritized the funerary landscape over the world of every day life, as the burial sites were the main focus for ritual, constituting the major arenas for socio-political display inside these communities. It is only from the successive Protopalatial period onwards that one can see a major shift towards the urban environment with large-scale communal occasions held at the Minoan Palaces, a theme that will be highlighted in Parts 4 and 5 of this dissertation.

I do not disagree with the observation that a change in the loci of communal ritual occurred from the Prepalatial into the Protopalatial period, i.e. from the Tholos tombs towards to the Minoan Palaces, but such a major, brutal shift needs to be nuanced by recently published Prepalatial archaeological evidence from Minoan settlements. This material illustrates clearly that Prepalatial communities also constructed loci for communal gatherings inside the urban environment and this long before the emergence of the Minoan Palaces in the Protopalatial period. Before we start with a discussion of the material evidence from the settlements, we will continue Part 3 with a discussion of the House tomb communities in the northern and eastern part of Crete.

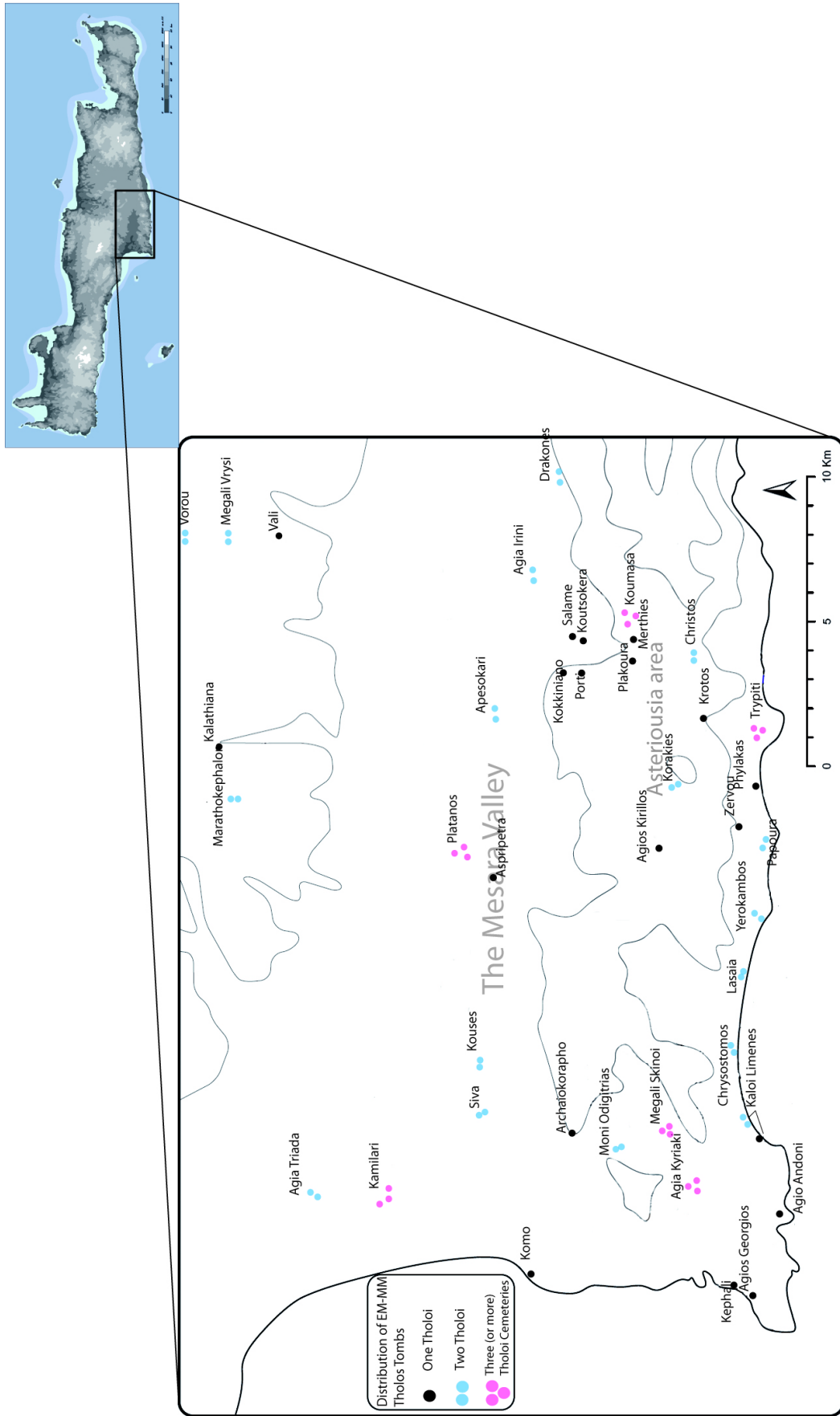


Figure 1 Distribution of Tholos Tombs and Cemeteries in the Mesara Region (EM-MM)

Settlement Location Relative to tombs	
to the north	9
to the south	9
to the west	2
<del>to the east (Platanos?)</del>	1
to the SE	2
to the NW	3
to the SW	2

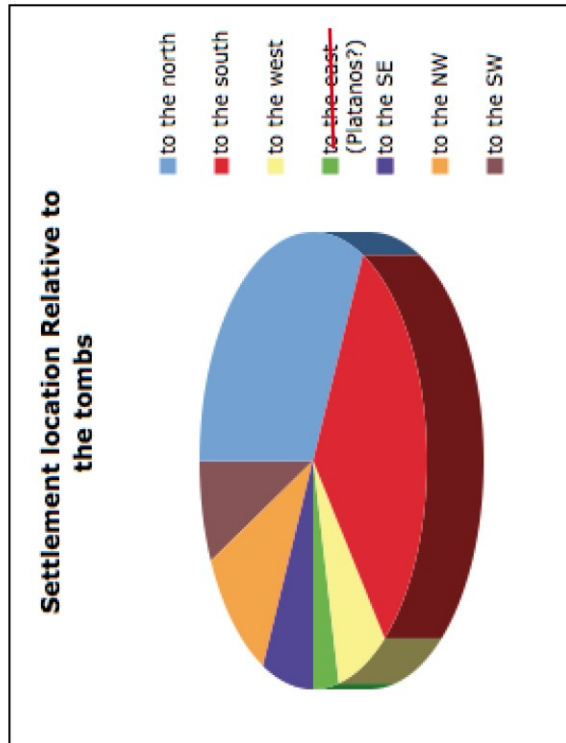


Figure 2 Settlement Location Relative to Tombs (Based on data from Branigan 1998, table 2)

Tomb doorway location	
East	37
South-East	7
South	2

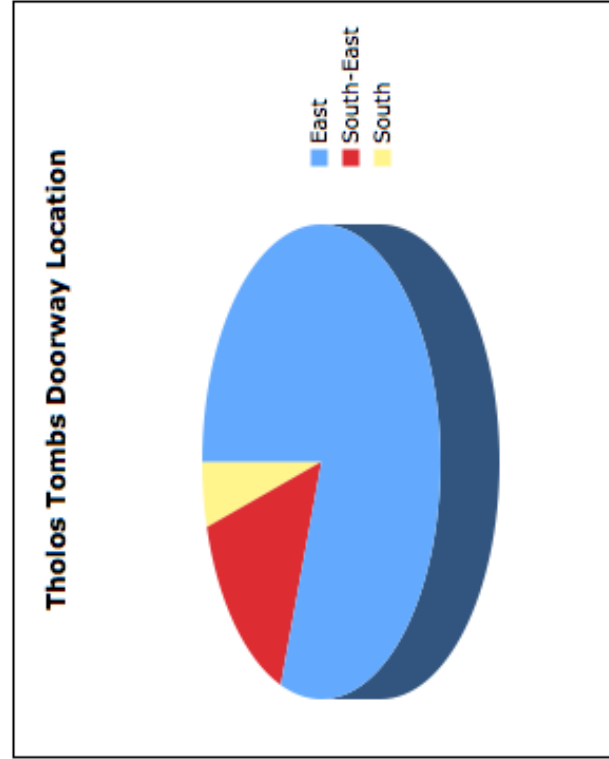


Figure 3 Tholos Tomb Doorway Location (Based on data from Branigan 1998, Table 3)

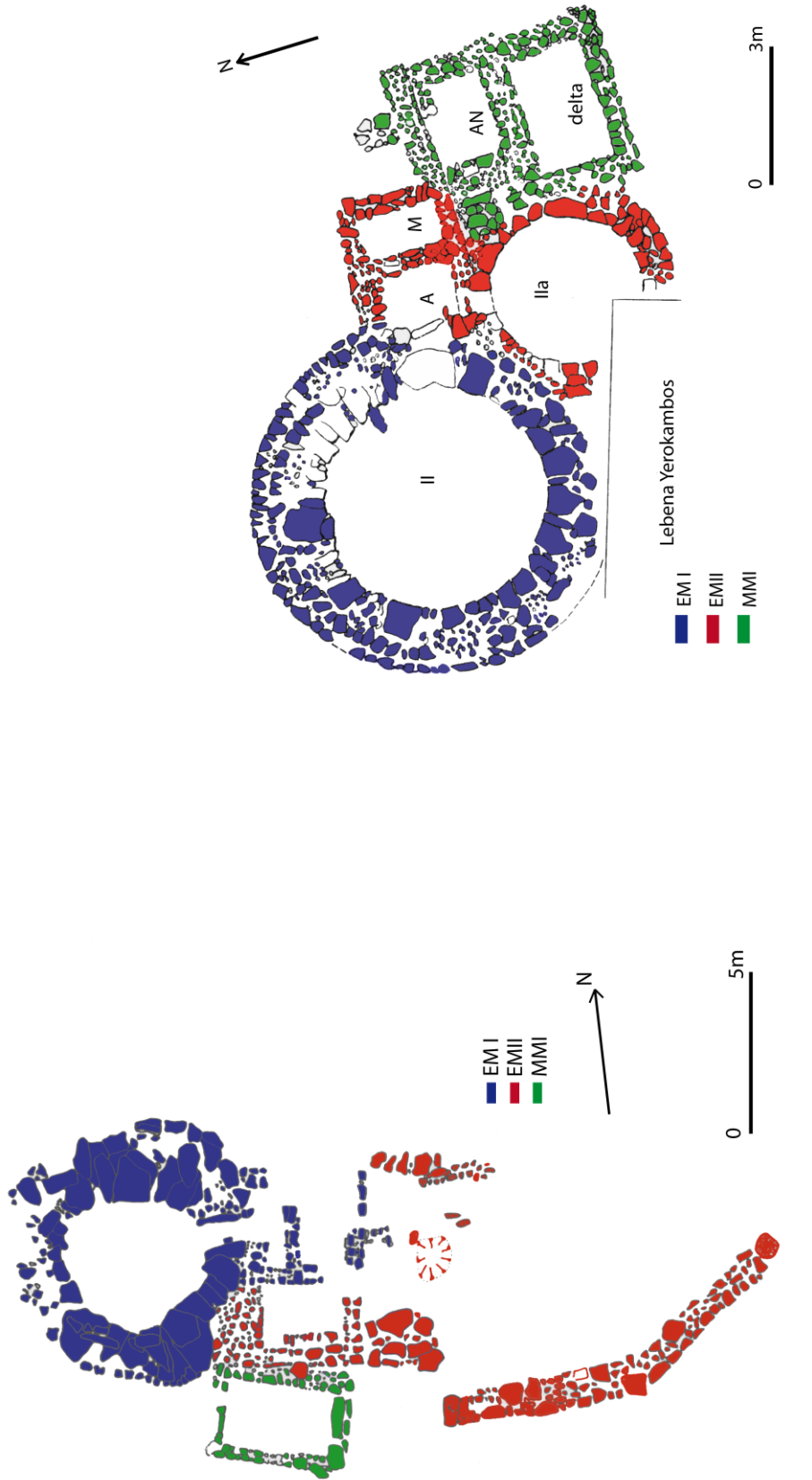


Figure 4 The Diachronic Evolution at Lebena Yerokambos

Figure 5 The Diachronic Evolution at Agia Kyriaki

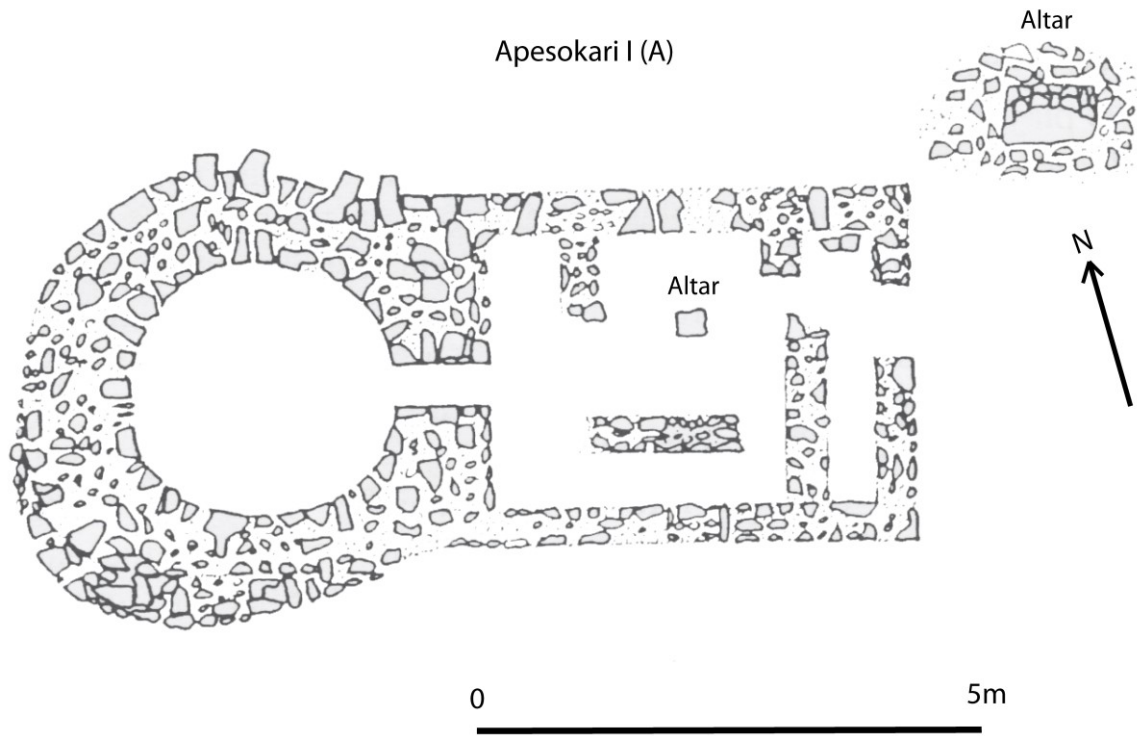


Figure 6 Situation of Altars Inside and Outside the Burial at Apesokari I

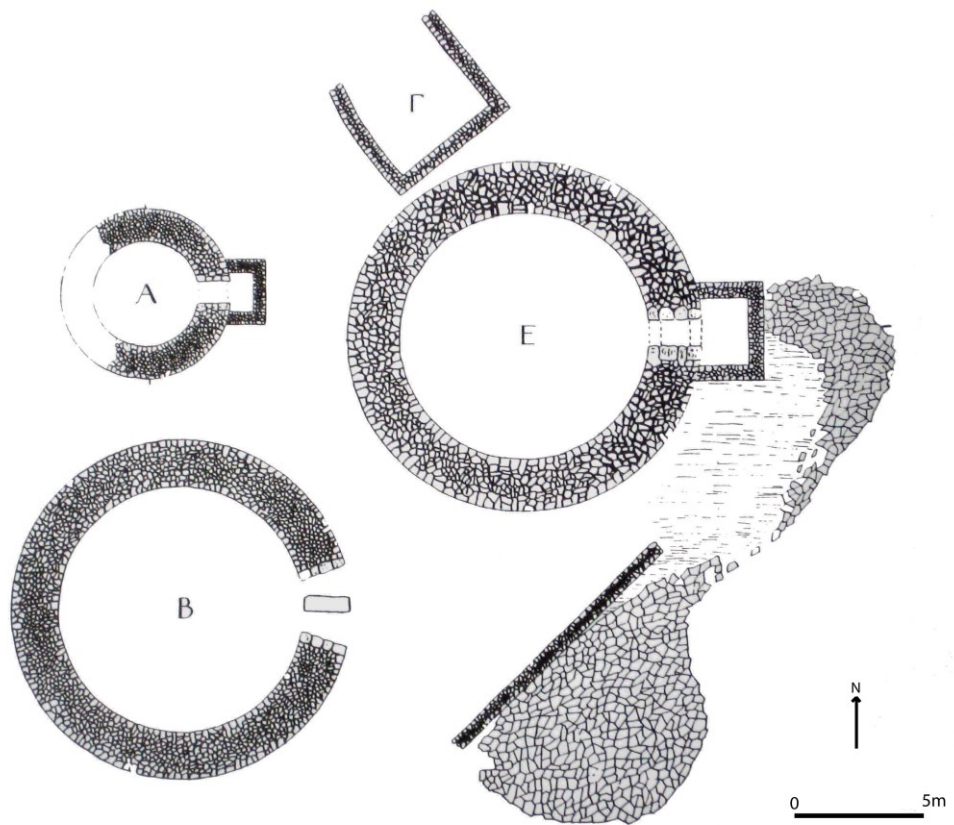


Figure 7 The Cemetery at Koumasa with the Large Paved Area at the East.

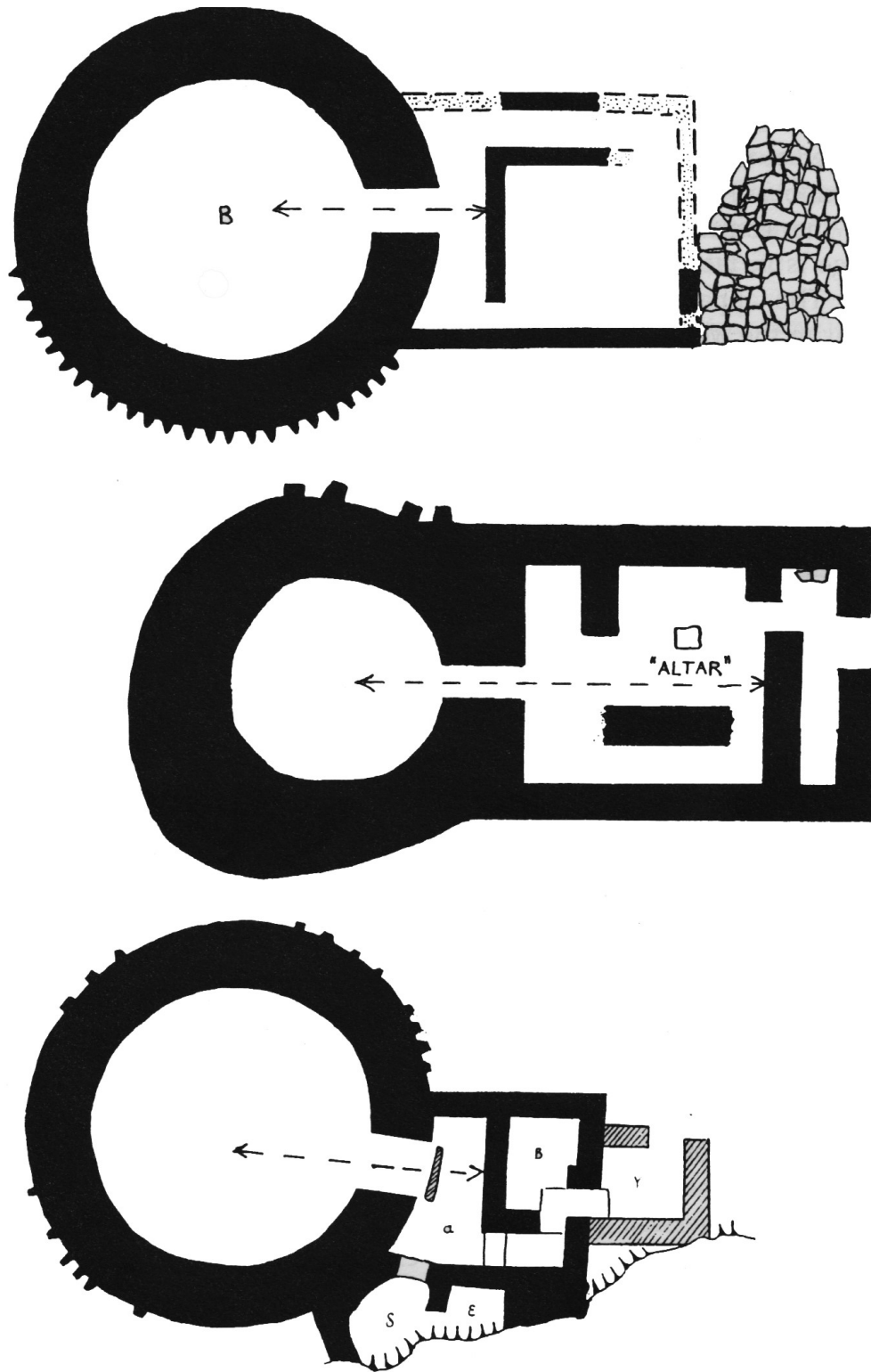


Figure 8 Examples of Blocked Axis of Tomb Doorways at (Top to Bottom) Platanos B, Apesokari I, and Kamilari A (after Branigan 1998, fig. 1.5)

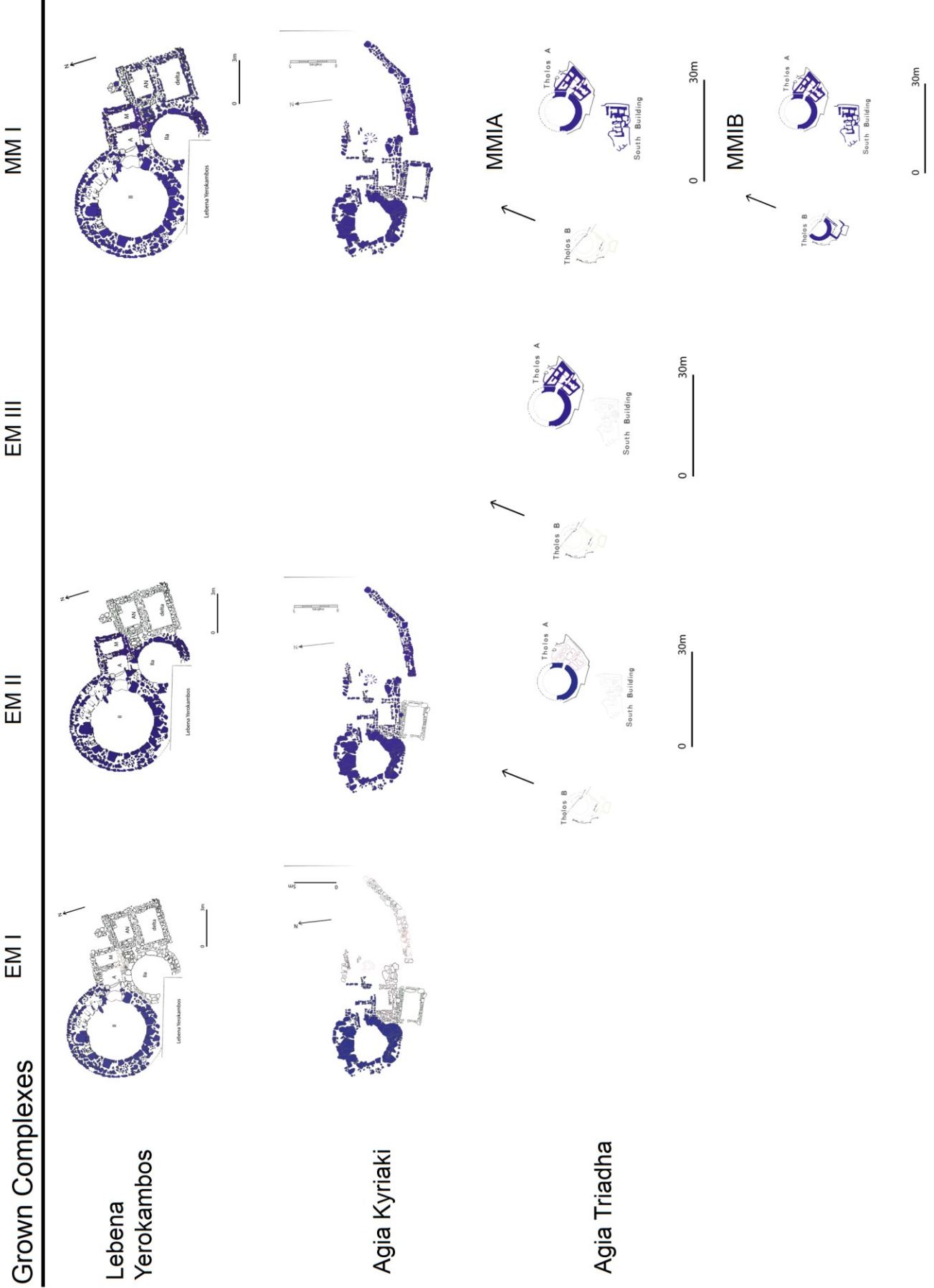


Figure 9 Diachronic Chart of The Evolution at Some Tholos Tombs/Cemeteries



### 3.1.3. The Case of the House Tombs

#### 3.1.3.1. Diversity and Similarity with the Tholos Tombs

The picture for the northern and eastern part of Crete in the Prepalatial period is entirely different from the situation for the southern Tholos region. Burial practices are more diverse, change over time and therefore the overall image of northern and eastern Crete is more dynamic and subject to change as compared to the rather stabilized situation I have sketched for the Tholos communities.<sup>325</sup> In these regions of Crete, House tombs were first introduced at Mochlos and Gournia, show strong cycladic influences, and there are strong indications that the phenomenon of the House tomb is soon adapted by other settlements in EM II.<sup>326</sup> This is suggested by the appearance of House tombs - and we just sum up the best-known examples from the Prepalatial period - in Pseira, Gournia (the north cemetery)<sup>327</sup>, Palaikastro<sup>328</sup>, Archanes-Phourni<sup>329</sup>, Malia (Chrysolakkos I)<sup>330</sup>, Myrtos-Pyrgos<sup>331</sup> and Mochlos (tombs III and IV/V/IV on the West Terrace)<sup>332</sup>, the latter being the best-known example of a real necropolis.

At the current state of research the work of Soles *The Prepalatial Cemeteries at Mochlos and Gournia and the House Tombs of Bronze Age Crete* is the most comprehensive and descriptive study of the House tomb phenomenon and has contributed greatly in gathering the necessary architectural evidence for this chapter. Soles has divided the House tombs into four distinct types, differing in complexity: - one room tombs; - two room tombs; - compounds with more than two rooms; - and finally the monumental

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<sup>325</sup> Davaras and Betancourt 2004; Betancourt and Davaras 2002; 2003; Galanaki 2006.

<sup>326</sup> Betancourt and Davaras 2003; Legarra Herrero 2009, 44.

<sup>327</sup> Soles 1992, 1-40; Soles 1979; Vavouranakis 2007, 26-33.

<sup>328</sup> MacGillivray and Driessen 1990, 398; Vavouranakis 2007, 33-37; Soles 1992, 179-192.

<sup>329</sup> Sakellarakis and Sakellarakis 1997; Panagiotopoulos 2002; Sakellarakis and Sakellarakis 1991; Soles 1992, 129-140.

<sup>330</sup> Soles 1992, 160-175; Pelon et al. 1992.

<sup>331</sup> Cadogan 1977-1978; Cadogan 1992; Hankey 1986; Vavouranakis 2007, 47; Soles 1992, 176-178.

<sup>332</sup> Mochlos in general, see Soles 1992, 41-113; Tombs III and IV/V/VI, see Soles 1992, 41-62; Vavouranakis 2007, 20-26.

versions of the House tomb that were developed only at the end of Prepalatial period (EM III – MMI A) (Chrysolakkos I and II at Malia).<sup>333</sup>

Thanks to Soles' typology it is clear that these monumental structures were carefully planned structures. A look at the area outside the actual tomb structure reveals that some of these tombs were equipped with some unique architectural features. The sites of Gournia, Palaikastro, Archanes-Phourni, Malia (Chrysolakkos I), Myrtos-Pyrgos and Mochlos (tombs III and IV/V/IV on the West Terrace) all share a combination of architectural innovations, such as the outer area which is sometimes delineated by pavements (small paved courts) elaborated with a raised terrace, altar-like structures and raised walkways, the latter being a unique feature attested at House tomb sites. The area outside the House tombs received lots of attention by its builders, since it was most probably reserved for specific performances, as was also the case for the Tholos tombs. Further, the House tombs were much smaller than the Tholos tombs, which is an indication that they were reserved for a much smaller social unit. However, one might recall the argument made by Whitelaw in the difficulties that exist to identify social units by means of an analysis of Minoan architecture. It is very difficult to say whether or not one burial belonged to one family or that different burials belonged to a larger social grouping such as the extended family.<sup>334</sup>

As it appears, House tomb communities had a fundamentally different perception of how the funerary landscape and the daily landscape are connected with one another. With regard to the Tholos tombs, it has been shown that they were unique territorial markers, alonstanding or arranged in small groups, situated in close proximity and clearly visible from the settlement. The House tombs, however, were no unique architectural type but had instead a number of architectural features borrowed from the real houses of the Prepalatial villages and the sometimes highly clustered arrangement of multiple burials gave them the appearance of a real necropolis. In the case of Myrtos-Pyrgos for example, the actual tomb even had an upper floor, which is indicated by a central pier in the middle

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<sup>333</sup> Soles 1992.

<sup>334</sup> Whitelaw 2001, 19.

of the main chamber.<sup>335</sup> Several features explicitly refer to domestic architecture at all House tomb sites. Paved open areas in front of the tombs, mud brick superstructures with wooden beams, doorways with pivot stones, flat roofing, plaster on the walls, benches in the rooms, the overall shape of the rooms; all these features rendered the cemetery site into a miniature pendant of the settlement, rather than a monument of its own.

The direct visible link between settlements and House tomb cemeteries was not a common one. At Mochlos, the House tombs were oriented towards the seaside of the isle, away from the location of the settlement and out of sight. This observation is also valid for Gournia<sup>336</sup>, Malia (Chrysolakkos)<sup>337</sup>, and Archanes-Phourni<sup>338</sup>, where the communities built these tomb sites almost entirely out of sight of community life. However, in the House tomb communities, visibility was not of major importance, which incidentally does not mean that these communities did not want to explicitly connect both realms. In order to do so, they sometimes created a straight-line physical connection between both realms by a paved walkway, which is a strong argument that the House tomb societies did not attempt to separate both realms but rather created a strong nexus between the funerary and daily landscape. Such elements were not present at the Tholos sites. The architectural form of the Tholos structure was entirely different from the houses in the settlements and the physical connection between both realms was not objectively laid out over the surface of the earth, but rather expressed through the concepts of visibility and proximity.

To conclude, Tholos- and House tomb communities each independently created different trajectories. However, such cultural diversity expressed in different forms of architecture does not mean that both regions did not share a similar perspective on the reciprocal relationship between the funerary and daily landscape. In fact, there is much reason to believe that they did. In both regions, the cemeteries on the one hand and the settlements on the other constituted the main axes of Minoan life. Each of these realms received special architectural attention, which proves the sophisticated ways in which these people

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<sup>335</sup> Soles 1992, 178.

<sup>336</sup> Soles 1979, 161.

<sup>337</sup> Pelon et al. 1992, 82.

<sup>338</sup> Sakellarakis and Sakellarakis 1991, 98.

dealt with the world of the dead. It may be stated that the funeral landscape and the rituals associated with it were the main forces that held these communities together and through which these communities were constantly regenerated. As early as the Prepalatial period House tomb communities actively used the funerary landscape as major arenas for socio-political display.

In the following, we will further elaborate the example of Mochlos since as to date this site has received most attention in published research. At the end of this section, I will link the evidence from Mochlos to the House tomb found at Myrtos-Pyrgos.

### 3.1.3.2. A Case Study of the Mochlos Cemetery

The Prepalatial burials at Mochlos are the best known example of a large number of burials arranged together in a necropolis, with several House tombs being by far the most monumentally tomb examples known to date. (fig. 10) On the western part of the isle about thirty tombs have been excavated over three terraces: the west terrace, the main- and the south slope. Just like the Tholos tombs, House tombs were man-made structures, which asked a proper planning, and the necessary human capital in order to build them. The use history of the Mochlos cemetery goes back to the Neolithic and as early as EM IIB approx. 13 tombs were in use. Beside the House tombs, several rock-shelters and pit graves were used as burial places as well in the Prepalatial period.<sup>339</sup> Mochlos is traditionally perceived as the type-site illustrating how social difference and differences in status and authority are reflected directly in the material record. The west terrace comprises the two most impressive and elaborated complexes, tombs I/II/III and IV/V/VI.<sup>340</sup> Their monumentality and artefacts such as gold jewelry, silver- and stone vases distinct them from the other burials on the Main and South Slope. The differences in size, monumentality and location of a great number of burials within the same cemetery, suggest that all these burials were the *locale*<sup>341</sup> for different families where

<sup>339</sup> Soles 1992, 41-42; Soles (1992, 201) for a chronology of the tombs.

<sup>340</sup> Soles 1992, 41-62.

<sup>341</sup> For a proper discussion of the term Locale and the theories by Giddens see section 2.1.2 this volume. The concept of the locale is borrowed from Anthony Giddens. With the concept of the

they could execute rituals for the veneration of their ancestors. This observation is not new. Soles already argued that the topographical division of the cemetery, with the most distinctive tombs on the upper west terrace is a reflection of Prepalatial social structures, in particular social ranking. For him the tombs on the west terrace belong to the most elite families of the Mochlos community, whose existence was legitimized by elaborate funeral and social display.<sup>342</sup> According to Soles, the location, size and construction of these tombs, together with the burial offerings found inside them, suggests that the communities which built them developed an advanced social hierarchy early on in the Prepalatial period, even prior to the Protopalatial period.<sup>343</sup>

Vavouranakis re-contextualized the tombs on the west terrace within the entire necropolis on the west, main, and south slope, and came to some interesting observations regarding the overall layout of the cemetery.<sup>344</sup> The entire cemetery was constructed according to two main reference points: the South Slope with Tombs Lamda and Theta and buildings M, N and Ksi, and the West Terrace with Tombs I/II/III and IV/V/VI at the far end of the cemetery. One main path running straight throughout the cemetery connected all tombs of the cemetery with each other (fig. 13).<sup>345</sup> To quote Vavouranakis: “As a result, a visit to the cemetery entailed a progression that gradually left the world of the living and plunged deeper and deeper into the domain of the dead. As one advanced towards the far end of the cemetery, namely the open-air courtyard and tomb IV/V/VI, the architectural setting became much more oriented towards burial rites, thus allowing for more complex and intense experience of these rites.”<sup>346</sup> Another interesting fact is that Tombs IV/V/VI and I/II/III on the upper west terrace seem to be the eldest tombs of the cemetery and the

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“locales” Giddens illustrates the active use of the physical environment in a context of social interaction, in which physical space transforms into place, i.e. meaningful centers of human life. Locales are the main settings for social interaction.

<sup>342</sup> See Vavouranakis (2007, 25) for a detailed discussion.

<sup>343</sup> Another good example of how social difference is identified through the material assemblages within the tombs comes from Archanes-Phourni, see Maggidis 1998.

<sup>344</sup> See Vavouranakis (2007, 99-110) for a detailed discussion.

<sup>345</sup> There is a possible sideways, but that is irrelevant in this discussion.

<sup>346</sup> Vavouranakis 2007, 109.

tombs on the main and south slope the most recent, which suggests that the layout of the cemetery was dictated by the use history of the tombs.<sup>347</sup>

The great number of House tombs within one single cemetery should be understood as the will of smaller groups of people, be it a nuclear or small extended family, to claim their presence within the funerary realm. I do believe that House tombs became important settings or *locales* to express individual wealth and social differences between different groups within the community. This would also explain the differences in the presence and distribution of gold and stone artefacts and other exotica in numerous tombs within the cemetery and not only within those of the west terrace.<sup>348</sup> Colburn (2008) has focused intensively on the role of imported foreign materials, objects and technologies in the social and political environment of Prepalatial Crete and was able to identify the socio-political processes behind their presence, arguing that ‘they were used and displayed as emblems, often as bodily adornment in the creation and continued negotiation of an elite identity in the period preceding the first Minoan palaces’<sup>349</sup>. Such objects were an integral part of elite culture, setting the highest elite, those with direct access to these foreign connections, apart from the majority of the community who did not.<sup>350</sup>

Because of their exotic character, such imported items have strong social connotations as they show access to long distance networks of exchange and could have added to the social status of the people.<sup>351</sup> Apart from imported objects, immaterial factors such as access to distant places, people, and ideas, are other important elements of social display. However, proof of such connections was mainly materialized through the import of foreign objects.<sup>352</sup> In that sense, both material and immaterial foreign elements became active actors in the negotiation of power and elite status. They became important tools for the negotiation of elite identity, strengthening the ties among elites and reinforcing the differences with the rest of the community.<sup>353</sup> Using Prepalatial Mochlos as a case study to investigate the importance of imported goods in negotiating social differences, Colburn

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<sup>347</sup> Vavouranakis 2007, 107-109.

<sup>348</sup> Vavouranakis 2007, 25.

<sup>349</sup> Colburn 2008, 203-204.

<sup>350</sup> Colburn 2008, 204.

<sup>351</sup> Schoep 2006, 37; Colburn 2008, 203-206.

<sup>352</sup> Colburn 2008, 206.

<sup>353</sup> Colburn 2008, 206.

showed that three of the about 30 tombs (Tombs I/II/III, IV/V/VI, and XIX) were not only the most prominent and monumental constructions, they also contained the largest cluster of exotica found at the site. The large investment of energy in their construction, their position, located high on the western terrace, and the large quantity of imported objects found within, are according to Colburn strong indications that exotica played an important role in negotiating social differences. They should be connected with the highest elite of the local community.<sup>354</sup>

The large diversity within the cemetery at Mochlos could be an indication that the level of group participation within the funerary rituals at the House tombs was far more exclusive as we suggested earlier for the tholoi communities. It becomes clear from the discussion above that the architectural complexity of the Mochlos cemetery is the result of an ongoing process of social complexity, in which different individual groups of people within one and the same community started to claim their presence in the funerary realm. However, this does not mean that the veneration of the dead was not a collective activity. I do believe that at particular times of the year all members of the community came together to honor the dead. However, the ritual performances executed within the Mochlos cemetery and its actual layout and architectural complexity probably embodied the same message, i.e. the mirroring of social differences among different groups of people.

As early as EMII, the community of Mochlos started to create a very specific structured burial site with different terraces, paths and differently elaborated tombs. In what follows we will reflect not only on the structural qualities of the cemetery, but also on the nature of the performances executed within. In order to do so we will focus more exhaustively on tomb IV/V/VI.

Tomb IV/V/VI is not only the most elaborated tomb of the entire cemetery, it is also the most ancient, which could explain why especially this tomb received particular attention. Tomb IV/V/VI could be the pre-eminent site for connecting with the communities' ancestors. In this case, the specific elaboration and situation of Mochlos tomb IV/V/VI within the cemetery could be a good case-study to investigate the role of the architectural complexity of the tomb itself, but also that of the established rituals executed in

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<sup>354</sup> Colburn 2008, 212.

proximity of the tomb as major tools in displaying social differences among the members of the community in terms of access and exclusive elite participation.

Tomb complex IV/V/VI located on the west terrace of the cemetery provides the best example to explain how architectural elements are brought together in order to create a meaningful environment in the EM II period. Tomb IV/V/VI is situated at the north end of the west terrace.<sup>355</sup> (fig. 10) In his preliminary observations prior to the actual cleaning of the area around tomb IV/V/VI, Seager referred to the presence of “a roughly paved court”<sup>356</sup>. After initial cleaning, a complicated system of approach was revealed. Tomb IV/V/VI was equipped with an open-air courtyard, a paved platform that overlooked the open area (approx. 2.0 m wide), an altar-like structure and a paved walkway (approx. 1.40 – 1.60 m wide), which ran along the outer facade and created a unique environment for specific ritual activities.<sup>357</sup> (fig. 11) The presence of an extra-elevated terrace that overlooked the open area in front of the tomb and the paved walkway suggests that there were different levels of participation. Those very few who gathered on the raised terrace could be the most prominent figures of the group, which overlooked the other representatives that gathered in the open area in front of the tomb.<sup>358</sup>

If the paved walkway in front of tomb IV/V/VI was indeed the end of the route running through the cemetery of Mochlos, then one might suggest that the overall analysis of the cemetery and the architectural analysis of tomb IV/V/VI create at least the possibility that the progression of people throughout the cemetery towards tomb IV/V/VI took the form of a procession, which started at the settlement and ran throughout the cemetery in a more or less straight path leading up to tomb IV/V/VI, which was the focal point (fig. 13).<sup>359</sup> The fact that the paved walkway becomes very narrow and very steep at the end suggests that during the procession the number of participants arriving at the actual burial at the west terrace (tomb IV/V/VI) was very low (fig. 12). Access to the tomb was reserved

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<sup>355</sup> Soles 1992, 51; Soar 2009b, 352.

<sup>356</sup> Seager 1912, 40; Soles 1992, 56.

<sup>357</sup> Soles 1992, 57.

<sup>358</sup> In one particular case at the Minoan Palaces just like in Mochlos, platforms or terraces overlook these paths. A clear example is the “Royal Road” west of the Palace of Knossos running into the theatral Area. Elsewhere this volume (Part 5) I argue that this road and the theatral area constitute together an architectural setting, which is suited for the creation and mirroring of social hierarchy.

<sup>359</sup> Soar 2009b, 353.



only to those relatives that had a clear ancestral link with the people entombed in this structure. They were a small social group within the Mochlos community that had the privilege to interact with the eldest ancestors.

These processions started off initially as large communal events. Additionally, one should picture the possibility of such processions being “degrading” in nature, as the number of participants diminishes in congruence with the walked distance. This means that the possibility to progress in the procession becomes a representation of status and a persons’ place in the politics of the community, based upon whether or not one was permitted to progress towards the final point of destination. Participation in the most exclusive rituals in proximity of tomb IV/V/VI was a privilege earned only by a small social group. The others had to leave the procession earlier and interact with the tombs down the hill, closest to the settlement. Thus, the right to proceed until the very end was an important element of social display. Additionally, the small size of the different architectural units within the tomb and the small open-air courtyard in front of the tomb are a good argument in support of the hypothesis that when they were used as places for ritual, only a small number of people could gather within this setting at once.<sup>360</sup> It must be noted that tomb IV/V/VI is a unique case, in that it is the only burial site dated to this period, which leads us to expect such a complex organization of ritual activity. Other sites, such as Gournia<sup>361</sup>, Archanes-Phourni<sup>362</sup> and Chrysolakkos<sup>363</sup> have some of these characteristics but these never reveal such a strong architectural complexity outside the tomb structure.

In the case of Mochlos, it sounds acceptable that “processing” to the very end was reserved to the very few, which suggests that within these communities there was a major concern to deal with the aspect of social difference between different groups within the community. Thus, the procession at Mochlos could serve as a ritual tool to reaffirm or negotiate social relationships within the Prepalatial communities.<sup>364</sup>

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<sup>360</sup> Soar 2009b, 354; Vander Beken 2010, 212.

<sup>361</sup> Soles 1979, 161.

<sup>362</sup> Sakellarakis and Sakellarakis 1991, 98; Panagiotopoulos 2002.

<sup>363</sup> Pelon et al. 1992, 82.

<sup>364</sup> Holliday 1990; Soar 2009b; Vander Beken 2010.

The ritual activity at Mochlos and the procession that ran throughout the cemetery were major tools to express social differences between all groups of the community, but also within the group itself. At tomb IV/V/VI for example, only a very small group would make it up to the open-air courtyard, with the altar and raised platform.<sup>365</sup> Here the process of social differentiation does not end, as the right to participate in ritual activities inside the actual tomb structure was only reserved to the highest-ranking individuals in this particular group. Thus, the sequence of ritual activities together with the architectural setting itself possessed all elements to actively reflect the social inequalities and group differences, be it on the level of the community or the smallest social unit. These were meaningful events with a deep impact on participants and spectators.<sup>366</sup> Further, wearing exotica during these performances also reflected such differences between people and indicated social prestige and power, which can only be connected to the local elite.<sup>367</sup> Such objects were strong mediators in communicating social differences between the emerging and eventually well-established elite and the rest of the local community.

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<sup>365</sup> Soar 2009b, 354; Such a hypothesis makes sense if one considers the entire layout of the Mochlos cemetery. The route towards the eldest and highest situated Tomb IV/V/VI was packed with other burials and according to a person's individual status one was allowed to participate in the exclusive rituals at tombs IV/V/VI or not. For those who were not, the other and more recently built House tombs were the major foci for ritual activities.

<sup>366</sup> Colburn 2008, 214.

<sup>367</sup> Colburn 2008, 219-220.

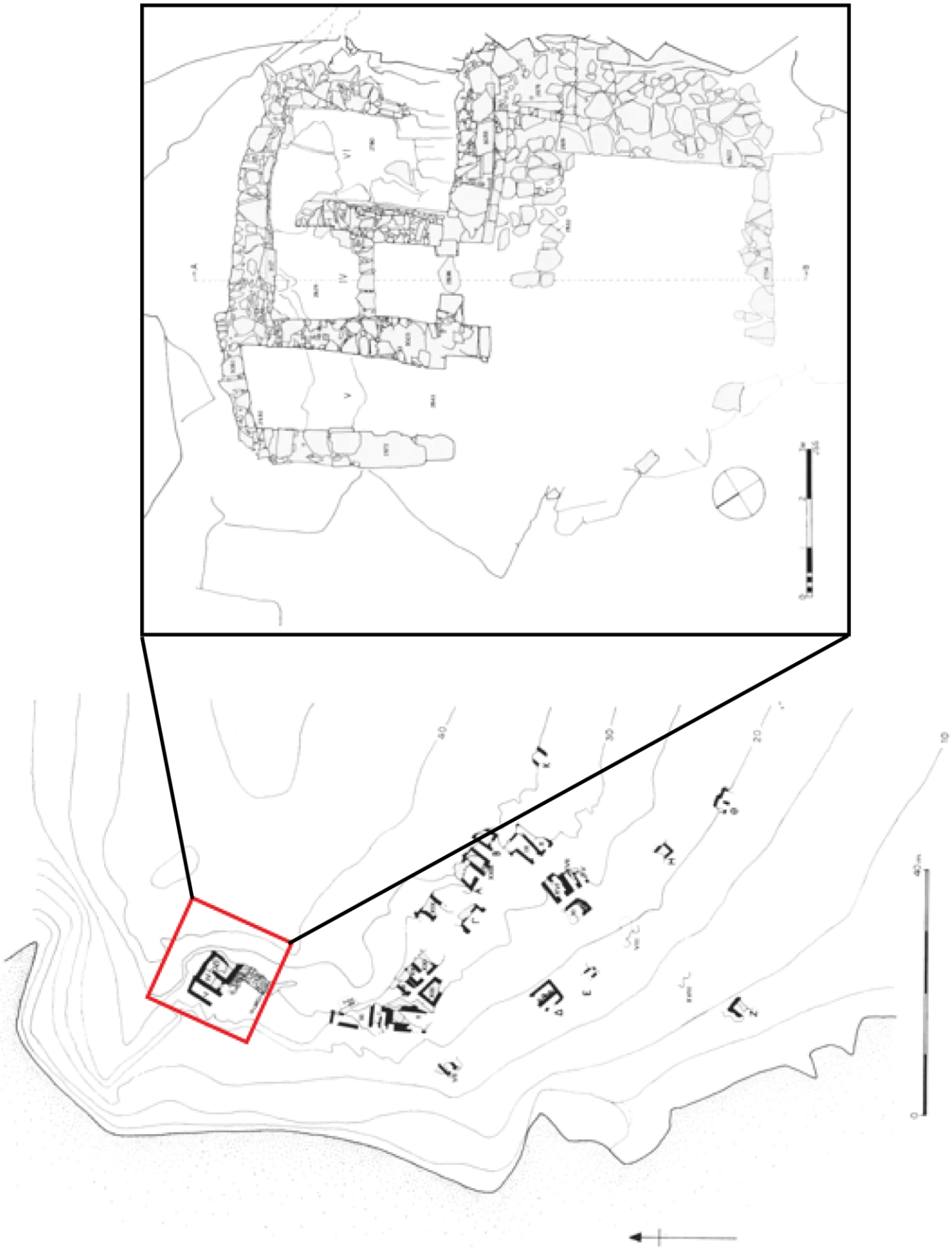
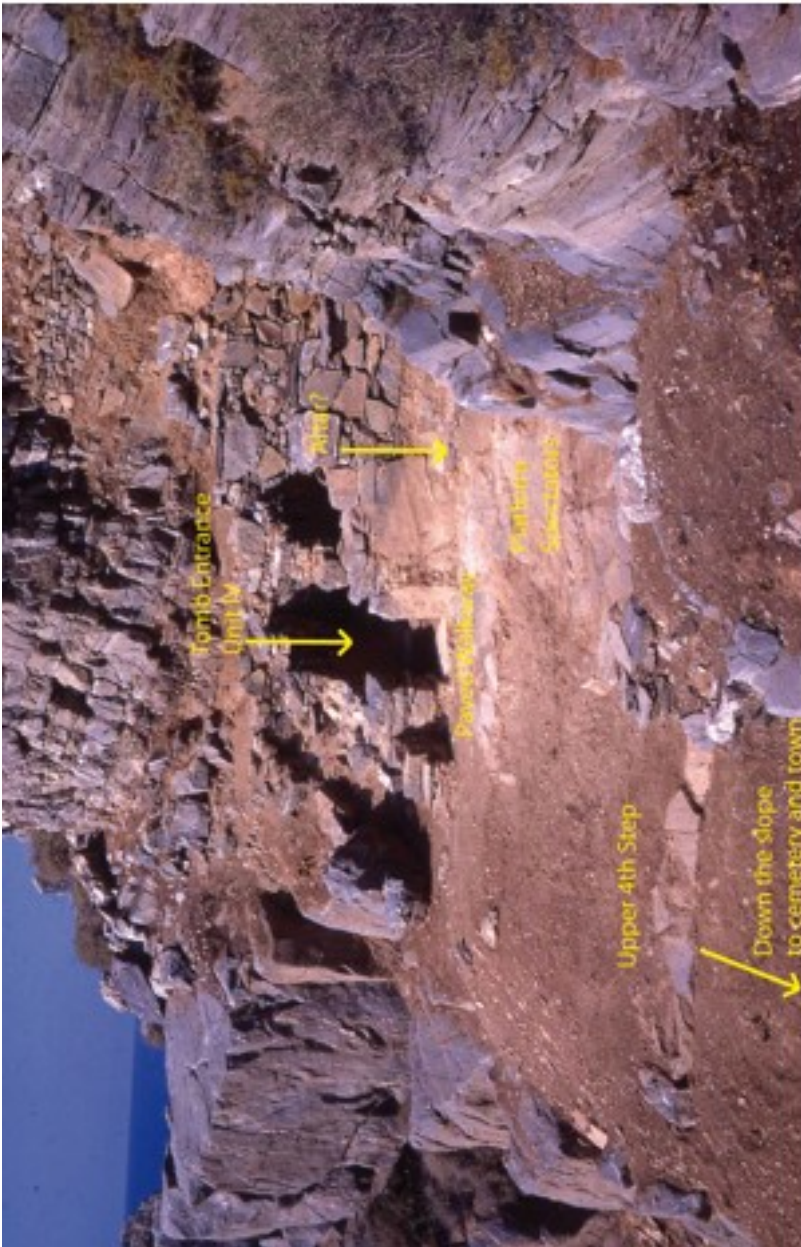


Figure 10 Topographical Map of Mochlos and Stone Plan of Tomb IV/V/VI (Soles 1992, fig. 20 and plan 3 modified)



**Figure 11 and 12 Top: Detailed Presentation of Tomb IV/V/VI; Right: Paved Avenue of Approach throughout the Cemetery to Tomb IV/V/VI**

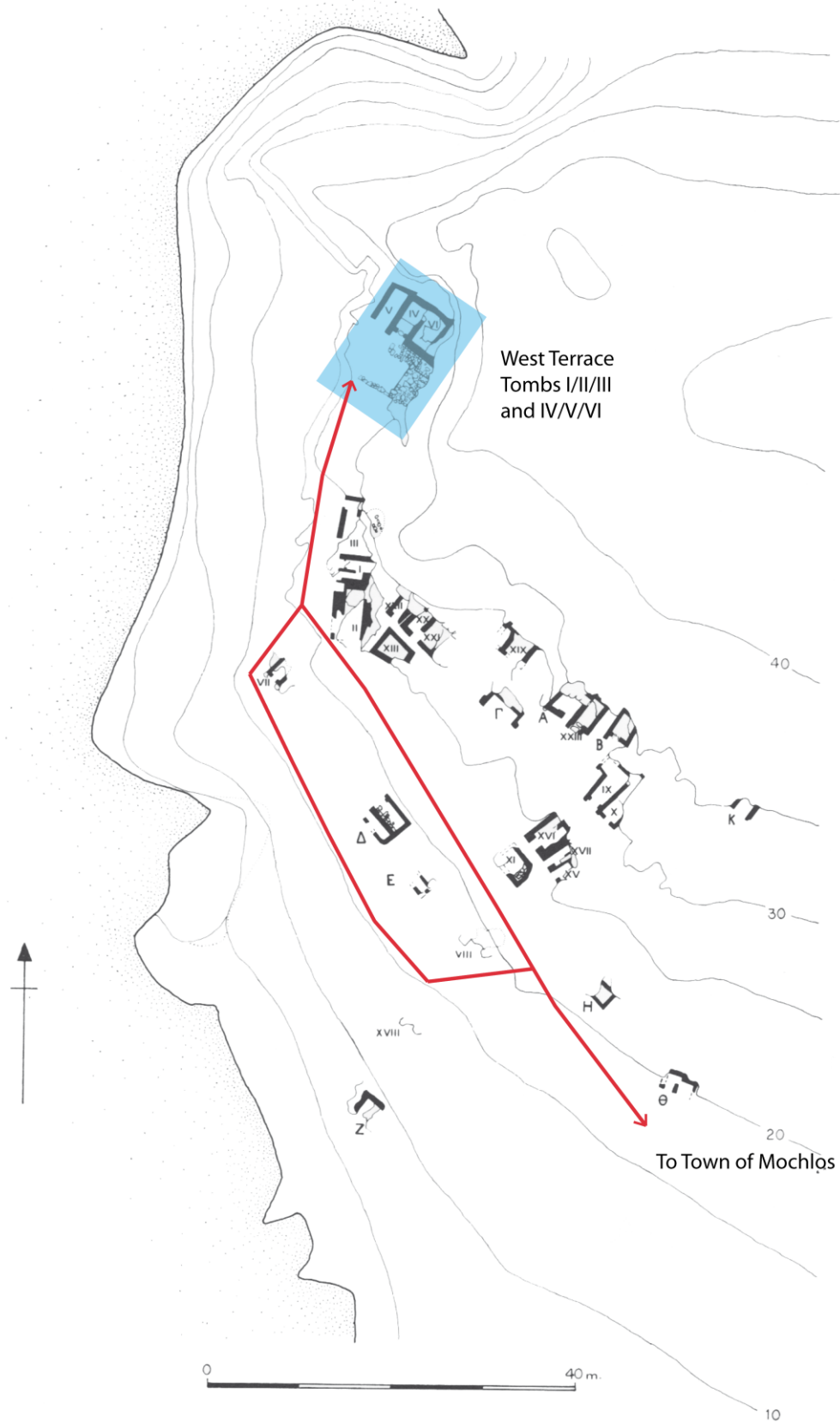


Figure 13 Possible Procession Routes Throughout the Cemetery at Mochlos, after Vavouranakis 2007, 107, fig. 5.14.

### 3.1.3.3. A Case Study of Myrtos-Pyrgos

Myrtos-Pyrgos is situated on a prominent hill located on the south coast of Crete, nearby the modern village of Myrtos.<sup>368</sup> The Minoan settlement was built on very hilly terrain on the southeast border of the Lasithi massif. The earliest material at Myrtos-Pyrgos itself dates back to the EM I period. Because of the lack of published records, it is not easy to give an exhaustive overview of the settlement's history. (fig. 14) It is however a well-known fact that in MM IB terraces were built on the northern slope together with a tower and two cisterns. The settlement was destroyed by fire in LMI and a country house or Minoan villa was built on top of it. The entire site was finally destroyed in the LMI B period.<sup>369</sup>

At Myrtos-Pyrgos, a House tomb was situated next to the settlement on the west slope, just outside the terrace walls of the settlement. (fig. 15) The tomb could be reached from the settlement by a paved road, reached by a set of stairs, which runs northeast-southwest along the western slope and gives out at the south end to a small paved open courtyard in front of the tomb.<sup>370</sup> The tomb itself measures about 5 by 3m and can be entered by a doorway at the north corner of the western wall, which leads down by means of three steps to the original floor of the main chamber, where a circular ossuary was found in the southeast corner. The tomb most probably had a second floor, marked by the large pillar in the center of the room that supported a wooden floor. A second ossuary was situated between the actual tomb and paved courtyard. It was a rectangular chamber entered by another doorway adjacent to the door that gave access to the main chamber.<sup>371</sup> Based on the artefacts and burials found in the tomb, the tomb was in use between EM III – LMI. During EM III, the tomb was a standalone monumental construction, which, despite small alterations stayed in use throughout the Protopalatial period and was partly re-used

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<sup>368</sup> Cadogan 1977, 71.

<sup>369</sup> Vavouranakis 2007, 46; Also Cadogan 1992; Hankey 1986.

<sup>370</sup> Cadogan 1977, 71.

<sup>371</sup> Vavouranakis 2007, 46; Cadogan 1977, 43.

in Neopalatial times.<sup>372</sup> The area outside the tomb at Pyrgos has a layout which is very similar to the one at Mochlos, however in a simplified concept.

Just like in Mochlos a paved narrow walkway is an integral part of the setting at Myrtos-Pyrgos. (fig. 16) The elevated walkway leads to a small paved courtyard in front of the tomb. The paved road and courtyard cannot be linked with any other structure besides the tomb and therefore must have played an essential role in specific ritual activities. Inside the courtyard, at the north corner, a part of a *kernos* was recovered, together with a bench in the southeast that may have served as an offering table.<sup>373</sup> As was the case at Mochlos, the clear physical connection between settlement and tomb at Myrtos-Pyrgos by means of a paved walkway suggests that processions might have occurred from the town to this tomb.<sup>374</sup> Such an environment suggests that also at Myrtos-Pyrgos the physical setting of performance plays a crucial part in the processes of socio-political production and reproduction.

#### **3.1.3.4. House Tombs: Built space, Performance and the Establishment of Social Complexity**

It becomes clear from both case-studies that there was a tendency from the EM II-EM III onwards to coordinate and control human circulation and interaction at the House tomb sites in northern and eastern Crete, as demonstrated by the layout of paved courts in front of the tombs and paved walkways guiding people towards the final destination. In both cases, the tomb functions as the eldest ancestral link for the entire community. One could argue that tomb IV/V/VI at Mochlos and the tomb at Myrtos-Pyrgos function in such a way because their walls “house” the collective memory of the entire community. The specific performances at the burial sites and the arrangement of the architectural setting could have very strong reciprocal relationships, as they both played very important roles to emphasize social distinctions. The evidence from the House tombs suggests that the type of ritual activities performed at the site took the form of processions, which were

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<sup>372</sup> Vavouranakis 2007, 46.

<sup>373</sup> Soles 1992, 221.

<sup>374</sup> Wright 2006, 53.

constitutive to the reflection of social differences inside the community.

#### 3.1.4. The Funerary Landscape and Monumental Tombs as a *Locale* for Social Display

The evidence discussed above from both the Tholos and House tombs suggests that in the EM II period a process of innovation was initiated inside Minoan communities, in which people felt the need to restructure the built space and create new architectural forms, such as open (paved) areas and raised walkways, that became an integral part of the funerary landscape. In conclusion, it may be put forward that the phenomena attested at the burial sites and the increased complexity in the built space reflected the progressively changing social dynamics inside Prepalatial communities. The funerary landscape became a sophisticated structured *locale* within the community, a place where the increased social complexity became re-enforced through the construction of monumental tombs and participation in communal performances. We argued before that - due to the scarcity of material evidence from Prepalatial settlements - it is not surprising that the large quantity of funerary data gives the impression that the early Bronze Age communities prioritized the funerary landscape over the world of the every day life. However, this picture should be nuanced and in order to do so I will give a short description of the phenomena occurring within the settlements in the Prepalatial, Protopalatial and Neopalatial period by a retrospective.





Figure 14 Aerial Photo of Myrtos-Pyrgos, after Cadogan 1977-78, fig. 3.



Figure 16 Paved Way at Myrtos-Pyrgos

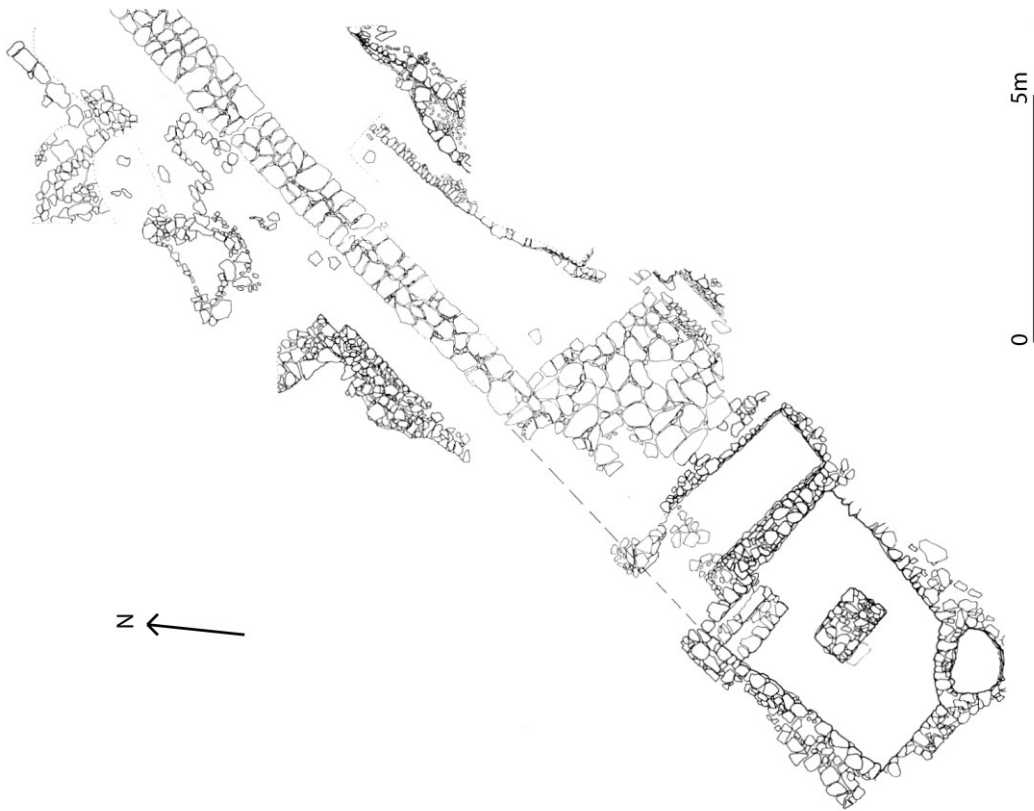


Figure 15 The House Tomb at Myrtos-Pyrgos, after Cadogan 1977-78, fig.5 (modified).

## Chapter 3.2. The Urban Landscape in the Pre-, Proto-, and Neopalatial period: A Process of Gradual Transformation.

### 3.2.1. Introduction

In what follows, we will look at Minoan cities as entities, which were gradually formed throughout the stages of the Pre-, Proto-, and Neopalatial periods. This chapter is necessary to contextualize and understand the processes behind the emergence of the Palace structures within the Minoan built environment. In this chapter, we will try to illustrate the ways in which the Minoans shaped and re-shaped the built-environment according to the changing socio-political needs of their respective communities. This implies - and this is crucial for the further course of this chapter - that the overall layout of a settlement reflects the social, political, economical and religious structures of a specific community. Describing the process of Minoan urbanism from a sociological perspective leads to the necessity to move away from purely morphological approaches and focus instead on the emergence of cities as a gradual process spanning several generations, i.e. the social reality behind their formation and transformation. This approach requires a diachronic discussion of the alterations occurring within the settlements over time.

Thus, the predominant interest of this chapter is a diachronic discussion to define those particular meaningful changes that occur inside the built space in the Pre-, Proto-, and Neopalatial period in order to understand in a better way how Minoans form and transform the built environment as a setting for structuring social interaction and social relationships. Because the majority of the material comes from the more recent Proto- and Neopalatial periods, this chapter sketches a retrospective and starts with these, in order to end with the eldest (Prepalatial).

### 3.2.2. Social Complexity and Urbanism in the Proto-and Neopalatial period

It is generally assumed that in the Proto-and Neopalatial period “the Minoan city” as a concept is well formed and clearly identifiable. The volume edited by Branigan *Urbanism in the Aegean Bronze Age* is the only serious attempt in Minoan archaeology to define the concept of the “city” in a more comprehensive manner. What comes forward in this series of papers is that most of the contributors conceptualized the Minoan city from what it is certainly not and to this purpose they all make a clear distinction between the urban and the rural.<sup>375</sup> Archaeological studies dealing with the study of urbanism focused almost entirely on the physical (layout and town planning) and the dominance of a particular city within a region. In these studies it has been suggested that it is best to approach the study of urbanism from the point of view of searching for a city’s functions or structure.<sup>376</sup> Although these approaches have led to some interesting results, such morphological approaches always tend to classify the nature of ancient cities within broad and generalizing categories and some general discussions on the principles of town planning.<sup>377</sup>

Recent studies have approached cities from a more innovative research angle, in which scholars tried to look at the social reality behind the organization of a city’s built space. These scholars did not perceive cities as clearly identifiable morphological entities, but rather tried to understand how the layout and innovations occurring within the built environment make cities “islands of competitiveness”<sup>378</sup>, “a container of power”<sup>379</sup> or “a case study for the study of power relations”<sup>380</sup>. In a recent article, Driessen approached the Minoan city from such a perspective and looked at the Minoan city as a container for structured and organized social interaction between different groups of inhabitants, but also individual inhabitants and visitors.<sup>381</sup> Driessen starts his article with a statement of

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<sup>375</sup> Branigan 2001; Branigan 2001a.

<sup>376</sup> Knapp 1997, 56; Osborne 2005, 2.

<sup>377</sup> Adams 2010.

<sup>378</sup> Amin 2002, 395.

<sup>379</sup> Giddens (1984, 262) quoted in Driessen 2009, 41. Driessen (2009) is one of the first Minoan scholars who explicitly uses such a strong sociological approach to further his understanding of Minoan society.

<sup>380</sup> Adams 2004.

<sup>381</sup> Driessen 2009.

Herzog and argues that the organization of the urban built-environment has to be perceived as “the stage for and the communicational means of the elite to exercise its powerful status in society”<sup>382</sup>. According to Driessen, alterations inside the built space are reflections of changing power relations inside Minoan communities.<sup>383</sup> Most scholars regard the Protopalatial period (MM IB-MMIIB) as the moment at which these processes occurred and the architectural idiom of the “Minoan city” appeared on Crete, which is demonstrated by the emergence of a clear structuring of internal streets, squares, courts, and esplanades.<sup>384</sup> In this period, smaller settlements were abandoned and a large number of people nucleated inside large urban areas, some of which became true “palatial” centers on the Island.<sup>385</sup> It marks the time in which major changes in the organisational structure of Minoan society occurred and the first “states” appeared on Crete<sup>386</sup>; a time wherein a series of innovations suddenly appeared on the island and in which socio-political complexity was more complexly organised.<sup>387</sup> One cannot ignore the fact that there is a tendency among scholars to picture the Protopalatial period as a period that marks a complete breach with the Prepalatial, however, it will become clear throughout this chapter that such generalisations do not give a sufficient explanation for the archaeological data.

Under the influence of a continuously evolving process of increased socio-political complexity, Minoan communities felt the need to innovate architecturally by creating and incorporating new innovations within the built space. In this way, they created the architectural necessities in order to stage the altering relationships between different groups of people. In what follows, we will give a short description of the major phenomena attested at the settlements of the Proto-and Neopalatial period.

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<sup>382</sup> Herzog (1997, 7), quoted by Driessen 2009, 41.

<sup>383</sup> Driessen 2009, 41 and 44.

<sup>384</sup> Branigan 1972, 752; Chryssoulaki 1990, 378-380; Müller 1991, 558; Palyvou 1986, 192; Romano 2003, 247; Van Effenterre 1963, 230; Warren 1994, 209.

<sup>385</sup> Fitton 2004, 56-57.

<sup>386</sup> Renfrew (1972, 367-369) talks about ‘chiefdom states’, ‘principalities’ and ‘minor states’. Knappett (1999) thinks in terms of ‘segmentary states’.

<sup>387</sup> See for example Wiener 1991; Warren 1994; Cherry 1986.

### 3.2.2.1. Streets – Walkways – Open Air Spaces

Scholars have argued that within the settlements that later become cities of recognizable size, an internal street system became an integral part of the built-space and streets were clearly laid out in a particular manner to create a well-established circulation network through the town.<sup>388</sup> They are therefore major innovations that facilitated circulation throughout the settlement. A well-established circulation network also formalized a clear and direct connection between the settlement and other cities in the surrounding region and such a network turned Crete into a mosaic of interconnected settlements in the Proto- and Neopalatial period.<sup>389</sup> Most scholars believe that the clearly planned network of circulation and the structuring of the built space in general were coordinated by a central authority, which controlled the planning of the town and its appearance as it has been transmitted to us today.<sup>390</sup> The increasing population may have necessitated a good established network of roads that facilitated the organization of and circulation through the town. The planning of the town and the installment of a circulation network and open air spaces was a large communal operation, working at the level of the entire community. Such large interferences in the landscape were controlled by a higher elite who regulated and managed all necessary resources for the building project. Since these streets connect the different parts of the site with each other and connect the city and the hinterland, they

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<sup>388</sup> Warren (1994, 189-210) and Branigan (1972, 755) both consider the presence of streets as the major characteristic of a city; Van Effenterre pleads that Minoan cities should show some kind of tendency towards the conceptualization of the built space; Van Effenterre (1990, 489) refers to “la géométrisation des espacements urbains en un schéma abstrait”. With this he suggests that Minoan cities should show some kind of tendency towards the regulation of the built-environment; Driessen (2009, 41-42) argues that the installment of open air spaces inside settlements of considerable size, such as the west courts, esplanades, etc. are the main elements to distinguish a city as such; Palyvou (1986, 193) has demonstrated that the building activity at Akrotiri was strongly related to street formation, which means that the people had conceptualized an architectural idiom for constructing the street-system and the city in that particular manner. She argued that at Akrotiri the dentation of the facades is primarily related to the street system, since one of the objectives was to form non-straight streets. It is a long-lived rule respected by all members of the community and in all successive building activities.

<sup>389</sup> Chryssoulaki 1990, 372.

<sup>390</sup> Branigan 1972; Romano 2003; Warren 1994.

played a major role in the constitution of the urban environment both in the Protopalatial and Neopalatial periods.<sup>391</sup>

In Minoan times, the internal street system existed primarily out of walkways used by all inhabitants of the settlement.<sup>392</sup> To quote Warren 1994: “the Knossian roads are excellently designed for people on foot or with pack or driven animals...not for wheeled traffic”<sup>393</sup>. The best known walkways are found at the Palace sites of Knossos, Malia, and Phaistos, were raised above ground level and paved, although in different materials. For example, the raised walkways at Malia were paved with Kalderim and at Knossos they used poros limestone slabs. In all of the largest palatial settlements (Knossos, Malia, Phaistos, and Zakros) where raised walkways dated to the Proto-and Neopalatial period have been attested, one or more walkways end up at one or more entrances of the Minoan Palace.<sup>394</sup> These roads guided the people, both residents and non-residents, throughout the settlement towards its major focal points, in most cases the west and central courts of the Minoan Palaces.<sup>395</sup> The raised walkways penetrate the Minoan Palace and end up in front of the central court, which is a termination point of the focused movements in the building. The penetration of the building through a raised walkway is sometimes associated with changes in the form of the paving as it enters the Palace. Cadogan mentioned that the main causeway at Phaistos was built of crazy paving until it approaches the main western entrance of the Palace. At the entrance the walkways change into well laid out blocks of gypsum that ran straight through the main corridor.<sup>396</sup> At Knossos one can see a similar phenomenon at the west entrance. The white stone of the raised walkway crossing the west court changes into blue-green slabs, which are

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<sup>391</sup> Chryssoulaki 1990, 378-379; Palyvou 2004, 213-214; Van Effenterre 1980, 253; Warren 1994, 192.

<sup>392</sup> Chryssoulaki (1990, 377) made the interesting observation that: “les revêtements de rues minoennes portant des traces de roues sont rares”.

<sup>393</sup> Warren (1994, 207) argued that these walkways served for the transportation of commercial goods as well as for religious and ceremonial activities such as processions held at particular times in the community. The traffic passing along these walkways could be guided by different motivations, also socio-political and that is what interests us.

<sup>394</sup> Palyvou 2002, 173; Palyvou 2004, 214.

<sup>395</sup> Driessen 2004; Marinatos 1987; Driessen (2004, 8): “the plan of some specific Minoan towns was dictated because of their function as an interregional meeting place for residents and non-residents; in these cases the priority of access routes to the communication device – the central court or, in some cases, another attention focusing point – decided the town’s development”.

<sup>396</sup> Cadogan 1976, 96.

faced with red stucco.<sup>397</sup> Causeways are generally in between 1.10 and 1.4m wide and their construction seems in a way “standardized”.<sup>398</sup>

The unique interrelation of raised walkways, theatral areas, courts, and Palace entrances suggest that these walkways could be used at particular times of the year as procession ways.<sup>399</sup> Raised walkways indeed facilitated human traffic throughout the town, but these walkways served apart from this practical function more symbolic functions when large-scale ritual events were held at the Minoan Palaces.<sup>400</sup> Their elevation above ground level served a symbolic purpose and emphasized the people that actively participated in processions. Further the narrowness of these walkways suggests that the movement of people was restrained to a limited number, who probably walked one by one, or in pairs behind each other towards the Palace.<sup>401</sup> Visibility, elevation and distinction were important features in these ritual events and asked for a sophisticated architectural setting, which is illustrated for example by the causeways, but also by the theatral areas, which are equipped with platforms and standing/seating areas to overlook processions from a higher level (Knossos, Phaistos), which creates a very interesting interaction dynamic by the built-environment.

In Minoan research, scholars looked at processions from an art historian’s perspective and focused mainly on the emergence and distribution of the iconographical theme, clothing, gender, ritual objects, etc, in processional art but never focus on the socio-political function of processional behavior as main integrative devices within Minoan

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<sup>397</sup> Evans 1928, 760.

<sup>398</sup> Warren (1994, 192) argued that the Royal Road at Knossos is such an example of standardization; All slabs were 0.7 m wide, with two side wings of each 1.2 m and a central part of 1.4m wide.

<sup>399</sup> Palyvou (2004, 214) stressed that these roads were only occasionally used for processions, and that the primary objective behind their construction was in the first place to facilitate traffic throughout the town. Additionally, the elevated nature of the walkways could be just a practical decision to keep the roads dry when there was heavy rainfall; Palyvou (2004, 214): “A visitor arriving at a Minoan town would follow such a walkway and trust it to lead him through the main arteries of the town.”

<sup>400</sup> Palyvou 2004, 214.

<sup>401</sup> Sakellarakis and Sapouna-Sakellarakis 1997, 129.



communities.<sup>402</sup> Marinatos and later Palyvou and Driessen focused on the spatial aspects of processions and argued that the raised walkways, which are intrinsically connected with the Minoan Palaces, were used on regular occasions as processional ways.<sup>403</sup>

Although the importance of processions in the Minoan world remains largely understudied, one can draw close parallels to the Mycenaean world, in which Cavanagh and Maran have illustrated the importance of processional behavior.<sup>404</sup> According to Maran, processions are devices that allow a proper focused movement to a final destination, in order to symbolically emphasize specific routes.<sup>405</sup> In Mycenaean times, processions were staged to express the kings' power and authority over the rest of the community. Mycenaean processions were exclusive in nature and reserved for a minority of the Mycenaean community. Similar observations were made recently for the Minoan Palaces.<sup>406</sup> Although processions certainly had a religious/ritual function, they also functioned as primary tools for the establishment, expression and maintenance of asymmetrical power relations within Minoan communities. The processional ways led throughout the town towards the citadel, which constituted the end zone of the procession and the place where the people could interact with the ruler.

For most scholars, the central court of the Minoan Palace constitutes the final destination point of the procession.<sup>407</sup> The term "central court" is well chosen, since it stresses the element of controlled access to this space.<sup>408</sup> These courts, of regular form and in most of the cases surrounded by walls on all four sides, have a closed off character that worthy of further exploration. As these courts are inscribed in the circulation network of walkways, they are only accessible "under condition".<sup>409</sup> We will not elaborate in this heading on the function of the Minoan Palaces as loci for large-scale performative events that involved

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<sup>402</sup> Peterson 1981; Immerwahr 1990; Laffineur 2000; Shaw 2000; Smith 2003, German 2005; Blakolmer 2008.

<sup>403</sup> See Marinatos 1987; Palyvou 2004; Driessen 2004; 2009.

<sup>404</sup> Cavanagh 2001, 130-132; Maran 2006.

<sup>405</sup> Maran 2006a, 82.

<sup>406</sup> Vander Beken 2010a; 2010.

<sup>407</sup> Driessen 2002; 2004; Palyvou 2002; 2004.

<sup>408</sup> Palyvou 2004.

<sup>409</sup> Palyvou 2004, 209.

all socio-political layers of the Minoan community. This will be discussed in detail in Parts 4 and 5 of this dissertation.

### 3.2.3. The Prepalatial period: A Time of Gradual Transformation and Formation.

We have already argued in the discussion of the Tholos- and House tombs that very little archaeological evidence providing information about the organization of settlements in the Neolithic and Prepalatial period has survived allowing for a proper description of any processes of change. Together with the material evidence discussed above, the excavations at Vasiliki and Myrtos are essential to our understanding of the life cycle and layout of such earlier settlements. They have both been destroyed around MM II and are not considered as cities, because of the fact that the passages and paths do not show any logical arrangement.<sup>410</sup> Although Prepalatial settlements are not considered as cities, the archaeological material that is at our disposal today shows some noteworthy emerging processes, which are contemporary to the transformations that we sketched above for the cemetery sites on Crete.

The clearest evidence comes from the 'palatial' settlements. One such element is the appearance and allocation of room for large open air spaces inside these settlements from the Prepalatial period onwards. Open air spaces became a significant element in the layout of settlements and therefore in the urban life of the Minoans. Their importance may be understood as similar to the value awarded to them by modern Cretans, since many daily activities are still conducted outside in the open.<sup>411</sup> From the Prepalatial period onwards, there is evidence for at least three palatial settlements in which the place of the later central court - the essential characteristic of the Minoan Palaces - was already an open space.

At the Kephala hill, where the later Knossian Palace was built, ten different strata of the Neolithic period have been attested. The oldest strata of the Neolithic period go back to the 7<sup>th</sup> millennium BC. Soundings underneath the central court of Knossos unveiled the

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<sup>410</sup> Because of the absence of any arrangement Branigan (1972, 751-752) prefers to refer to paths and passages, rather than routes or streets.

<sup>411</sup> Palyvou 2004, 207.

existence of substantial architectural remains dating to the Middle Neolithic (stratum III) period. Here the remains of two multiple room buildings and a large roughly square room have been uncovered underneath the area of the later central court.<sup>412</sup> During the Final Neolithic (stratum II and I) the settlement still increased in size (5 ha).<sup>413</sup> Of this period little architectural finds have been attested which suggests that they disappeared with the building of the first Palace. Underneath the central court, scholars have found the traces of two distinct houses based on the presence of “fixed hearths”<sup>414</sup>. It is clear that these structures constitute the last architectural evidence in the area of the central court before it was leveled and turned into an open area. When did the central court become an open area as such? Driessen has argued that a close connection existed between the central and western courts and suggested to further examine the evolution inside the west court at Knossos in order to gain extra evidence for the establishment of the central court as an open space.<sup>415</sup> At Knossos, the EM period is the least known of all.<sup>416</sup> The hilltop where the later Knossian Palace got built underwent a series of changes with sometimes large levelling operations during EM IIA-EMIIB as well as EM III, MMIA and MMIB.<sup>417</sup> Evans notes that leveling operations “clearly took place in Early Minoan times” and therefore in a period before the erection of the first Palace.<sup>418</sup> The most remarkable finds of the EM I phase are the deposits of the “Palace well”, situated in the northeast quarter of the Palace. This deposit contained a large number of burnt ceramics and dates back to the earliest phase of EM IA. The EM IB period is known from a trench (FF) in the later west court again containing burnt pottery. Several other deposits are related to trench FF in the west court and formed the basis for a good description of the EM IB phase, which is situated between the EM IA “Palace well” and EM IIA “West Court House”

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<sup>412</sup> It seems that the Middle Neolithic period was a short period since in none of these structures more than one building phase is attested, see Evans 1994, 14-16.

<sup>413</sup> Evans 1994, 16-20.

<sup>414</sup> Evans (1994, 16): “Evans distinguished two separate houses on the basis of two fixed hearths, or small raised platforms, which he found in separate rooms”.

<sup>415</sup> See Driessen (2007, 79 -81) with references.

<sup>416</sup> Wilson (1994, 23): “No other period of the Minoan settlement is so poorly preserved, owing largely to the very extensive intrusions made during the course of later building activity.”

<sup>417</sup> Wilson 1994.

<sup>418</sup> Evans 1994, 16.

deposits.<sup>419</sup> The EM IIA phase is especially well known for the “West Court House” deposits. Wilson notes that underneath a part of the later Protopalatial and Neopalatial west court, the “West Court House” was found, which has been dated to the EM II period and was built immediately on top of the Final Neolithic phase. When this house was constructed, the EM I phase was cut away before the building was placed. Because of the lack of fundamental evidence, the function of the building remains unknown. At the end of EM IIB, the building was leveled and this small part of the later west court turned into an open area.<sup>420</sup> If there is indeed a close connection between the west and central court, then it seems reasonable to suppose that the central court became an open area surrounded by ancillary buildings from EM IIB onwards. As early as EM IIB the west court became partly an open space and fronted the court building on the hill. However, the EM IIB west court was very narrow and definitely not the size of the one in the Proto- and Neopalatial period.<sup>421</sup> The building activity further expanded during EM III when the northwest court (which involved a large terracing) and the Early Keep were added.<sup>422</sup> Also the Hypogaeum should probably be assigned to this period.<sup>423</sup> Other constructions that date to the Prepalatial building are the Monolithic pillar basement.<sup>424</sup> Later in between EM III – MMIA the first lines of the Throne room complex, and other structures such as the early west façade were laid out. It was not until MMIB – MMII that the west court gained its final form and till MM II that the major lines of the Protopalatial Palace were finally laid out. In MMII the central court of Knossos received its first real paving.<sup>425</sup> From the discussion above, it becomes clear that as early as the Prepalatial period, different things were going on at the later Knossian Palace site, which are the more interesting if we contextualize them within the phenomena attested at the contemporary funerary sites. All these extensions provided an enlarged space for large gatherings within the Knossian town from the Prepalatial period onwards.

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<sup>419</sup> See Wilson (1994) for a detailed discussion. The Early Minoan II phase is better attested in the archaeological record and based on the findings it has been put forward that the EM II settlement comprised an area of about 4.84 ha.

<sup>420</sup> Wilson 1994, 36; Driessen 2007, 79-80.

<sup>421</sup> MacDonald 2005, 45.

<sup>422</sup> Wilson 1994, 38; MacGillivry 1998, 34.

<sup>423</sup> MacGillivry 1994, 49-51.

<sup>424</sup> Momigliano 1991, 163-167.

<sup>425</sup> Mirié 1979, 38-39.

The archaeological evidence in the central court at Malia also points towards this early EMII B date.<sup>426</sup> In a series of recent soundings, Pelon came across four floors dating from EM IIA onwards. Based on these different floor levels, he concluded that the constructions of EM IIA were covered by a floor of red earth in EM IIB. Moreover, it seems that the central court has been free of any constructions from EM IIB onwards. This means that the central court at Malia also dates back to the EM IIB period. In EM II B a building gets erected immediately above the EM IIA layer, which incorporates the later open area of the central court.<sup>427</sup> Some soundings in the vicinity of the Neopalatial pillared hall (IX 1-2) revealed some traces of early structures dating to the EMII period.<sup>428</sup> The archaeological evidence suggests that a major change occurred in the orientation of the buildings between EM II A and EM II B. In EM IIA the constructions under the later Palace site were orientated NE – SW. It is not until the EM II B period that the architecture was conventionally orientated in more or less strict N – S direction. Later, with the construction of the actual central court and the layout of the entire Palace, this orientation seems to have retained the actual standard.<sup>429</sup>

At Phaistos, the archaeological evidence is unclear. Although it is clear that constructions dating to the Final Neolithic are situated in the area of the central court, what happened with the central court between the Final Neolithic and the MM II period, when the paved central court was constructed, is still a matter of debate. There seems to exist agreement upon the fact that there has been a series of levelling operations on which different terraces were built in the course of the EM II and EM III period.<sup>430</sup> The absence of architectural remains in the area of the central court between these periods may suggest that the central court was already an open place from the Final Neolithic onwards.<sup>431</sup>

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<sup>426</sup> Pelon 1980, 128-129; 1989, 771 - 785; Hue and Pelon 1992; Driessen 2007, 83.

<sup>427</sup> Driessen 2007, 85 – 86.

<sup>428</sup> Hue and Pelon 1992, 31; Pelon 1993, 544-546; Pelon 2005; Also Driessen 2007, 83.

<sup>429</sup> Further reading on Malia, see Pelon 1970; 1980; 1982, 1986; 1989; 1993; 2005; Also Driessen 2004.

<sup>430</sup> La Rosa 2002.

<sup>431</sup> Vagnetti 1972-1973, 7 - 138; Branigan 1993, 116; Driessen 2007, 81-83.

In general, the material evidence from the Palace sites demonstrates that the central courts and partly also the areas underneath the west courts of the later Minoan Palaces were intentionally left open at a very early stage and were at the beginning not clearly marked by clearly enclosing architectural boundaries.<sup>432</sup> It is only gradually over time that there is a tendency to surround the area of the central court with ancillary buildings, which gives the possibility to structure movement and social interaction at these places. Such gradual changes will be discussed thoroughly later this chapter.

In a number of non-palatial settlements some interesting alterations of the built space have been attested in the Prepalatial period. One of these sites is Vasiliki where several Prepalatial phases have been discovered. In both EM IIA and EM IIB up to six houses were clustered in this village.<sup>433</sup> Here, early in EM IIB, a paved court measuring 20 by 20 m was added at the heart of the settlement, which seems to act as a sort of village square, with houses grouped around it.<sup>434</sup> At Palaikastro, underneath building block Chi, a series of walls has been discovered which belongs to a building dated to the Prepalatial period. Interestingly, adjacent to this building was a large open space, dated to the EM IIB period.<sup>435</sup>

#### 3.2.4. Shifting Worlds: From Funeral to Urban - Minoan Urbanism in Retrospective

We will now try to contextualize the changes that have occurred over time in the urban environment as being part of a gradual and not a sudden process of socio-political change. Although minimal, the Prepalatial evidence from both palatial and non-palatial settlements illustrates that as early as the Prepalatial period, Minoan communities started to exploit the socio-political opportunities of creating outside open air spaces as places for social display.<sup>436</sup> These innovations all prove that architectural innovations that

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<sup>432</sup> Evans 1994, 1-20; Driessen 2004, 78.

<sup>433</sup> Fitton 2004, 48.

<sup>434</sup> Zoīs 1982, 207-215; Driessen 2007, 87 - 88; Fitton 2004, 48.

<sup>435</sup> Driessen 2007, 86 - 87.

<sup>436</sup> MacGillivray and Driessen 1990, 395-412.

occurred inside the Prepalatial cemetery sites simultaneously occurred inside the Prepalatial settlements, which suggests that the evolving complexity of the socio-political fabric generated the need to apply architectural innovations in order to stage the altering relationships between people (for a detailed overview, cf. *supra*).

In the subsequent stage of the Protopalatial period the little hamlets were abandoned and different groups started to nucleate in a substantially smaller number of urban centers, some of which bear witness to the first Palace structures on Crete. Major changes have been perceived both in terms of scale and elaboration within the urban sphere in the Protopalatial and the later Neopalatial period. Their presence takes serious proportions, whenever the urban environment is dominated by several open air spaces such as courts and raised pathways. These are good arguments to state that the structuring of human interaction and facilitation of human traffic were key-elements in the establishment of Minoan cities. Throughout Minoan history the need presented itself to conceptualize the Minoan urban built-environment in order to anticipate these socio-political processes.

The changes that occurred in the Pre-, Proto-, and Neopalatial period illustrate that the Prepalatial period was at the start of a continual process of innovation that reached its most sophisticated form in the Neopalatial period, a period of major institutionalization hallmarked by the emergence of major palatial centers across Crete. These settlements are characterized by monumental architecture (Palaces and villas), a clear internal organization of streets, open-air squares, and habitation quarters that are all organized into a clearly structured entity. Such observations add a separate form of data to the ongoing discussion of social complexity in the Prepalatial period. First of all, it becomes clear that the formative stages of the Minoan Palaces, traditionally considered as a true hallmark of the Proto- and Neopalatial period, were set into motion during the Prepalatial period. Such observations ask for re-thinking the picture of socio-political complexity throughout the stages of the Pre-, Proto-, and Neopalatial period. The traditional picture of a breach between the Prepalatial on one side, and the more complexly organised Proto- and Neopalatial periods on the other, does not give a sufficient explanation to the archaeological data. What we see is a rather gradual transformation over the course of time, for which the basis is already laid out in the Prepalatial period.

Is there a change in the ways Minoans conceptualized the reciprocal relationship between the funerary and urban daily landscape? The changes within the cemetery and the settlement landscape of the Pre-, Proto-, and Neopalatial period may indeed suggest that Minoan communities started to prioritize the importance of the daily “city” landscape over the funeral landscape. Prepalatial communities constructed loci for communal gatherings both inside the urban environment and at the burial sites, and this long before the emergence of the Minoan Palaces in the Protopalatial period. It therefore seems that early Bronze Age communities created places for social interaction both within the funerary and the urban sphere. Although the Prepalatial settlement evidence is rather limited, these examples illustrate quite well that both the funerary as well as the urban environment were regarded as equally important and both play an essential role in the process of elite place making. However, I strongly believe that the specific context of the cemetery sites and the nature of the social interactions that occurred here should be considered as more socio-politically relevant compared to those within the urban environment. The ritual performances executed at the Tholos and House tomb cemeteries makes the burial sites the main loci for focused ritual performances and communal gatherings. The Tholos and House tombs housed the collective memory of these communities and were therefore the key places for these purposes. These sites were the most important places for socio-political display inside the Prepalatial communities.

It is only from the successive Protopalatial period onwards that one can see a major shift in the loci of communal ritual almost exclusively towards the urban environment with large-scale communal occasions held at the Minoan Palaces. There seems to be a diachronic change from the Prepalatial into the Protopalatial period. At the beginning of the Protopalatial period, burial sites were possibly still an important feature of some of the Minoan communities; nonetheless, a shift in the axis of the funeral landscape and the daily landscape of the Minoans can be clearly demonstrated. The dominant weight of the funeral slightly shifted towards a dominance of the daily life. Within the process of urbanization the cemeteries were not the only landmarks for the Minoans. At that time, the cemeteries were only one of a series of landmarks and the fact that they gradually went out of use proves that the Minoans started to prioritize the daily life over the world



of the dead. The increasing complexity of the cityscape from the Protopalatial period onwards may indicate that by that time the socio-political and economic life had been irrefutably brought to the foreground. Towns become more extensive than before and are elaborated with a street grid, blocks of houses and most importantly Palace structures start to appear. By the Neopalatial period, the countryside was filled with villas and all settlements were more or less connected by an extensive street system that crossed the island. Although the importance and character of the Minoan villas is still far from clear, it is certain that they duplicated many features of palatial architecture in terms of planning, function of rooms and architectural elaboration. Thus, they might have operated as regional centers through which political authority was diffused. As a result, from the Protopalatial period onwards, Crete may be regarded as a landscape in which several phenomena across the island, such as Palace-structures, peak- and cave sanctuaries were the main loci for communal gathering, which were used simultaneously for the representation of socio-political power and authority.<sup>437</sup> This landscape was constructed through the meaningful use of architecture stressing the world of everyday life and in particular, places of political authority, which established a network of opportunities to express power and authority on both a local and regional level. Although in this landscape the place of the dead was less dominant, this does not mean that it was not dealt with, only in a less prominent fashion.

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<sup>437</sup> The function of the peak sanctuaries and Minoan caves for Minoan community life are beyond the scope of this dissertation; More info concerning the socio-political dimension of the peak sanctuaries and sacred caves, see Jones 1999; Tyree 1974; Rutkowski 1988; Kyriakidis 2006; Peatfield (1994) has suggested that the Late Minoan elites might have used peak sanctuaries and cave sanctuaries as loci for socio-political display. Sanctuaries on mountain peaks might have gathered communities from wider regions and catered to their ritual needs, as they were major tools in the representation of socio-political power and authority. He bases his suggestion on the sharp decrease in the number of sanctuaries from about 25 to 6 throughout the Palace periods and the fact that the material assemblages found at the remaining sanctuaries show a strong link with the monumental Palace structures on the island. The increased architectural complexity over time and the very specific material assemblages involving luxurious goods such as gold jewellery, bronze figurines, etc., lay in straight line with the developments attested at the cemetery and urban sites discussed within this dissertation: i.e. the active use of the built space and objects in order to structure social interaction and socio-political relationships (see Part 3, 4, and 5 this volume).

Although the outside gathering spaces remained important during the entire Minoan period, it has to be noted that in the course of the Proto- and Neopalatial period a wide range of new room types appear in Minoan monumental architecture (both the Palaces and villas), which could have functioned as important internal venues for specific occasions. Their forms can be summarized in some kind of recurring typology, which I will return to later in detail (see Part 4 below). The extensive appearance of both external and internal gathering spaces from the Prepalatial through the Protopalatial and into the Neopalatial period should be regarded as the material reflection of a continuously growing social complexity in Minoan every day life. Their appearance should be considered as the externalization of a conscious need to structure social interaction and social relations by the extensive use of architecture in order to create a meaningful environment for the expression of status, power, and authority.

In the next part of this dissertation, we will focus more specifically on the position of the Minoan Palaces within the urban fabric of the Neopalatial period. The following chapter starts with a short review of the past approaches taken to the study of the Minoan Palaces and discusses shortly the recurrent architectural features at each of them. Additionally, we give a descriptive overview of the best-known Minoan Palaces and the different gathering spaces inside these buildings, which were introduced in the Protopalatial period and reached their definitive form in the Neopalatial period. Since it is claimed in this dissertation that these gathering spaces were the key spaces establishing a mode of structured interaction between several groups of people, their presence in and distribution throughout the Minoan Palaces are of prime importance to our argument.

# Part 4

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The Minoan Palaces: Description and Architectural analyses.

## Abstract

In Part 4 we will conduct a descriptive and architectural analysis of the best-known Minoan Palaces of Knossos, Malia, Phaistos, and Zakros. Although all Minoan Palaces have in common a number of components, they also show strong differences in the placement of rooms, accessibility and general elaboration. First, we give an overview of the recurrent components at each of the Minoan Palaces. This is followed by a detailed description of all units within them in order to clarify the individuality and differences in situation, elaboration and layout. Special attention will be given to those units that are important venues for occasions during performative events. To end, we will perform an architectural analysis for each of the Minoan Palaces, which focuses on the presence of physical boundaries within the built space.

## Chapter 4.1 Deconstructing the Minoan Palaces: A Labyrinth versus a Clear Conceptual Design

Before we continue with a thorough description for each of the Palaces, it might be useful to draw attention to their most important characteristics. This chapter will recapitulate at first the essential features (mostly) shared by all Palaces, widely discussed in past literature. A study of the Minoan Palaces by matter of form shows that they have strong similarities but at the same time a strong individuality.

### 4.1.1. The West Court (fig. 17, 18, 19)

Open spaces are an important element in Minoan architecture and the large west and central courts of the Minoan Palaces are the most common examples.<sup>438</sup> The large paved open west court is the most remarkable attachment of the three biggest Minoan Palaces (i.e. Knossos, Malia, and Phaistos) and is equipped with slightly raised walkways. At some Palaces, such as Knossos and Phaistos, the west court received a theatral area and so-called *Kouloures*.<sup>439</sup> This space is situated at the transition between the actual Palace and the rest of the town and therefore fulfilled a mediating function between the two in the case of large performative events. In contrast to the central court, the orientation and final form of the west courts differs strongly at each of the Minoan Palaces.<sup>440</sup>

A structural analysis of the west courts further elucidates our understanding of what happened at these courts and what their function could have been for Minoan community life. In past and recent scholarship it is commonly accepted that this court had some kind of public function as it functioned as a venue for specific occasions. The presence and gradual enlargement of this open space in the Protopalatial and Neopalatial periods provide good arguments for an increased importance of the west court for the Minoan

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<sup>438</sup> Palyvou 2002, 167.

<sup>439</sup> Palyvou 2004, 214.

<sup>440</sup> Hitchcock 2000, 63; Palyvou 2004, 215.

community, an element that we will pursue further in this dissertation.<sup>441</sup> Palyvou argued that the west courts were the main public spaces in Minoan society because access to them is unrestricted and west courts form a direct link between Palace and town.<sup>442</sup> Vansteenhuyse has argued that the arrangement of the west court illustrates a strong program which should be connected with the execution of a specific ritual.<sup>443</sup> The west court should be perceived as a strategically placed public venue for occasions. Past scholarship has defined the west court in several ways, calling it the “principal public plaza of the city” for collective activities on the level of the entire community.<sup>444</sup> The large size and open access indicate that west courts are areas suitable for large, communal and public performances. The west court connects the town and the Palace - a relationship that no one could describe better than Preziosi, who argued that “it is a controlled interface between the city and the Palace”<sup>445</sup>. The court therefore played an essential role in Minoan community life and constitutes a place for different social processes.<sup>446</sup>

At the three biggest Minoan Palaces, each Palace faces the town from the west, with the west court forming a large transitional space between the town and the Palace site.<sup>447</sup> The western facade is therefore the side that faces the public, which explains immediately why this facade was treated with more attention than the other outer sides of the building.<sup>448</sup> It seems that most scholars believe that the monumentality of the western

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<sup>441</sup> Strong evidence exists that the west court at Knossos was expanded in the Neopalatial period, a proof of the need for space and the growing importance of the west court for community life, see Marinatos 1987, 138.

<sup>442</sup> Palyvou 2004, 215.

<sup>443</sup> Vansteenhuyse 2002, 239.

<sup>444</sup> Preziosi 1983, 107.

<sup>445</sup> Preziosi 1983, 87.

<sup>446</sup> Indelicato 1986, 138; Hitchcock 2000, 63; Palyvou 2004, 208; Van Effenterre 1987, 85; Gesell 1987, 123; Vansteenhuyse 2002, 235-239; Driessen 2004, 79; Platon's (1990, 392) opinion contrasts with this view, as he and numerous others believe that the center of community life became the central court of the Palaces from the Neopalatial period onwards.

<sup>447</sup> Palyvou 2004, 214; Van Effenterre 1963, 234-235.

<sup>448</sup> Preziosi 1983, 88.

facade was indeed intentional and may have carried a symbolical message of power, sent by the people who had the Palace constructed.<sup>449</sup>

Although at every Palace the west court may be intrinsically unique, these open spaces also share several characteristics. One of these elements are the so-called raised walkways running through the town, securing circulation within and to the different quarters of the town and leading the people of the community (inhabitants and/or visitors) to the west courts and in front of the Palaces.<sup>450</sup> At each of the Palaces the raised walkways penetrate the Palace at one or more entrances. In close resemblance to the festival of the Panathenean, where the procession route traversed the agora before proceeding towards the acropolis of the city, the raised walkways in the Minoan towns crossed the west courts before entering through one or more entrances the Palace's proper.<sup>451</sup> At the west courts these walkways run in many directions and form sometimes triangles, which suggests a dynamic movement which is simultaneously closely coordinated at these courts.<sup>452</sup> The coordinated movement at the west courts by these walkways is clearly intended for a purpose, since they do not provide the fastest way to reach the Palace entrance, which would have been crossing the west court in a straight line.

The west court with its raised walkways formed an important hub between the town and the Palace, which was a transition of major importance in the case of performative events. Marinatos has argued that one of the arms of the triangles formed by the walkways at Knossos, Phaistos, and Malia, ran directly to the circular structures (the kouloures), which were large silos for grains and cereals.<sup>453</sup> Marinatos argued that the close relationship between the raised walkways and the kouloures could be interpreted as

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<sup>449</sup> Van Effenterre 1987, 85; Driessen 1997, 45; Hitchcock 2000, 66; Driessen 2004, 80; Panagiotopoulos 2006, 32-33.

<sup>450</sup> The west court and causeway system has been associated with grain storage in the Kouloures in the west court and/or a harvest festival or with ritual dancing. To this, we want to add the possibility of large ceremonial events where processions ran throughout the town to the west courts and the central courts of the Minoan Palaces. More information, see Marinatos 1987, 135 and 137; Palyvou 2004, 214.

<sup>451</sup> Hölscher 1999, 30; Driessen 2004, 12-13.

<sup>452</sup> Knirsch 2004, 12 and 76.

<sup>453</sup> Marinatos 1987, 137.

processions wherein the tributes or agricultural surplus was brought from the countryside towards the kouloures of the Palace.<sup>454</sup> In the Neopalatial period, when the kouloures went out of use, the processions proceeded further towards the magazines inside the Palaces.<sup>455</sup> Such an interpretation is possible, but we find it rather questionable that the raised walkways only functioned as an access to the magazines. The final destinations of the processions were not the kouloures or the western magazines, but the central courts and some ritual areas in the deepest parts of the Palace. The triangles at the west courts are interpreted in various ways. As the focal point of the west court, it is perfectly possible that several groups (or processions) came together at this point and continued further towards the primary entrance of the Palace.<sup>456</sup> Preziosi on the other hand has identified these triangles as “Choros triangulaire” or as places for dance.<sup>457</sup> For this interpretation he draws a close parallel between the folkloric circular dances on Crete. This circle stays closed until one person leaves the group and stands in the middle, showing of his skills. However, in Minoan times, one should rather think in terms of processions coming from town and merging together in the west court before turning towards the Palace.<sup>458</sup>

Although Palyvou is right to label the west court as a public space because many people gathered here, its function becomes much more complex and transforms entirely when the west court is used as a place for a performative event. Palyvou’s observation that access to the west court was unrestricted and uncontrolled forms an insufficient argument for the complexity of the west court. An alternative reconstruction of the function of the west court as performative space will be highlighted in more detail in part 5 of this dissertation and builds upon a recently published article by Letesson and Vansteenhuyse.<sup>459</sup> The main question to be discussed is whether or not the west courts were really “public” when they were used for large-scale ritual events?

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<sup>454</sup> Marinatos 1987, 137.

<sup>455</sup> Marinatos 1987, 137-138; Hitchcock 2000, 64.

<sup>456</sup> Palyvou 2004, 214.

<sup>457</sup> Preziosi 1983, 85.

<sup>458</sup> See also section 3.2.2.1. and 5.2.2.1. this dissertation.

<sup>459</sup> Letesson and Vansteenhuyse 2006.



#### 4.1.2. The Kouloures (fig. 17, 18, 19)

In the Protopalatial period two of the best-known Minoan Palaces (Knossos and Phaistos) received at the west court circular pits or “kouloures”.<sup>460</sup> At Malia no such structures exist until the Neopalatial period. Traditionally these pits were classified as cisterns, garbage pits and planters for sacred trees.<sup>461</sup> Today, most researchers prefer to identify them as large granaries because of the close relationship with the Neopalatial granaries found in the southwest corner of the Palace of Malia.<sup>462</sup> At Malia, eight circular silos are aligned in two rows of four within a walled space.<sup>463</sup>

These structures are not only typical for Palace sites. Also at Myrtos-Pyrgos one kouloura was found. Strasser questioned the interpretation of granaries and refers to Evans, who interpreted them as large installations for the collection of water that ran off the paved terrace of the west court.<sup>464</sup> For Strasser they were probably unrelated to Minoan economy, but rather a technical design for a major problem. Without willing to undermine Strasser’s alternative reconstruction, it should be noted that the interpretation of granaries is the most widely accepted.

#### 4.1.3. Theatral Areas (fig. 17, 19)

The Palaces of Knossos and Phaistos are equipped with several rows of low stairs that could be used for seating and/or standing situated at the north borders of the west court. The discoveries by Evans at Knossos show that the development of the “Theatral Areas” dates back to the Protopalatial Palaces.<sup>465</sup> The fact that we do not have such structures at Malia can be due to topographical reasons. As the palatial site is situated on flat land with no natural flanks or elevations in the terrain, such structures were never built. Preziosi

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<sup>460</sup> Begg 1975, 33-35.

<sup>461</sup> See Preziosi 1983, 85; Hitchcock 2000, 64-65; Marinatos 1987, 135.

<sup>462</sup> Marinatos 1987, 137-138; Graham 1962: 134-135; Tire and van Effenterre 1966, 8-9; Preziosi 1983, 85 and 108; Preziosi 1983, 108-109; Strasser 1997, 78-79.

<sup>463</sup> Graham 1962: 134-135; The French excavators identified them since the beginning as large water tanks, see Chapoutier and Demargne 1962, 18-19.

<sup>464</sup> Strasser 1997, 81-91.

<sup>465</sup> Hitchcock 2000, 68 – 72.

argues that the so-called “Agora of Malia” could have had a similar function and thus replaced the theatral area.<sup>466</sup>

The theatral area at Knossos is the most unique of all. The stairs have been arranged in a straight angle around the ‘Royal Box’ together with the Royal Road (the major raised walkway at Knossos) that ran and ended up in front of the eastern flight of stairs. This led Evans to assume that this arrangement was a real theatre-like structure, reserved for spectators that observed the ritual performances inside the theatre and the west court (ceremonies or processions).<sup>467</sup>

It is very questionable that these stairs were used to sit just as is the case in a modern theatre. Evans states that ‘assuming that the low steps were intended for standing room rather than for sitting, there might, indeed, have been room for something over 500 persons.’<sup>468</sup> Also Marinatos seems to agree to this observation, arguing that people probably stood upright on these stairs.<sup>469</sup> Both at Knossos and Phaistos the raised walkways ran towards (at Phaistos they climb up) the theatre, which proves that the designers clearly intended a close connection between the theatral areas and the raised causeways.

Later in Part 5 this dissertation it will be argued that the west courts with their theatre, causeways, and triangle created a unique environment to stage specific events and eventually provided the possibility to structure social interaction and relationships. The elevated or hierarchical nature of the theatral areas may have functioned two-fold in a context of social interaction. The important people of the community could gather on this “place of appearance” in order to be seen by the audience in the west court. Simultaneously, they could observe the activities that were performed in the west court from a privileged position, looking over the heads of the masses. For the function of the

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<sup>466</sup> Hitchcock 2000, 71.

<sup>467</sup> Evans 1928, 582; See Chapter 4.2.2.4. this dissertation.

<sup>468</sup> Evans (1928, 585): “The tiers of steps on the east would have accommodated about 360 persons, those on the west about 160, and the Royal Box would have been the most exclusive area for about a dozen persons.”

<sup>469</sup> Marinatos 1987, 137.

“Theatral Area” as a performative space and its social function, we would like to refer to Part 5 this dissertation.

#### 4.1.4. The Central Court

The central court is, in contrast with the west court, a rectangular space clearly defined by architectural boundaries and is often considered as the diagnostic feature of the Minoan palace.<sup>470</sup> Graham and Preziosi focused primarily on the Palace as a box, trying to unveil their syntax based on the interrelationship of the different structures. The actual form of the Minoan Palaces was guided by some normative principles of design. As a result they actually confirmed what Shaw (1973) assumed in an early article, that:

“The central court was the ‘coreform’ of the Palaces, with the religious structures along its western side, facing east, and the placement of the rooms in such a manner may have been a basic criterion determining court orientation”<sup>471</sup>.

Although the central courts of the Minoan Palaces are different in size, they seem to be built according to the conventional proportions 2:1 and surrounded on all sides by monumental facades.<sup>472</sup> The surrounding facades of the central court framed this court as an isolated entity and created a subtle but prominent gradual transition from open air space towards the inner compartments behind them. In this view, the facades announce and screen off what lies behind them at the same time, something that incites curiosity for those who already reached the central court. People saw the numerous openings to the deeper parts of the Palace from the central court, but had no clue of the internal arrangement that lay behind them because they were mostly sealed off by physical boundaries. The central court is often surrounded by a series of columns or pillars on one

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<sup>470</sup> Graham 1962, 73-83; Gesell 1987; Davis 1987, 157; Preziosi 1983, 78-148; Palyvou 2002; 2004, 215-216; Vansteenhuyse 2002; Driessen 2004; Letesson and Vansteenhuyse 2006.

<sup>471</sup> Shaw 1973b, 56.

<sup>472</sup> Knossos: ca. 53 x 28 m; Malia ca. 51 x 22m; Phaistos: ca. 51 x 22m; Zakros: ca. 30 x 12m. See Palyvou 2002, 171.

or more sides and more or less oriented north-south.<sup>473</sup> It is possible, especially for Knossos, that some of the rooms of the upper floor had balconies and balustrades overlooking the central court, which gave the inner facades a very dynamic character.<sup>474</sup>

Apart from these close resemblances, all Palaces are characterized by a strong individuality. A look at the west wings, i.e. the major ritual wing of the Palace, makes it easy to recognize that the types of rooms found in the west wings and the degrees of accessibility between the different units are substantially different at each of the Palaces. At Knossos, the west wing consisted of a tripartite shrine and the throne room complex, whereas this kind of configuration is completely missing at Zakros. At Zakros, most of the area behind the facade of the west wing was covered by a large Minoan hall (the largest ever found in a Minoan Palace). Also the west wings at Malia and Phaistos have their unique configurations, which will become clear in the detailed descriptions of all Palaces below.

Chronological evidence illustrates that the very concept of a large open space in the form of a courtyard came into being in a period well before the erection of the Minoan Palaces<sup>475</sup>, however, there is no doubt that the central court received its canonical form during the Palace periods on Crete. As we will see later in Part 5, the central court became one of the most integrated spaces within the Palace building during the Palace period, which favours the view that access to this place was controlled and institutionalized during the Palatial periods so that it played an important role in producing and reproducing normative notions of power and authority.

#### 4.1.5. Orientation

At an early stage in the investigation of Minoan structures, scholars came to recognize the importance of their deliberate orientation to external focal points in the landscape such as mountain peaks, caves, and even astronomical constellations or the rising sun.

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<sup>473</sup> Shaw 1973b; Preziosi 1983, 501-510; This succession of columns and pillars form a Stoa or portico, which is defined by Palyvou (2002, 173) as a ‘Sheltered semi-indoor extension of an outdoor space [...]’.

<sup>474</sup> Palyvou 2004, 211-212; 2002, 173; Gesell 1987, 126.

<sup>475</sup> Driessen 2004, 78-79; 2007; Palyvou 2002, 168; Tomkins 2004; Also Chapter 3.2.3. this volume.

Shaw has studied the orientation of the individual parts of the Minoan Palaces starting with the central court and argued that its proper orientation was most probably an integral part of the planning of the Palace. Shaw was the first to suggest the rough N-S orientation of the Palaces and argued, based on his measurements, that this orientation was intentionally and due to solar and lunar orientations; a conclusion already made by S. Marinatos in 1934.<sup>476</sup> With regard to ritual structures Shaw made an interesting comment, arguing that “The impression one gets from the evidence available... is that many religious structures were set with an east-west orientation and were open on the east.”<sup>477</sup>

The Palace of Phaistos is an exception on the rule because the topography of the hill was already oriented N-S and restrained the architect’s freedom.<sup>478</sup> Malia on the other hand, is very emblematic for an intentional orientation. Here, the archaeological evidence suggests that a major change occurred between EM II A and EM II B. In EM IIA the constructions under the later Palace site were orientated NE – SW. It is not until the EM II B period that the architecture was conventionally orientated in more or less strict N – S direction.<sup>479</sup> The actual Palace at Malia was situated on a plain without large differences in altitude, which means that the architects were not at all restricted to an obligatory north-south orientation. The fact that they decided to do so proves that this orientation was meaningful. At Knossos it also appears that the actual N – S oriented central court was already laid during EM II-III (see chapter 3.2.3 this dissertation). At Zakros the central court is no later than LM I in date, with no structures pre-dating the actual paved court.<sup>480</sup> The Palace of Zakros is an unusual case with regard to its orientation. The reason for this large difference in orientation could be due to the fact that the west wind at Zakros is rather strong, explaining the unusual placement of the Palace in between two

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<sup>476</sup> Shaw 1973b; 1977; Marinatos 1934; Although Shaw (1973b) and others stress the more or less north south orientation, it should be noted that all of the Palaces have a slight or even large deviation from the true North. Deviations for the Palaces are: (a) Phaistos: 2° 35’38" ; (b) Knossos: 11° 37’ 08" ; (c) Malia: 17° 01’48" ; (d) Zakros: 37° 33’20", see Shaw 1973b, 49: fig.1.

<sup>477</sup> Shaw 1973, 57, quoted in Goodison 2001, 81.

<sup>478</sup> There is little agreement about the construction date of the central court at Phaistos; For more information on the subject see La Rosa 1992, 240; Warren 1987, 48; Fiandra 1983, 34.

<sup>479</sup> For more information regarding architecture and finds at Malia, see Pelon 1970; 1980; 1982; 1986; 1989; 1993; 2005; Also Driessen 2004.

<sup>480</sup> See Platon (1999) for more information regarding the construction history of the Palace.

surrounding hills.<sup>481</sup> The intentionally N-S orientation of the Palace building and its central court proves its purposefulness. As a result, in all four largest Palaces, which are oriented N-S (Knossos, Phaistos, Mallia) or NE-SW (Zakros) the most important ritual rooms were located in the western wing of the Palaces, facing east. The Minoan architects situated the religious rooms especially in the west wing so that at sunrise they could bathe in the sunlight. During winter most of the south part of the west wing lay in the shadows, which explains why at all Palaces the most prominent cult rooms were situated in the northern part of the west wing facing the central court.

Preziosi further elaborated the hypothesis of a possible east-west orientation inside the Palace and argued that the core of the Minoan Palaces consisted of the square formed by the central court and the west wing. (fig. 21) For the Palace of Knossos the exact center of this square is the middle of the Tripartite shrine, the most prominent feature with a ritual/religious connotation facing the central court. The central court at Knossos was laid out according to the 0.270m standard and covered a modular grid of 200 by 200 units cut in two at 100 units north south and east west. The building of the Palace started with the layout of the central court and the west wing. The other parts of the Palace seem to have been added in later phases either simultaneously or in following sequences, something that is quite hard to tell from the archaeological evidence. The part of the western magazines at Knossos was built in accordance with the wider Minoan foot of 0.340m.<sup>482</sup> At Malia and Phaistos also the Minoans built according to the same standards. At Malia the central core of the Palace also existed of the central court and the central part of the west wing. Again both parts constituted a modular grid of 200 by 200 units built according to the 0.270m foot. This central grid is divided in two equal parts along a north-south axis by the eastern wall of the west wing and there was a west-east axis that runs through the pillar crypt in the west wing. The altar in the central court is situated on this east-west line and forms the center point of the central court.<sup>483</sup> The core of the Palace at Phaistos is modeled according to the same grid. Again, it measures 200 by 200

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<sup>481</sup> Shaw 1973b, 53.

<sup>482</sup> Preziosi 1983, 419-432.

<sup>483</sup> Preziosi 1983, 433-446.

units and is divided in two equal parts by the inner façade of the west wing. The center of the grid was focussed on the main ritual chamber (nr. 24), which proves again that a ritual/sacred space formed the center of the actual design.<sup>484</sup> At Zakros also, the same grid can be recognized. However, it was laid-out in another standard of 0.340m. The center of the square marks exactly one half of the length of the central court.<sup>485</sup>

Goodison (2001; 2004) further elaborated on these observations and demonstrated with a vast amount of evidence that as early as the Prepalatial period Minoans took into account the movement of the sun in the actual orientation and construction of the Tholos tombs, an element that continued to be of great importance in the final layout of the Palace structures on Crete as well. Her belief, that the orientation to the sun became important as such is primarily based on her research into the Tholos tombs; observations she took further to investigate the Minoan Palaces and specifically the layout of the Throne Room at Knossos.

Due to preservation issues, Goodison was only able to examine approximately one third of the 94 tombs originally catalogued by Branigan.<sup>486</sup> Although Shaw, Branigan, and others already stressed a tendency for Tholos tombs to face to the east, Goodison's study of the orientation of the doorway to sunrise shows that a complete alignment only happened at certain days of the year and this close to the summer solstice, the winter solstice and the equinoxes, as well as a period in late summer. It is only during the complete alignment at sunrise that the interior of the tomb could be lit by a beam of light coming through the doorway for a short amount of time. This may suggest that the Minoan builders considered these orientations meaningful and that the illumination of the tomb's interior played an important role in the activities performed at the site. Such specific moments in which the tomb is fully aligned with the morning sun may be reflective of the use of the tombs as loci for seasonal festivities or rituals.<sup>487</sup>

Another interesting observation concerns the overall importance of the cardinal points – North, South, East, and West. Goodison argued that extra structures such as annexes, antechambers, paved or encircled outdoor areas, and altar structures were usually added

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<sup>484</sup> Preziosi 1983, 458-472.

<sup>485</sup> Preziosi 1983, 476-478.

<sup>486</sup> Goodison 2004, 340 ; Goodison 2001, 79.

<sup>487</sup> Goodison 2001, 80-81.

to the east/northeast side posterior to the original construction of the burial, in some cases blocking the tombs' original doorway.<sup>488</sup> Especially in the MM period the structures in front of the original doorway look like standardized architectural suites where the visitor needs to make several turns before being able to enter the tomb through its original doorway. Such a physical barrier in which movement towards the actual burial site could be tightly monitored shows the continuous importance of the actual physicality of the built space and the symbolic and maybe even socio-political importance whenever it was used as a place for social interaction.<sup>489</sup> The small size of the annex rooms and the antechamber of the tombs at least gives the impression that participation in rituals performed inside involved only a few participants and maybe even only the most exclusive group within the community, whereas the majority of the people were involved in ceremonies performed outside.

Similar observations could be made for the layout of the Throne room at Knossos as well. The four doors of the pier-and-door partition connecting the Throne Room complex with the central court were intentionally constructed to align with sunrise at particular times of the year illuminating specific architectural features. Goodison believes that the people in control of the palace may have deliberately utilized the contrasts of light and dark for ritual purposes.<sup>490</sup>

The first architectural feature is the actual Throne with frescoes of griffins aside and flanked by stone benches, which are lit by a beacon of light at the winter solstice. Goodison refers to this as 'the Winter Throne' ; an alignment that becomes even more meaningful in light of Reusch's reconstruction of the actual Throne as the major locus for the performance of the epiphany of the Goddess.<sup>491</sup>

The second feature is the doorway to the 'inner sanctuary', referred to as the 'Illuminated Doorway' and lit at the spring and summer equinoxes.<sup>492</sup> Goodison pointed out that the doorways of the polytheron in between the anteroom and Throne room have been made a little broader along this alignment, possibly in order to catch more light or because the builders wanted to have sufficient width for a procession to pass through these openings.

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<sup>488</sup> Goodison 2004, 340.

<sup>489</sup> Also Goodison 2004, 340-342.

<sup>490</sup> Goodison 2004, 242.

<sup>491</sup> Goodison 2001, 83-84; Reusch 1958, 334-358, in Goodison 2001, 83.

<sup>492</sup> Niemeier 1987, 165 – 166; Evans 1935, 910 and 920; Also Goodison 2001, 84 – 85.



Whatever the case, such anomalies point to the fact that the layout of both the polytheron as well as the pier-and-door partition was carefully planned and intentional.<sup>493</sup>

The third important feature is the Lustral Basin, referred to as the ‘Summer Spotlight’ and lit at the midsummer solstice. At sunrise a beam of light shines through the extreme left door of the pier-and-door partition in order to light the far corner of the Lustral Basin for a few minutes.<sup>494</sup>

Goodison’s research makes clear that the use of the Throne room with its different architectural features was very complex and remains a matter of debate. However, the intentional placement of these features according to a cyclical orientation to sunrise is very plausible, especially in the Neopalatial period. Different areas in the architectural suite were main foci of interest, possibly connected to rituals of epiphany. Furthermore, the use of partitions in the doorways obviously increases control over the main light source, enforcing the theatrical effects.

A slightly different study but still connected to the study of Goodison forms the archaeoastronomical approach carried out by Blomberg and Henriksson.<sup>495</sup> They exhaustively showed the importance of orientation within Minoan ritual buildings such as Minoan villas, Palaces, peaks and caves. Regarding the Minoan Palaces, they argued the importance to be oriented towards major astronomical events, such as the rising sun at equinoxes and solstices. According to Blomberg and Henriksson, Minoans had a lunisolar calendar system in which the Minoan ‘New year’ probably began in the autumn.<sup>496</sup>

In his study *The Earth, the Temple, and the Gods* Scully devoted much attention to the relation between the orientation of architecture and the natural surrounding landscape.<sup>497</sup> In order to understand architecture, he argued that we do not have to seek the answer to our questions by looking at the internal configuration, but rather by looking at the external relations of the building with the landscape. Scully argued that in Minoan times

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<sup>493</sup> Goodison 2001, 85; Goodison 2004, 343.

<sup>494</sup> Goodison 2004, 343; Goodison 2001, 85-86.

<sup>495</sup> Blomberg and Henriksson 1996; 2001; 2005; 2006; 2008; 2011.

<sup>496</sup> Blomberg and Henriksson 1996.

<sup>497</sup> Scully 1962.

the orientation towards natural sanctuaries on hills played a central role in the construction of the Palaces. The external element, i.e. the peak or cave sanctuary situated on one of the prominent hills in the landscape, created the main axis for construction, which almost exactly coincided with the north-south orientation of the central courts. Therefore, the layout of the Minoan Palace was a combination of both external and internal considerations.<sup>498</sup>

In *Rethinking the Sacred Landscape: Minoan Palaces in a Georitual Framework of Natural Features on Crete*, Dennis Doxtater tries to understand the relationships between (religious) architecture and the so-called sacred landscape on Minoan Crete by drawing further on the observations made by Scully.<sup>499</sup> The detailed analysis of the geometrical patterns between specific sites, such as the Minoan Palaces, caves and mountain peak sanctuaries, illustrates extensively that the relationship between architecture and the sacred landscape was even far more complex as conceptualized by Scully, Shaw, Goodison and Blomberg and Henriksson. Doxtater identified a clear geospatial pattern between the four major Minoan Palaces and significant natural features on Crete, which exactly point towards the fact that the Minoan Palaces were intentionally placed a complex pre-existing network of ritual sites, of which the existence goes back as early as the Prepalatial period. Doxtater questioned the relationship between the orientations of the three major Palaces - Knossos, Phaistos, and Mallia – and this pre-existing spatial pattern.<sup>500</sup> A wide number of natural landscape features on Crete, such as the caves and mountain peaks were used for ritual and religious practices throughout the entire island, even far before the construction of the Minoan Palaces, and the specific placement of these monumental structures within pattern may suggest that the major Palaces existed in a larger ritual context that may render Minoan Crete as a society which was entirely socio-politically integrated. Although Doxtater's analysis is very consistent, one might question to which extent Minoans were able to understand and eventually lay out similar patterns at larger, georitual scales?

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<sup>498</sup> Scully 1962, 9-40.

<sup>499</sup> Doxtater 2009.

<sup>500</sup> Doxtater 2009, 14-18.

At Knossos, the close connection between the peak sanctuary of Juktas and the Palace is known since the very beginning (fig. 22, 23). A paved road ran through the mountains towards the sanctuary and led to the south entrance of the Palace. Even today Juktas is still the largest and most elaborated of all peak sanctuaries. In the Protopalatial period a very large complex was already situated there.<sup>501</sup> This peak sanctuary was built on two terraces, enclosed by cyclopean enclosure walls and an altar in use in both the Proto- and Neopalatial period. Several high quality votive offerings show a close connection with the Palace of Knossos. In the Neopalatial period this complex was expanded to include a processional way that ended up at a ramp that ran towards an open platform paved with pebbled flooring and in the middle a stepped altar and a deep chasm west of the altar<sup>502</sup>. Below the platform was a succession of rooms (first 4, later 6) with along the exterior (east-side) a bench to hold votives.<sup>503</sup> Because of its prominent placement on the hill this sanctuary could have played an important role for numerous sites within the politico-religious context. The central axis of the central court and the orientation of the north entrance passage in more or less straight line with the Juktas sanctuary, created a clear visible and architectural link between both.<sup>504</sup>

The geographical positioning of Knossos between Juktas and two other sanctuary sites in the environment, the Ida and Psychro caves, creates an interesting pattern that recently got studied by Doxtater.<sup>505</sup> (fig. 24) The difference in the two angles measured from

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<sup>501</sup> Info on Juktas, see Rutkowski 1988; Watrous 1996; Karetsou 1981; The traces of burnt oily earth in MMI A-II show that the Protopalatial sanctuary probably was very large in size. The Protopalatial shrine comprised a large open platform, with structures along the east. Finds: Walls were found under the Neopalatial rooms II-IV; a structure with steps next to a deep chasm in the bedrock served as an altar; stone kernos with ca. 100 cupules and in depression of bedrock a cache of ca 34 bronze double axes; figurines in clay (human and animal) and bronze, jewelry; pottery (mostly conical cups, also eggcups).

<sup>502</sup> Next to the altar many offerings were found, such as stone libation tables, bronze and clay figurines, votive heads and many other.

<sup>503</sup> For detailed information about Juktas, its finds and history of research, see Karetsou 1981.

<sup>504</sup> Shaw 1973b.

<sup>505</sup> See Doxtater 2009 for a thorough presentation of the material evidence in this discussion. The Idaean cave was situated at Mount Ida at a height of 1528m. Finds have been dated going back to the Neolithic till the 5<sup>th</sup> century A.D. The material of the Minoan period (MMI-LMI) are human and animal figurines, pottery, especially kamares ware, jars, jugs, cups, rhyta, jewelry, weapons, double axes, stone offering tables, kernoi and relief vases; More detailed information concerning the cave see Tyree 1974, 40-43; The Psychro cave is situated in the Lasithi region, in the northern face of Mount Dicte. The cave consists of three areas: a broad terrace outside the cave, an upper

Juktas are so small that they could be ignored, showing a geometrical pattern in the form of a triangle. This geometrical pattern suggests a triangular relationship between all three sanctuaries, Knossos acting as the final point in the configuration, Juktas as the religious mediator. It seems that the builders of the Knossian Palace constructed the building in such a way that the “node” of Knossos integrates perfectly with the triangle formed by the peak sanctuary of Juktas and the Idean and Psychro caves.<sup>506</sup> Juktas, most closely situated to Knossos, formed the ritual hub between the Palace and the Idean and Psychro caves, unifying the whole region of central (north, east and south) Crete. Since the use of these sanctuary sites is dated to long before the construction of the later Palaces, good arguments exist that this geometrical pattern was intentionally created and that the inhabitants of Knossos were aware of this pre-existing “configuration” and built a Palace that was fully integrated as the last constituent of the final layout.<sup>507</sup>

At Malia, the northern entrance is considered as the primary access to the Palace, whereas the southern entrance formed the ceremonial/processional one.<sup>508</sup> Both the southern and northern entrance leading directly towards the central court are situated on the same line. They are both placed on the same axis and face each other at both sides of the central court. When visitors entered the north entrance and arrived at the central court they directly saw Mount Dicte with the Psychro cave rising up in the south. The situation at Malia is therefore very similar to the one at Knossos.

For Phaistos, the situation seems slightly different. Here, the architects invested most effort in the elaboration of the northern inner façade, which was intended to direct attention towards Mount Ida appearing above this façade. A closer look at the actual

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chamber and a lower cave. For a detailed description of the cave, its history, related finds, and large bibliography, see Watrous 1996.

<sup>506</sup> All three sanctuaries can be connected with the God Zeus through ancient sources: the Psychro cave was identified with the birthplace of Zeus, based on a literary passage in Hesiod’s story *Theogony*, 477-484; For a detailed discussion of this issue, see Watrous 1996, 19; The Idean cave on Mount Ida is also known in the literary sources as a cave dedicated to Zeus and even seen as one of his birthplaces, see Tyree 1974, 40-43; For Juktas also a connection with Zeus can be made, since both local traditions and ancient literary sources identify this site as the place where the tomb of Zeus is situated, see Karetsou 1981, 137.

<sup>507</sup> Doxtater 2009, 9-11.

<sup>508</sup> See section 4.2.3.9 for a discussion of the Malian entrances.

orientation of the different parts of the façade shows that the central corridor running through this northern façade lies in direct line with the southern face of the Mount. Mount Ida shows strong similarities with the Minoan horns, a very important religious element in Minoan times, and the central corridor literally divides the head with the horns in two similar pieces. Because the Kamares cave is barely visible from Phaistos, one could argue that the focus in the architectural layout was the horned part of Mount Ida and the Idean Cave. However, the Kamares cave also played an important role as a sanctuary in the region, but became out of use in the Neopalatial period.<sup>509</sup>

The geographical pattern investigated above makes it more than plausible that the builders of Knossos, Malia and Phaistos used the sacred landscape in order to establish a web or network of religious relationships, resulting in a sacred unity that contrasted completely with the mosaic of political units that colored the island of Crete at the time.<sup>510</sup> The Palaces and more specifically the central courts were important assets to establish these connections. The statement of Peatfield could therefore be refined. Not solely the close connection between peak sanctuaries, but also the interplay between peaks and caves were important configurations for the Minoans. Peatfield argues: “On a regional level the intervisibility of peak sanctuaries provides an opportunity, for the expression of ritual unity may have transcended political boundaries”<sup>511</sup>. For numerous reasons Zakros could not be included in the analysis.<sup>512</sup>

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<sup>509</sup> The Kamares cave was, for example, directly visible at Haghia Triadha, a center believed to be in strong competition with Phaistos in its vicinity. Based on some archaeological evidence, one could assume that also the Kamares cave was devoted to Zeus in ancient times: the Kamares cave has a history dating back to the Neolithic and activity is proven right into the Iron age. For the most prominent discoveries are a pool of water at the rear of the cavern and a stone-built structure serving as a hearth. More information regarding the finds, excavations and a bibliography, see Watrous 1996, 60.

<sup>510</sup> Doxtater 2009.

<sup>511</sup> Peatfield 1994, 25.

<sup>512</sup> One of the reasons was the unusual topographical situation at the site of Zakros, with the different geometrical lines of the Palace not pointing to any of the natural sanctuaries in the direct environment. One could ask why that was the case here. A possible explanation for the unconventional situation of Zakros is due to climatological circumstances. Because of the strong winds coming from the sea, the Minoan architects were obliged to build the Palace in between the two hills surrounding it. Therefore, they could not built the Palace in relation to natural sanctuaries. Additionally, Platon 1985 argues that the central court at Zakros dates back to LM IA, very late in comparison with the other Palaces. The remoteness of Zakros made it possible to create their own unique independent historical trajectory, which was not so actively linked with

#### 4.1.6. The Magazines<sup>513</sup> (fig. 17, 18, 19, 20)

A typical feature of the Neopalatial palaces is the presence of a large number of storage facilities, often but not exclusively situated in the west wing and in close proximity of the west court. The magazines were structured in very different ways. At Knossos and Malia these were long and narrow rooms, arranged in rows and accessible at one end by a narrow long corridor.<sup>514</sup>

The western storage complex of the Long Corridor at Knossos existed out of 18 individual magazines that could store about 420 large pithoi; a storage potential of about 231.000 litres when fully stocked. Several magazines (IV-VII and IX-XIII) and the Long Corridor held rectangular cists in the floor ; a total of 93 cists that increased the storage potential tremendously.<sup>515</sup> Two types of cists were installed: lead-lined cists for the storage of non-staple goods, which sometimes were real treasuries, and plaster lined cists which were ideal for staple storage.<sup>516</sup> Apart from the west magazine other areas were designed for storage purposes as well, such as the Room of the Giant Pithos and the Temple Repositories used to store liquid commodities, which indicates that drinking ceremonies were held at the Central Palace Sanctuary.<sup>517</sup> Further areas dedicated to storage are the Magazine of the Jewel Fresco (or Magazine of the Vase Tablets) and the magazine parallel to the Royal Magazines, and the compartments near the Corridor of the Draughtboard.<sup>518</sup>

At Malia, the largest storage complex was situated on the west, existing out of a central corridor with storerooms on both sides. Quarters I 2–6, II 1–3, VIII 1–3, and XX 1–2

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the existing web of religious relations that unified the Island. The other Minoan Palace centers followed more close trajectories. Zakros really stands out.

<sup>513</sup> Begg (1975) was able to develop a typology of the different storage spaces in Minoan architecture; Christakis (1999, 2008, 2011) studied the Minoan political economy by reevaluating the different types of storage spaces in Minoan domestic and Palatial architecture. For a thorough discussion of the storage spaces at the different Palaces: Knossos (Christakis 2008, 44-47, fig.10); Phaistos (Christakis 2008, 47-48, fig.13); Malia (Christakis 2008, 48-50, fig. 14); Zakros (Christakis 2008, 51-52, fig. 18).

<sup>514</sup> Graham 1962, 129-136; Graham 1979, 49-63; Begg 1975, 19; Preziosi 1983, 92.

<sup>515</sup> Christakis 2008, 44; Evans 1921, 448–462; Evans 1935, 630–632.

<sup>516</sup> Christakis 2008, 44; On the distinction between treasuries and staple storage see also Evans 1921, 452–453.

<sup>517</sup> Panagiotaki 1999, 71–72 ; Christakis 2008, 45.

<sup>518</sup> Christakis 2008, 45 – 47 with references.

make up the stores in the west wing.<sup>519</sup> Other substantial storerooms were the North-East magazines existing of six rectangular spaces (Quartier XXVII 1–6) arranged alongside the north portico and an east–west corridor<sup>520</sup>; the East Magazines (Quartier XI 1–7) which exist out of seven long and narrow spaces arranged off a north–south corridor<sup>521</sup> and date to the Protopalatial and remained in use over the course of the Neopalatial period<sup>522</sup> and of course the silos, which were built against the southwest wing of the palace and form an independent unit existing out of two rows of four circular structures, each supported by central pillars and enclosed by a walled structure.<sup>523</sup>

At Phaistos the most substantial area for storage was not structured in the same way as what we have seen at Knossos and Malia. The magazine block at Phaistos consisted of two rows of five storerooms arranged along the north south axis, each opening up into a central corridor in which three large pillars supported the ceiling.<sup>524</sup> These magazines were also more easily accessible than the ones at Knossos or Malia as they have wide, double doorways and were directly accessible from the east end by a broad, paved and columned vestibule that gave out onto the central court. This raises some questions for future research: why did the builders at Phaistos decide to position the magazines in the west, but with rather different topological and morphological features? It is possible that at specific times of the year and for specific occasions the long and wide corridor in the middle of these storage rooms was used for the reception of visitors and therefore did not only function as a corridor. This may be the reason that the orientation towards the central court may have been more pronounced at Phaistos as compared to the other Palaces. Apart from the west magazines, several other storage rooms were situated in the Palaces.

At Zakros, the main magazine complex is more isolated from the Palace, and exists of eight rooms (Rooms I–VIII or A, Aa–G, H–K).<sup>525</sup> They were arranged in a separate block, situated on the west side of the Palace and facing towards the town. The Zakrian

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<sup>519</sup> Christakis 2008, 48 with references.

<sup>520</sup> Christakis 2008, 48–49 with references.

<sup>521</sup> Christakis 2008, 49.

<sup>522</sup> Pelon 1980, 91–94; Pelon 1980, 203.

<sup>523</sup> Christakis 2008, 49.

<sup>524</sup> Preziosi 1983, 128 ; Christakis 2008, 47–48.

<sup>525</sup> Platon 1985, 115.

magazine was packed with pithoi and other smaller containers and was probably used for the storage of olive oil.<sup>526</sup>

It becomes clear that the Palaces of the Neopalatial period have a high storage potential through the construction of extensive storerooms, stone-lined cists, enclosures, large pithoi, and sometimes as at Malia the construction of silos.<sup>527</sup> The importance of storage to the wider picture of social, economic and political dynamics in Minoan society has been well investigated in previous as well as recent research. Previously, research looked at the archaeological material from a top-down perspective and focused on the evolution in terms of storage from the Protopalatial to the Neopalatial period. It has been argued that during the Protopalatial period the Minoan Palaces played a dominant role in the surrounding region as centers for the collection of agricultural produce and dominated the flow of commodities and trade in the larger Minoan economy.<sup>528</sup> By contrast, the Neopalatial period marked a time of decrease in terms of storage potential at the Minoan palaces, suggesting an exclusive elite oriented redistributive system, in which the Palace served the needs of the elite instead of the entire community.<sup>529</sup>

A detailed discussion of the magazines and the role of storage and more specifically the Minoan Palaces in Protopalatial and Neopalatial Crete is beyond the scope of this dissertation. Nevertheless, it is a topic that has been reassessed recently by Christakis. His book *The Politics of Storage: Storage and Social Complexity in Neopalatial Crete*, does not only offer a good historiographical overview of past approaches taken to storage practices in Minoan society, by reevaluating the archaeological material available today it also offers of a number of new insights into the nature of the Proto-and Neopalatial Minoan economy disproving the traditional perspective.<sup>530</sup> Christakis convincingly argues against a decrease in storage potential between the Protopalatial and the Neopalatial period, claiming that the material available for such interpretations is far too

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<sup>526</sup> Christakis 2008, 52.

<sup>527</sup> Christakis 2011, 3.

<sup>528</sup> Evans (1935, 630-48) was one of the first scholars to address the issue of storage facilities as an essential component to Minoan economy, emphasizing the large space reserved for storage in the Knossian Palace and trying to define the importance of the Palace as a central place in Minoan economy; also Halstead 1981; Moody 1987.

<sup>529</sup> Christakis 2011, 3.

<sup>530</sup> Christakis 2008; Also Christakis 2011.



fragmentary. According to Christakis, past scholarship to storage strategies during the Protopalatial period almost exclusively focused on the large *Kouloures* found at Knossos and Phaistos; their disuse in the Neopalatial period being consequently linked to a fundamental shift in the Minoan political economy. The political economy changed from a staple-financed communal system to a wealth-financed elite system.<sup>531</sup>

After he has dismissed the traditional perspective, Christakis turns to the Neopalatial palaces, each evaluated in terms of storage potential by focusing on the different types of storage spaces and the number and capacity of the pithoi found within.<sup>532</sup> This analysis foregrounds the fact that the Minoan palaces were continuously used - whether in the Protopalatial or Neopalatial period – as central places for the storage of staple goods. Further, it seems that in the Protopalatial period the Minoan Palaces were not conceived as centers for redistribution in order to become differently organized in the Neopalatial period. Instead, the examination of the archaeological data suggests that the area devoted to storage within the Palaces was significant but limited to the production and accumulation of staples to serve the needs of a limited number of individuals since the very beginning<sup>533</sup>; a limited elite that used ritual and the luxury goods accumulated at the Palaces to express and sustain their own power and authority within the socio-political fabric of Minoan society.<sup>534</sup>

#### 4.1.7. The Reception Halls and Residential Quarters (fig. 17, 18, 19, 20)

There is a reason to discuss under this heading together two types of spaces which have traditionally been considered as belonging to distinct categories. Although the functioning of the Minoan Palaces as elite residences has recently been questioned, one should not forget that some units inside these buildings show a strong energy investment and were strongly elaborated, which makes these units distinctive to the other areas of the Palaces.

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<sup>531</sup> Christakis 2011, 3.

<sup>532</sup> Christakis 2008 tables 8 and 9.

<sup>533</sup> Christakis 2011, 7.

<sup>534</sup> Christakis 2008, 123 and 140-141.

Evans and Graham considered reception halls and residential quarters as distinctive features of the Palaces and based on the evidence of Knossos, Malia and Phaistos, Graham argued that the so-called reception or banquet halls must have been located on the “Piano Nobile” of the building, whereas the residential areas were on the ground floor. None of these upper floor rooms were found *in situ* and have been reconstructed based on the evidence found on the ground floors underneath them.<sup>535</sup> Nevertheless, at Zakros, one such hall has been discovered on the ground floor of the Palace (see chapter 4.2.5.3 this dissertation).

However, it has to be acknowledged that the rooms, which have been traditionally considered as residential quarters, could have been used during particular events as reception halls and therefore have a dynamic functionality that goes beyond mere domestic function.<sup>536</sup> If we accept that these rooms did not only serve as Domestic quarters an alternative explanation of their function has to be provided. The residential quarters are very easily recognizable in each of the Palaces and apart from some differences in size they all consist of a similar set of rooms with similar features that made them typically palatial. The residential quarter at Knossos is the largest of all Minoan Palaces and runs over three stories on the east side of the Palace. Malia and Phaistos only had two stories and Zakros probably one. Further, access to these quarters seems to be very restricted. In most of the cases they only have one entrance to the complex, which speaks in favor of such an interpretation.<sup>537</sup>

What interests us here is the deconstructed view of these residential units. The residential quarters were made up of different types of spaces that are recurrent and widely dispersed throughout the entirety of the floor plans of the Minoan Palaces. Each of these spaces could serve as important venues for occasions. The residential quarters exist out of Lustral basins<sup>538</sup>, a Minoan Hall<sup>539</sup> and innovations such as the Polytheron<sup>540</sup>. All these

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<sup>535</sup> Graham 1956; 1959; 1960a; 1961; 1962, 114-124; 1979, 49-63.

<sup>536</sup> Nordfeld 1987; Hitchcock 1994.

<sup>537</sup> See Chapter 4.2 for detailed descriptions of the Minoan Palaces and the residential quarters.

<sup>538</sup> Lustral basins are characterized by an L-shaped stairway that lead to a sunken room. There is often a balustrade running alongside the stairway. In several alignments were found with gypsum and sometimes traces of frescoes. The basins are an integral part of the so-called residential quarters of the Palaces and closely connected with Minoan halls. Apart from some exceptions, lustral basins are mostly situated rather deep inside the configuration of the Minoan Palaces.

types were not solely part of the residential quarters but were also widely dispersed throughout the building, which makes the Palaces very dynamic environments. Apart from these, other types of rooms may have been suitable for assemblies such as the Hypostyle Hall<sup>541</sup> and Pillar Crypts<sup>542</sup>.

A focus on the distribution and positioning of this variety of spaces throughout the Minoan Palaces strongly broadens our perspective on the ways in which social interaction between different groups of people was structured during particular events and how the building itself operated as an active agent in the structuring of social relationships.

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Evans argued that they were used for bathing, but several scholars have come up with strong arguments that the lustral basins were not really designed for that purpose and served a ritual function. Many lustral basins contained cult objects such as offering tables or sacred vessels and the walls are often decorated with religious themes. What interests me is their distribution in the total configuration of the building. The fact that they have been situated deep inside the configuration of the buildings can be a good explanation for their small size and the ritual spirit that they breathe. Their specific physicality, connection with halls and small size are good arguments to support the hypothesis that they were only accessible by the very few, an issue we will return to later on in this dissertation, see Hitchcock 2000,160-163; Graham 1962, 99-108.

<sup>539</sup> In general, the Minoan hall consists of a principal hall separated by a pier-and-door partition from a fore-hall and a light well situated behind one or several columns. The palatial halls are the most complex and have multiple pier-and-door partitions, showing that this type of space in a palatial context possesses much potential in the case of human interactions; Hitchcock (1994) describes them as chaotic systems in that the possibility to play with open and closed doors gives the users the possibility to manipulate and structure movement and visibility (interaction) in a particular manner; Further reading Driessen 1982; Preziosi 1983, 33-50; Graham 1962, 84-97.

<sup>540</sup> One of the main characteristics of the polytheron is the presence of the pier-and-door partition which is a unique feature, as several doors in the wall can create a fully permeable continuum between two units or fully separate them, granting or restraining access, visibility and circulation. Such an innovation would allow to control and structure social interaction in a very sophisticated manner. When the doors are closed, it separates two different environments from each other, which means that people on one side of the unit were screened off from the people in the other unit behind the closed curtain that the polytheron creates, see Marinatos and Hägg 1986, 62 and 72; Palyvou 1987, 200-201.

<sup>541</sup> The hypostyle hall is characterized by two central rows of columns. They are found in the north wing of Malia and similar rooms are found in the Palaces of Knossos and Zakros. Only at Phaistos, there is no such hall in the north wing, see Graham 1962,125-128; Hitchcock 2000,186-188.

<sup>542</sup> The pillar crypts are another important indoor gathering space for the Palaces. When they are present, they are mostly situated in the centre of the west wing of the Palace, closely situated to the central court. Hallager (1987) argued that the place of the pillar crypt in the heart of the west wing, in between the central court and the western magazines is no coincidence. The space itself was rectangular or quadratic in form with in the center one, two, or three columns, see Graham 1962,138-142; Preziosi 1983, 319-477.

The above illustrates the strong resemblances existing between all palatial buildings on Crete. Apart from these recurrent tendencies in their design, each of the Minoan Palaces shows a strong sense of individuality that makes each of them unique. In the following we want to focus on these “variations on a theme”, and the best way to do this, is through a detailed description of each of the Minoan Palaces. In the following chapters we will focus specifically on the distribution of different room types across the Palaces that were suitable as venues for occasions. In order to do so, it synthesis what has been written in past and recent literature for each of the Palaces. Aferwards, access systems and circulation patterns will be highlighted in order to unveil the Palaces’ spatial syntax in order to highlight the ways in which the Minoan Palaces possessed the capacity to orchestrate the interaction of people in very dynamic ways.

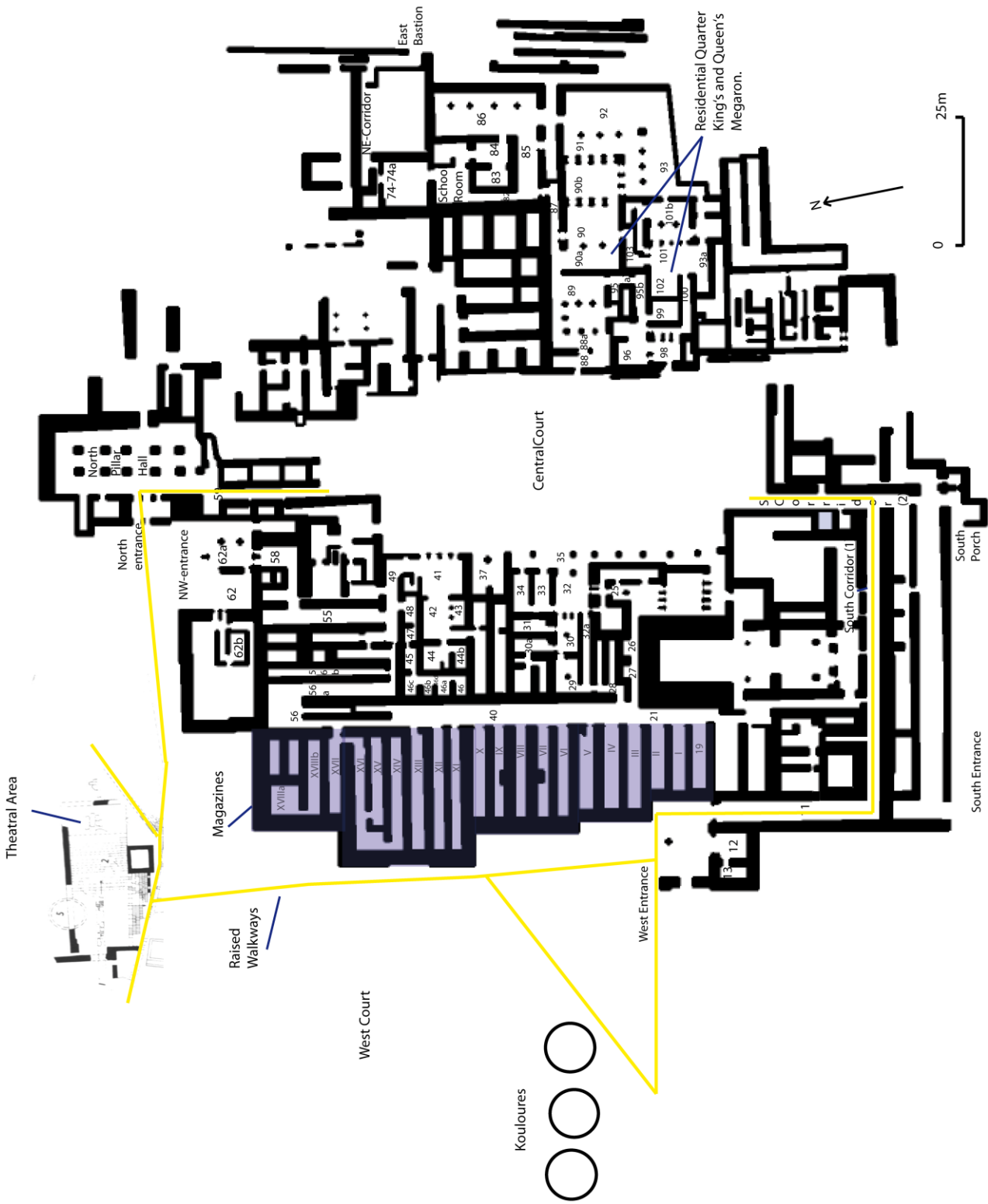


Figure 17 Plan of the Palace of Knossos

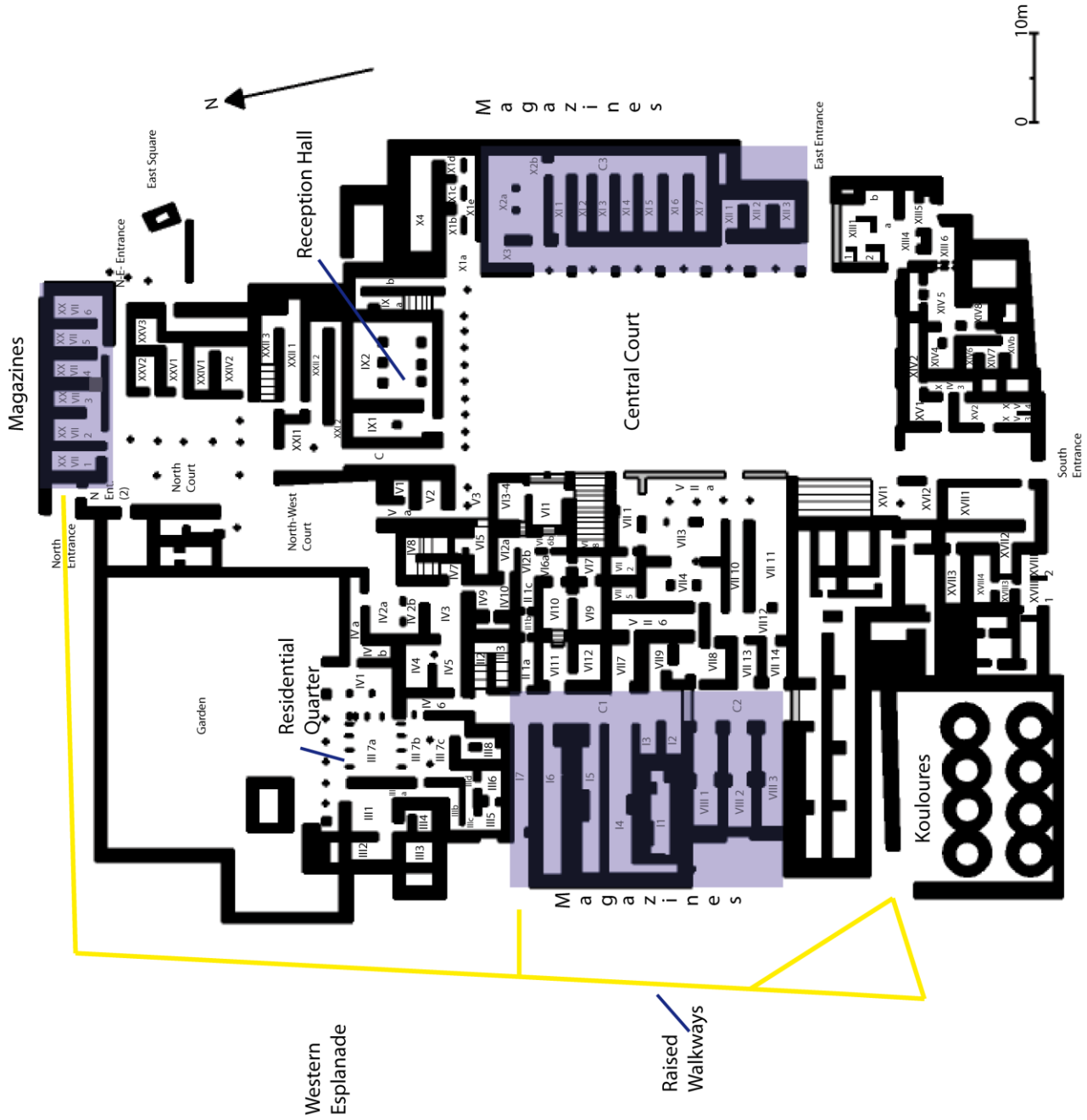


Figure 18 Plan of the Palace of Malia

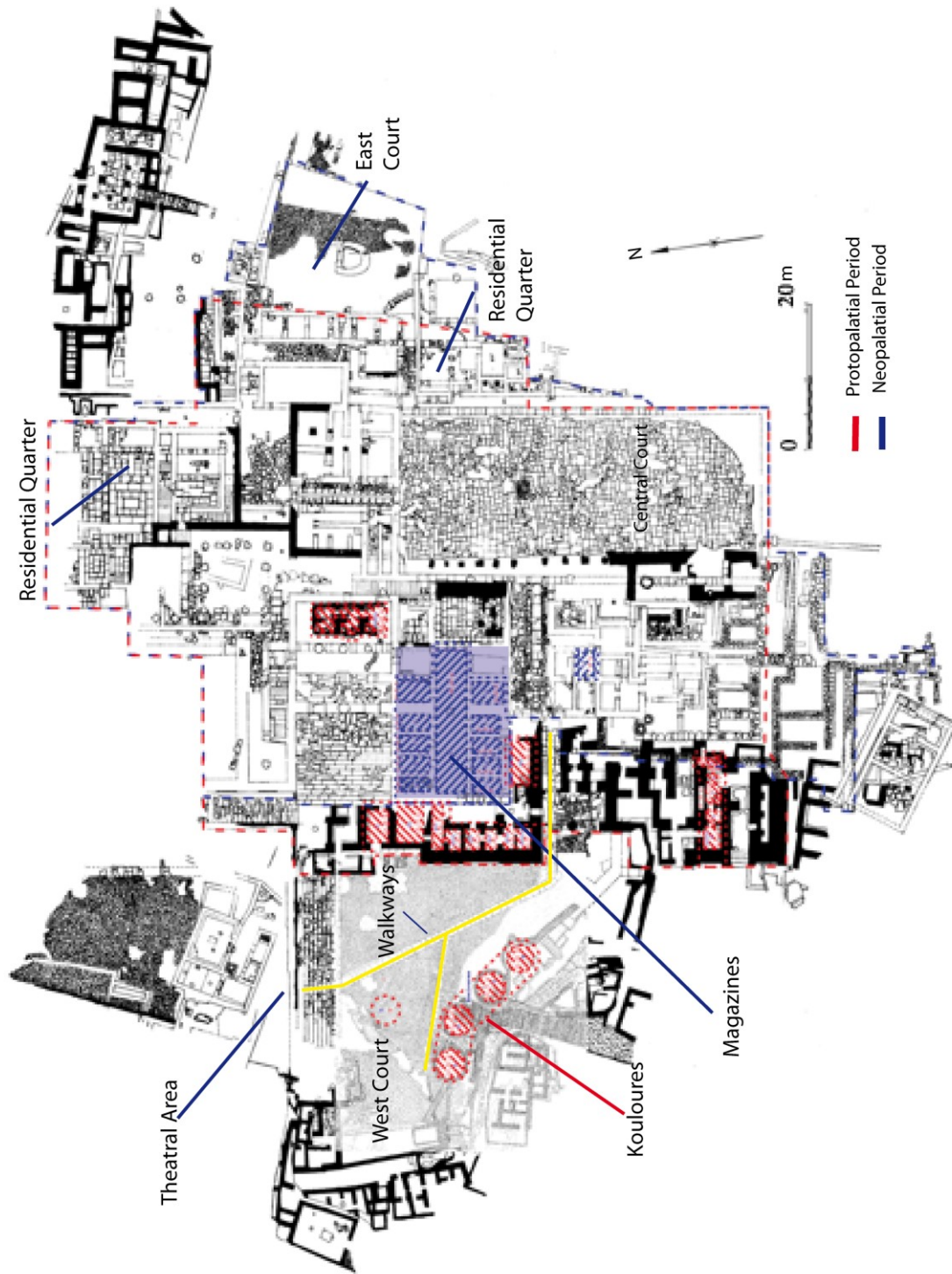


Figure 19 Plan of the Palace of Phaistos

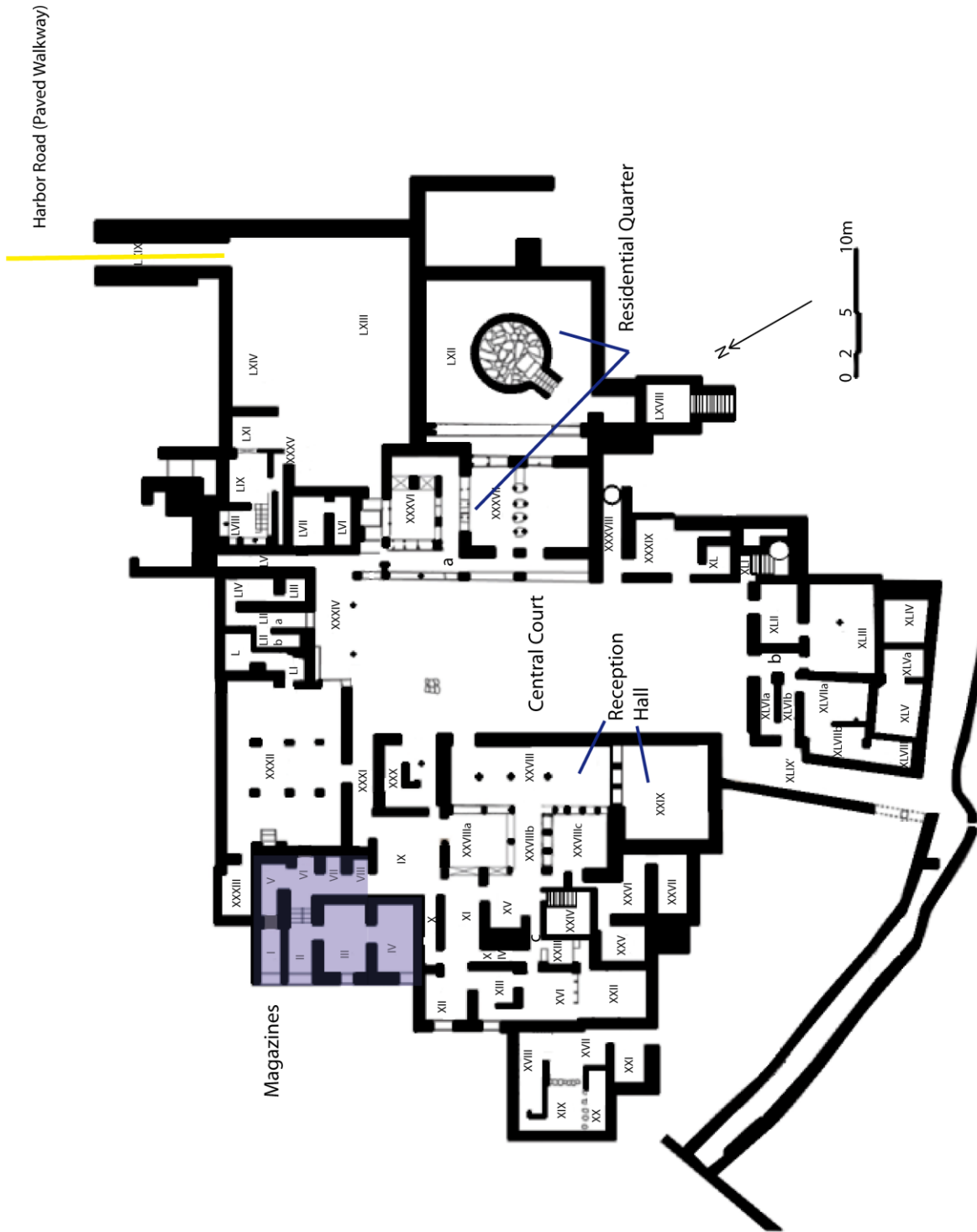


Figure 20 Plan of the Palace of Zakros



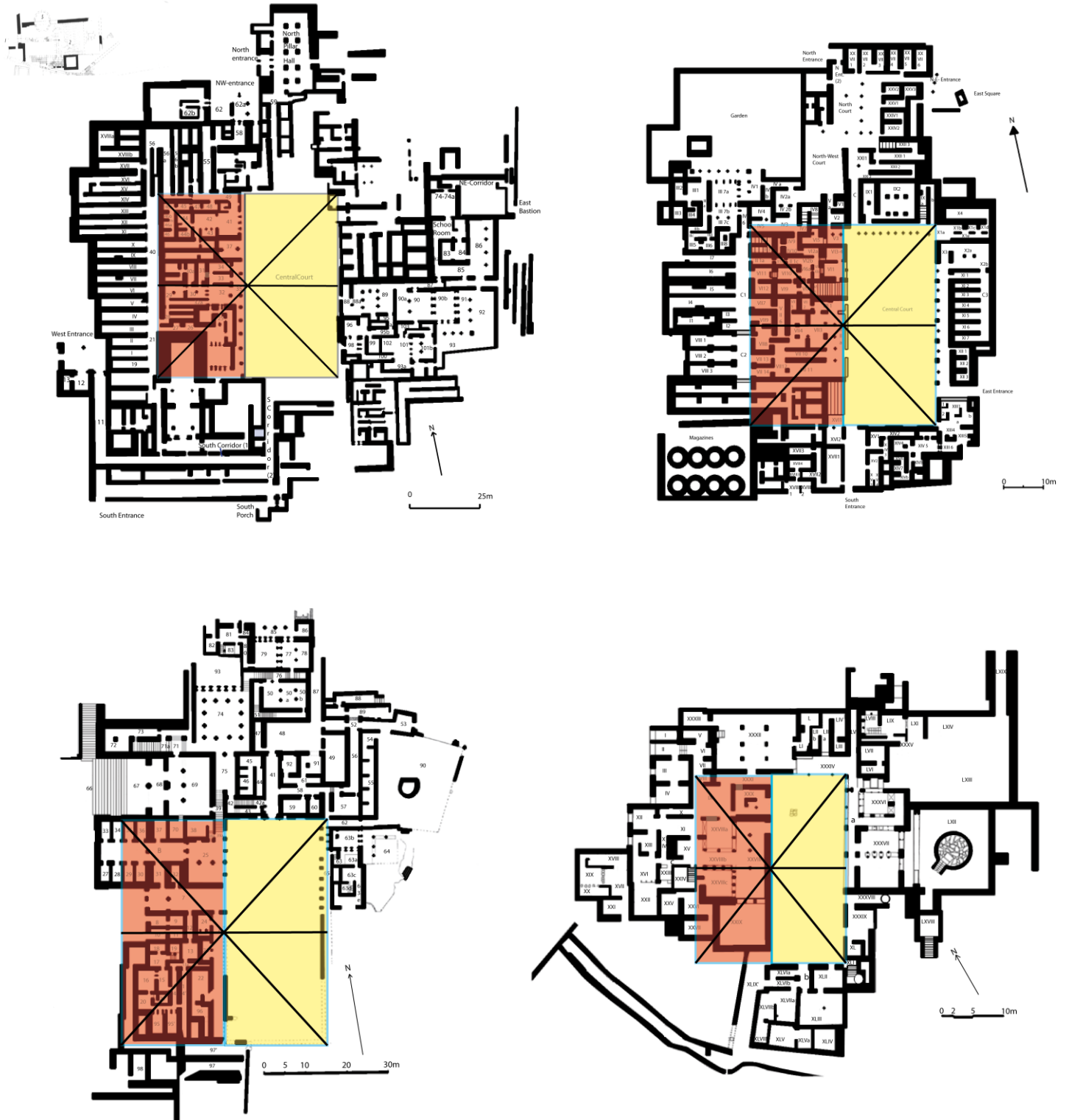
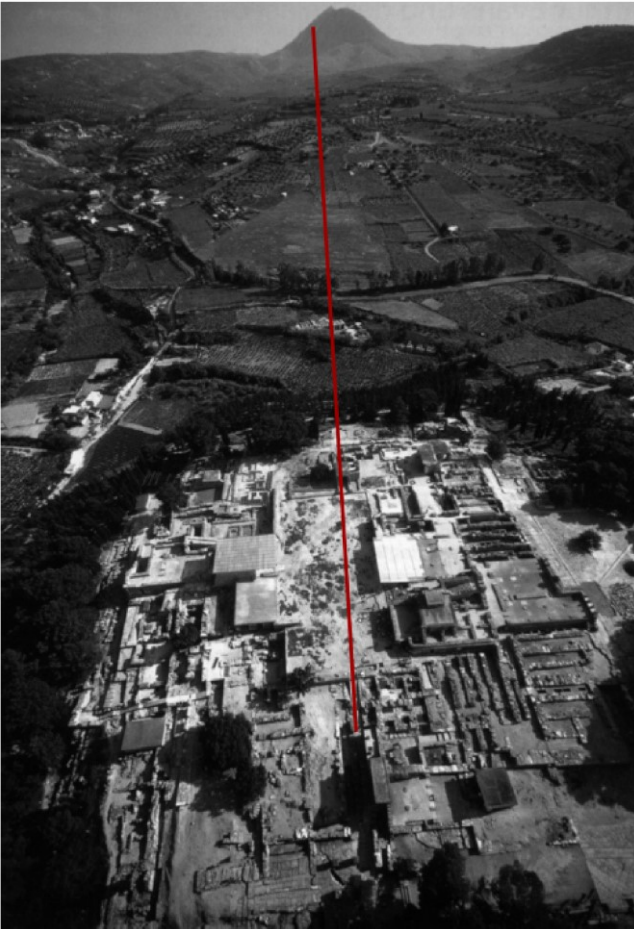


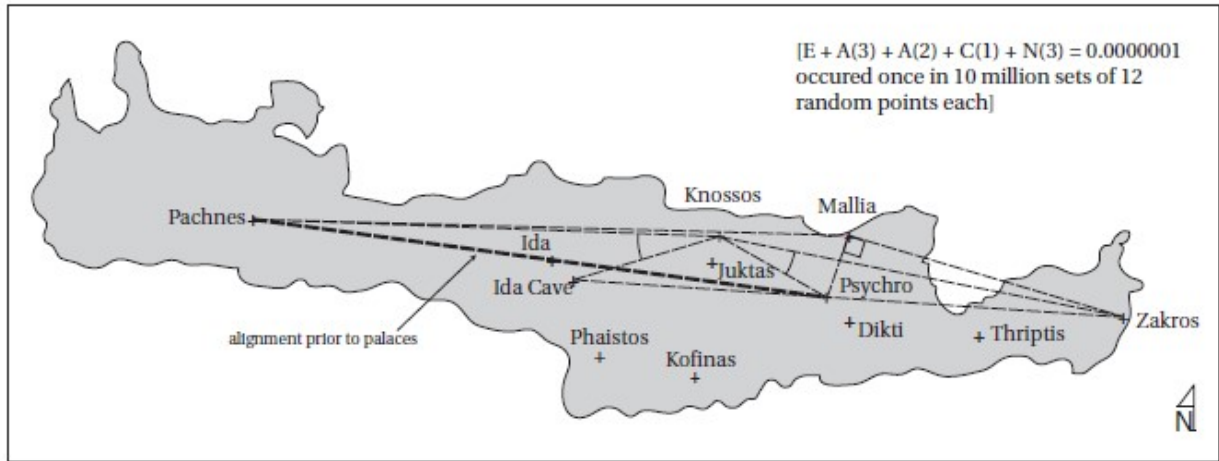
Figure 21 The concept of the square based on Preziosi 1983



**Figure 22 Knossos with North Entrance in Line with the Juktas Sanctuary**



**Figure 23 View to Juktas from Central Court Knossos; South Porch Entrance in right corner (author's picture)**



**Figure 24 Geospatial Relationships between the most prominent natural features on Crete and the biggest Minoan Palaces (Doxtator 2009, 11, fig.9).**

## Chapter 4.2. An Architectural Analysis of the Neopalatial Palaces: A Qualitative Discussion of Their Spatial Configuration and Circulation Pattern.

### 4.2.1 Spaces (Places) for Occasions in Context – Mapping Movement and Social Interaction

A quantitative survey of all internal gathering spaces in the entire Minoan built environment would lead beyond the scope of this dissertation. Since part 4 and 5 of this dissertation focuses on the social role of the Minoan Palaces within the Minoan communities of the Neopalatial period, other forms of urban architecture (i.e. villas and normal houses) have not been included. However, it should be noted that the Minoan villas also shared with the monumental Minoan Palaces numerous room types. In this view, further research may as regards the ways in which the Minoan villas were used to negotiate power, status, and social inequality provide interesting material for comparison with the results of the present analysis.

The overview in this dissertation is restricted to a discussion of the different room types that are attested on the ground floors of the best-known Minoan Palaces of the Neopalatial period (1700-1450 BC). It is important to note that for the Minoan Palaces, similar spaces were most probably also situated on the upper floors of the buildings. As to date, insufficient data survives to produce a good picture of the appearance of these floors or where the specific room types were exactly situated. However, this lack of information does not interfere with the approach in this dissertation. As we have argued elsewhere, the analysis of the ground floors of the buildings is sufficient to formulate different interpretations about the buildings' role in Minoan society.

On the ground floor several spaces were more or less suited for particular occasions and can be described in a coherent typology. However, such generalisations are not sufficient to explain their function in terms of how the Minoan Palaces in total manipulated and orchestrated social interaction during large social events. All rooms that were suitable should be contextualized within the entire complex in order to understand how all were arranged in a meaningful environment for staging these social events. The residential

quarters exist out of Lustral basins, a Minoan Hall and innovations such as the Polytheron.

All these types were not solely part of the residential quarters but were also widely dispersed throughout the building, which makes the Palaces very dynamic environments. Apart from these, other types of rooms may have been suitable for assemblies such as the Hypostyle Hall and Pillar Crypts. Since all types of space have been delivered to us archaeologically, their descriptions are the first important step towards a vivid reconstruction of how occasions were organised in the first place, and how people perceived and experienced space in the end.

Each of the Minoan Palaces (Knossos, Malia, Phaistos, and Zakros) is marked by a very unique pattern of circulation. However, there are some main design principles to be found in each of them.<sup>543</sup> The creation of access graphs for the Palaces enables us to understand how the building structured social interaction (more basically human movement). Letesson studied intensively by the use of access analysis and depthmap the circulation patterns in Neopalatial architecture and included also the Minoan Palaces, except Knossos.<sup>544</sup> For Letesson, the Palace of Knossos is architecturally too confusing to conduct this form of analysis. Because access analysis is used in this dissertation as a qualitative method or as a “tool to think with”<sup>545</sup> rather than a quantitative method, it is worth the exercise to model also the most probable circulation pattern within the Palace of Knossos for the Neopalatial phase. Because of this we create coherent comparative data to draw some general conclusions from the circulation patterns of the Minoan Palaces. It must have been said that there exists a strong consistency between Letesson’s observations and the one presented here, especially concerning the Palaces’ syntaxes. They all share a set

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<sup>543</sup> Preziosi 1983.

<sup>544</sup> Letesson 2005; 2008; 2009; Depthmap more or less does the same as access analysis, only from a different focus. With depthmap different color variations visualize differing CV, RA, RRA, and depth levels within the building and this analysis creates colored maps of buildings. Depthmap will not be employed in this dissertation. For more info on Depthmap <http://www.vr.ucl.ac.uk/depthmap>.

<sup>545</sup> Cutting 2003; 2006.

of topological recurrences, which Letesson identified as an underlying set of principles or an “architectural genotype”.<sup>546</sup>

After a description of the most noteworthy spaces within each of the Minoan Palaces, we will construct access graphs for the Palaces of Malia, Phaistos, Zakros and Knossos in order to create a comparative set of data for further analysis. In contrast with the strong mathematical focus of Letesson the access graphs are in this dissertation only used as a visual tool.<sup>547</sup>

Since we are concerned with the interaction between controllers and visitors and the way these buildings were used during large social events, there is the need to identify at first the major “public” entrances. There are only one or two entrances that have functioned as the primary public entrances to the Palace. A look at the circulation pattern starting from the public entrances elucidates a unit’s position (its depth from the outside) in the entire configuration. In past research it has been argued that in order to assess the interaction potential of a unit within the building with respect to visitors, the number of depth levels within the building, or the number of spaces a visitor has to pass in order to reach the deepest unit inside the Palace structure are illustrative of the accessibility of spaces with respect to strangers. The depth levels closest to the public entrances will have the highest presence availability or interaction potentials to visitors; those in between will have moderate interaction potentials and those furthest away will have low interaction potential.<sup>548</sup> However, one should prevent us to think in this simplistic way. It is not only the depth within the configuration that is important to assess accessibility. A physical boundary makes units situated in those depth levels closely to the exterior as inaccessible to visitors as those situated in the deepest levels. We will therefore focus both upon the distribution of real physical boundaries in the built space and the distinctive depth levels, which creates a very different perspective for the social dynamics within the Minoan

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<sup>546</sup> Letesson 2008, 208-211; Letesson 2009.

<sup>547</sup> See also Chapter 2.1.3. this volume.

<sup>548</sup> Letesson 2008, 208-211; Grahame (2000, 60): “The interaction potential with respect to strangers can be easily measured using the justified access map. As we know, the access map organises spaces into distinct levels above each other. All we have to do is count the number of levels and divide the number by three. Those levels closest situated to the exterior will have the highest interaction potential with respect to strangers; those furthest from the exterior will have the lowest interaction potentials; and those in between will have moderate interaction potentials.”

Palaces. It will become clear that the Minoan Palaces had a unique spatial concept with several units for social occasions not necessarily situated “deep” within the configuration but which are nonetheless characterized by strongly restricted access.

When, for example, the Minoan visitor had to go through a dark, long, narrow and ascending entrance corridor and cross a series of internal courtyards before arriving at his final point of destination, such a configuration would have had a specific effect on the experience of space. In the access analysis, however, the visitor only had to overcome three distinctive depth-levels (entrance corridor – court – court - final destination) and one would assume that such units are rather easily accessible. In reality, however, such a route asked a true physical effort from each of the visitors and postponed the moment of arrival final as the several turns made the route longer. If one imagines guards facing the doorways on the transition between these different nodes in the access graph, then the constant negotiation of access made the act of movement and accessibility restricted and controlled. I therefore plead for an approach that nuances the predictability of access analysis and places the real physicality of the built space back in the center of research, as it gives the possibility to re-enact the Minoan experience in a more comprehensive manner. In such an approach the access graphs are only used as a visual tool to think with.<sup>549</sup>

To summarize, the unique configuration of the Minoan Palaces and the wide distribution of several sorts of physical boundaries within the building give the possibility to assess the building’s socio-political dynamic. It creates the opportunity to evaluate to what degree access and non-access and physical boundaries between different groups during the same occasion where major constructs in establishing distinct social positions among people.

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<sup>549</sup> Cutting 2003; 2006.

#### 4.2.2. The Palace of Knossos: Internal Venues for Occasions and Description of the Palace<sup>550</sup> (fig. 25)

##### 4.2.2.1. Chronology of the Site and some Issues on the Dating of the Frescoes

Although Evans dated the original construction of the Protopalatial Palace to the MM IA period, one has to admit there exists very little concrete evidence of this early formative stage of the building. For Evans, the palatial building existed in the earliest phase out of different independent parts or *insulae*. Parts that belonged to this phase were the rounded corners of the Throne Room Complex, the Early Keep, and possibly what should have been the western façade.<sup>551</sup> The Ramp, Enciente wall, and walkways in the west court were also assigned to this period. There was a court in the northwest corner of the Palace and in the east the Monolithic Pillar Basement and other terraces were built.<sup>552</sup>

It is not until the successive MMIB-MMII period that the Protopalatial Palace received its definitive form. The west façade and the South Stepped Entrance belong to this period as well as the West Porch entrance and the western magazines, which were built in MMII. In the north part of the Palace the Early Keep gets covered by a floor and the Initiatory Area was constructed. In the northeast, the Royal Pottery Stores and the Magazines of the Grant Pithoi came into being. The west court was clearly laid out too and in what becomes the later Residential quarter there is some building activity. The MMIA houses in the west court were covered and the Kouloures were built. MMIB – MMII is also the moment when the central court received its first paving.<sup>553</sup> The Protopalatial Palace became a great example for the construction of the successive Neopalatial Palace.<sup>554</sup>

There are two distinctive views about when the actual Neopalatial Palace was constructed. Evans argued that the initial building activities started in MM IIIA,

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<sup>550</sup> The numbers behind the different units in the description coincide with the numbers on the plan of Hood and Taylor 1981.

<sup>551</sup> Momigliano 1992, 167-168 and 174-175.

<sup>552</sup> For a summary of Evans' views, see Pendlebury 1939, 94-100 and 126-132.

<sup>553</sup> Mirié 1979, 38-39.

<sup>554</sup> Recently MacGillivray (1998) reexamined the material that dated to this period.



immediately after the destruction in MM IIB.<sup>555</sup> MacDonald, however, dates the Neopalatial period to MM IIIB and divides the Neopalatial period in three distinct phases: MM IIIB or the “New Palace”, LMIA or the “Frescoed Palace”, and LMIB or the “Ruined Palace”.<sup>556</sup> The first phase is characterized by a strong building activity wherein the Knossian Palace gets its definitive form. The second phase existed out of a large rebuilding project and the walls of the building were covered with frescoes, whereas the third period was characterized by a time of inactivity, which made MacDonald believe that the building was almost entirely deserted. Some scholars, however, pointed out that such a rigid distinction between different archaeological phases is impossible. If one compares Knossos with the other major Palace centers and sites on Crete it becomes immediately clear that Knossos does not have the same distinct destruction layer at the end of LMIB.<sup>557</sup> It rather seems that the Palace continued to be used well into LM II –LM IIIA and although some areas received a series of alterations during the Final Palace period, the overall picture is one of strong sameness with the Neopalatial phase. Because of this continuous occupation, clearly sealed off Neopalatial contexts at Knossos are very difficult to find. Preziosi and Hitchcock pointed out the difficulties in identifying such distinct archaeological phases and rather describe the Knossian Palace as a “single building with a long, complicated history of repair, renovation and rebuilding, some of it large scale, some of it minor”<sup>558</sup>. As such, there is very little distinction between the Neopalatial and the Final Palatial phases, the end of which falls in LMIIIA2, around 1375 BC.<sup>559</sup> This has some serious repercussions for the fresco dates, as the end of the Final Palace period acts as the only *terminus ante quem* for the wall paintings at Knossos executed in the Neopalatial/Final Palace period.

Leaving aside its architectural complexity, there are several other elements that make the study of Minoan frescoes and particularly the ones from Knossos extremely complicated. Apart from its fragmentary preservation – only a small percentage of the original painted plaster from Crete survives today - very few material comes from *in situ* contexts and is

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<sup>555</sup> MacGillivray 1998, 97-98.

<sup>556</sup> MacDonald 2002, 35-36.

<sup>557</sup> Immerwahr 1990, 78.

<sup>558</sup> Preziosi and Hitchcock 1999, 92.

<sup>559</sup> Hood 2005, 45.

found in unfavorable circumstances (fallen debris from the upper stories or in dumps outside the building) where the Minoan material is mixed with material from the Neolithic until the Hellenistic and even Roman times.<sup>560</sup> This makes a good reconstruction of individual frescoes, their location within the building and their exact dating a difficult and sometimes impossible task. Also Knossos has a long history of continuous activity that goes well into the Roman period and due to poor stratigraphical information available in the archaeological reports one still has large difficulties to unveil the different chronological sequences of the Minoan era.<sup>561</sup>

Although one has difficulties to unravel which frescoes belong to a particular chronological sequence, it is clear that within the course of the Neopalatial period, Knossos was heavily frescoed as early as MM IIIB.<sup>562</sup> In the Neopalatial period Knossos has the most extensive fresco remains on the island and wall paintings became now, for the first time, figurative, including male and female figures, plants, animals, as well as supernatural beings.<sup>563</sup> The extensive dispersion of fresco decoration throughout the building made scholars speak about a real iconographical program.<sup>564</sup> A look at the material evidence of Knossos shows that the most important entrance spaces, corridors and spaces to accommodate social occasions were decorated with iconographical themes that give us a glimpse of the activities that possibly occurred within these spaces but also widen our perspective in the active use and importance of the layers of architecture and iconography at the Palace in communicating message of power, authority and appropriate behavior; all issues that will be thoroughly addressed in Part 5 this dissertation.

Bearing in mind what has been said above, it has to be pointed out that for all key-important spaces discussed in this chapter – i.e. the Throne Room area, the western entrance, the north entrance, the Corridor of the Procession and the Domestic quarter - the exact dating of the fresco fragments found *in situ* on the walls of these spaces is far from clear and even today still subject of discussion. As Walberg pointed out, it is often

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<sup>560</sup> Immerwhar 1990, 10; Morgan 2005, 21-23; Walberg 1986, 58.

<sup>561</sup> Hood 2005, 45-52.

<sup>562</sup> Chapin 2010, 224; Mac Donald 2002, 35-36.

<sup>563</sup> Immerwahr 1990, 21-22; Boulotis 2000, 847.

<sup>564</sup> Hägg 1985.

difficult to know how long a fresco remained in place on a given wall before it gets covered by a new wall painting or prior to its destruction.<sup>565</sup> Those wall paintings that remained *in situ* until Evans' excavation have generally been dated to LM II - LM IIIA, such as the “Griffins” from the Throne Room and the “Bull Fresco” in the anteroom of the Throne Room, the “Shield Frescoes” in the Hall of the Double axes, etc. However, there still exists controversy among some of these lately dated frescoes and several others such as the “Procession Fresco” and the “Bull Fresco” at the West Porch entrance, the “Cupbearer” in the southeast corridor, the “Priestking” at the south entrance, the “spiral friezes” that run throughout most of the spaces within the King’s and Queen’s Megaron, and the “Dolphin fresco” and the “Dancing Lady” in the Queen’s Megaron, which could be dated to the transitional period LMIA-LMIB or the LMII-LMIII period respectively.<sup>566</sup> A thorough discussion of the fresco dates together with earlier relevant bibliography for each of the mentioned frescoes within this chapter can be found in Hood (2000, 2005) and Immerwahr (1990). The frescoes were mainly dated by stylistic analysis and if one looks at both studies the subjective nature of fresco dating comes immediately apparent, which only means that the dates they assign to the frescoes aren’t necessarily absolute. Because of this, the dates proposed by Hood and Immerwahr will be compared with past interpretations when this information is available. It would help us to make a more objective interpretation of the archaeological evidence.

The discussion above shows that the architectural history of the site as well as the dating of the frescoes is still the subject of strong debates, discussions, and uncertainties. Ongoing efforts to clarify the architectural history of Knossos hopefully leads to a better understanding of the Palace’s pictorial program in the Neopalatial period and might provide us in the future with more factual evidence to reach consensus on excluding compositions from the later Final Palace phase.<sup>567</sup>

We mentioned before that of the studied spaces in the part that follows, the discussed fresco elements were found *in situ* on the walls and this in clear context. Although the exact date of their application is mostly unknown or difficult to trace, one can see clearly that the frescoes within these spaces were meaningful features and served specific

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<sup>565</sup> Walberg 1986, 57.

<sup>566</sup> For a detailed discussion of these frescoes, see Immerwahr (1990) and Hood (2000; 2005).

<sup>567</sup> Chapin 2010, 225.

functions at least till the end of the Final Palace period. They were intentionally placed on these walls and became an integral part of the entire scenery. For all issues pointed out above we choose to discuss the Neopalatial and Final Palace period as being closely intertwined because it doesn't have strong repercussions for the subject of research, i.e. the ways in which the iconographical program within an architectural space adds to the way in which these spaces became true representational spaces within the Minoan community.

#### **4.2.2.2 The Domestic or Residential Quarter and the Upper Hall in the East Wing**

It always has been difficult to give a solid explanation to the function of this specific architectural suite. A lack of objects found within led to a series of differing interpretations that range from ritually used spaces to sleeping areas. What Evans found at Knossos was a strongly elaborated and complexly organized web of interconnected spaces what he immediately labeled as the Domestic or Residential Area of the Palace, with the smaller hall referred to as the Queen's or woman's and the larger unit as the King's or men's quarter of the complex.<sup>568</sup>

The so-called residential quarter at Knossos is situated in the south half of the east wing and could only be entered from the central court by descending the Grand Staircase (nr. 88-88a).<sup>569</sup> This staircase consisted of several steps wrapped around a light well system and was created during MMIIIB.<sup>570</sup> Only two flights of steps have been preserved from the original staircase. Evans reconstructed the Residential Area as consisting out of three stories in total.<sup>571</sup> The only floor preserved today is the ground floor, which was probably

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<sup>568</sup> Evans 1921, 315-359; Evans 1930, 282-390; Graham 1957, 47-52; On the residential quarter see Mac Donald 2002, 47-49.

<sup>569</sup> Evans 1921, 340: fig. 247.

<sup>570</sup> Macdonald 2002, 48.

<sup>571</sup> The detailed plan of Knossos by Hood and Taylor (1981) shows that the central court was situated about 100 m above sea level. The start and ending of the lowest and second flight of the staircase were respectively situated between 93 and 97m, meaning that another 3 meter should be overcome. This led Evans to reconstruct certainly 2 other flights to overcome the remaining 3 m.

the most important story of all as is illustrated by its strong architectural and iconographical elaboration throughout the Neopalatial and Final Palace period.

The Grand Staircase was the only connection between the central court, the Residential quarter on the ground floor and the highly situated halls above. The balustrades of the staircases were equipped with columns that supported the other flights above. The walls of the Grand Staircase were at least in the Final Palace period decorated with a procession fresco with men ascending the stairway. Although the fresco is fragmentary, there is ample of evidence to indicate that the walls were decorated with people processing.<sup>572</sup> One can recognize a musician with a flute hanging from his waistband and another figure that carries a lotus flower.

When one descends the Grand Staircase one enters the Hall of the Colonnades (nr. 89) and through a small door access is granted to a long corridor in the northeast corner (nr. 87) which led to the “Hall of the Double Axes” (nr. 90a) which is the main hall of the “King’s Megaron” complex (nr. 90a-90-90b) and measures ca. 14 m x ca. 8 m. The name of the hall refers to the numerous double-axe symbols cut in the walls of the western light well.<sup>573</sup> In the Neopalatial period, the King’s Megaron was adorned with a spiral frieze that seems to run throughout most of the rooms and which forms immediately the most basic and unifying motif of the entire Residential Area.<sup>574</sup> Also the smaller Queen’s Megaron and more specifically the Minoan hall, the so-called Bathroom, and the Corridor of the Painted Pithos received the same spiral frieze.<sup>575</sup> Throughout the entire Residential quarter the floors were laid out with gypsum slabs and the walls were faced with gypsum orthostates.<sup>576</sup>

In the Final Palace period, the King’s Megaron received further decoration and was adorned with a series of large “Figure of Eight” shields consisting of layers of bull hide stretched over a wooden frame.<sup>577</sup> Next to the entrance to the east-west corridor Evans reconstructs a wooden throne with baldachin.<sup>578</sup> The most remarkable find within the

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<sup>572</sup> Hägg 1985, 210-211; Hitchcock 2000, 167.

<sup>573</sup> Evans 1930, 319.

<sup>574</sup> Evans 1930, 345: fig. 229.

<sup>575</sup> Evans 1930, 382-383: fig. 254-255; Evans 1930, 387-388: fig. 259.

<sup>576</sup> Evans 1930, 318-390.

<sup>577</sup> Evans 1930, 343-346.

<sup>578</sup> Hutchinson 1963, 174; Evans 1930, 333-338.

King's Megaron was a large Rhyton made out of variegated breccia with black, grey, and porphyry-like veins.<sup>579</sup> The King's Megaron was in the south and east bordered by an L-shaped portico (nr. 91) with a light well (nr. 92 und 93). A dog's leg corridor (nr. 103) gave direct access between the King's and Queen's Megaron (nr. 101-101b) that was also equipped with columns, a polytheron and wooden benches.<sup>580</sup>

The Queen's Megaron complex was adorned with frescoes in the Neopalatial period, with a spiral frieze running at the top of the walls, a papyrus fresco<sup>581</sup> in the southwest corner of the Minoan hall and the Dolphin fresco<sup>582</sup>, of which the suggestion that it was in fact a floor fresco instead of placed on the walls cannot be confirmed<sup>583</sup>. To the west of the Queen's Megaron, access was granted to the Corridor of the Painted Pithos (nr. 100) and a smaller closed off room that was considered as the Queen's Bathroom (nr. 102) because of a painted bath out of terracotta that was found here.<sup>584</sup> However, the bath itself is probably Postpalatial and thus post-dates the construction of the room.<sup>585</sup> Although there exists controversy about the date, the Queen's Megaron complex gets at least in the Final Palace period further adorned with the fresco of a Dancing Lady wearing a yellow jacket at the south side of the east light-well.<sup>586</sup> Some finds from the Queen's Megaron include a large pyramidal stand probably to carry a double axe, double axe symbols on the north wall, as well as a broken slab with cupules from the Minoan hall which could be related to the execution of some kind of cultic activity.<sup>587</sup> The Corridor of the Painted Pithos gives access to room nr. 98 with in the east side the presence of a clearly delineated space in gypsum.<sup>588</sup> In front of the room there was a small depression in the floor that was connected to a water channel. In one of the gypsum slabs a vertical slot probably served to accommodate a wooden seat, which can be interpreted as a toilet.<sup>589</sup> Nevertheless, as

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<sup>579</sup> Evans 1930, 346 and 347: fig. 230.

<sup>580</sup> Evans 1930, 366-368.

<sup>581</sup> Evans 1930, 371-373.

<sup>582</sup> Evans 1930, 377-379.

<sup>583</sup> Hood 1978, 71 and 76-77; Koehl 1986; Also Mac Donald 2002, 49.

<sup>584</sup> Evans 1930, 381-387.

<sup>585</sup> Hutchinson 1963, 175.

<sup>586</sup> We argued earlier that this Fresco dates to the transitional period LMIA-LMIB/ LMII; Evans (1930, 369-371) dates the fresco to LMIA; Mac Donald 2002, 49.

<sup>587</sup> Evans 1930, 347, 369 and 390-393.

<sup>588</sup> Graham 1987, 143.

<sup>589</sup> Evans 1921, 228; Evans 1930, 387-389: fig. 260.

has been argued by McDonald and Driessen a ritual functioning of the room is more plausible.<sup>590</sup>

According to Evans there was at least one Reception hall, the Upper East hall, which was accessed by the Grand Staircase and so situated at least partly above the lowly situated Residential Area.<sup>591</sup> The Great East Hall was decorated with at least three bulls of life-size, and in a later phase of the Neopalatial/Early Final Palace period with boxers, wrestlers and bull leaping scenes rendered in high relief.<sup>592</sup>

For a detailed discussion of the function of the Residential Area within a context of social interaction in the Neopalatial and Final Palace Period see chapter 5.2.2 this dissertation.

#### **4.2.2.3. The West Wing: The Throne Room Complex and Tripartite Shrine.**

The Throne Room area existed out of an anteroom, the actual Throne Room, an inner sanctuary and service section and a magazine. Originally, Evans placed the construction of the Throne Room complex in LMII<sup>593</sup>, but a reexamination of the archaeological evidence by Mirié from this complex as well as the stratigraphic analysis of the successive pavements of the central court (three within the course of MMII – LMIII) led to the deconstruction of Evans' view and revealed instead a complex history of continuous use and alterations over a time span from MMII till LM III A.<sup>594</sup>

At the very beginning, around MMII, there has been some building activity in this area and the inner sanctuary, the lustral basin, and some magazines to the south of this basin were built.<sup>595</sup> It is not until the Neopalatial period that this area received more or less its final architectural form. The Throne Room complex was situated at the western inner façade of the Palace and this in between the western magazines and the central court, the eastern unit or the anteroom (nr. 41) of which is opened towards the central court through a columned wall existing out of 4 columns with 4 doorways that could be closed off by

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<sup>590</sup> McDonald and Driessen 1988, 252-253.

<sup>591</sup> Based on the large number of fine plaster relief fragments found in the basements, Evans (1930, 495-507) concluded that this hall was the most important of all the reception halls in the Palace area.

<sup>592</sup> Hallager 1995, 548; Evans 1930, 495-507.

<sup>593</sup> Evans 1935, 901 – 905.

<sup>594</sup> Mirié 1979.

<sup>595</sup> Mirié 1979, 76.

doors. In the course of Neopalatial period, the level of the central court was raised and therefore one had to construct two steps in order to reach the anteroom from the central court. In the Final Palace period (LMII or LMIIIA) there has been a last pavement and two extra stairs had to be constructed, which brought the total steps to four, so in order to reach the anteroom from the central court one had to descend two and later four stairs.<sup>596</sup> Stone benches, just like in the actual Throne Room, flanked the walls of the anteroom.<sup>597</sup> The most remarkable feature of the anteroom was the presence of a bull-fresco on the southern wall, oriented towards the visitor.<sup>598</sup> Only a part of the foot is preserved, which makes it difficult to reconstruct whether or not the fresco was a single ‘charging’ bull or a bull-leaping scene. A passage of ca. 3,25 m wide in the west wall with in the middle a central column<sup>599</sup> gave access to another unit of 6 x 7 m, the actual Throne Room (nr. 42) and its Lustral Basin (nr. 43). In the Neopalatial period the lustral basin measured 3 by 2 m and was 70 cm deep with walls built out of alabaster slabs. Six L-shaped stairs lead down into the basin. At the north wall of the lustral basin an 80 cm high balustrade was situated, with at the outside a bench made from alabaster (the south wall of the Throne Room).<sup>600</sup> There were also benches out of gypsum on the west and north wall of the Throne Room. In the Neopalatial period stood precisely in the middle of the north wall of the Throne Room a 48cm high chair out of alabaster, flanked by two low benches on both sides of the throne. The actual seat was pre-formed for a human body.<sup>601</sup> The walls and floors of this room were painted red and were decorated with papyrus plants and palms and frescoes of griffins.<sup>602</sup> One griffin flanked the door in the west and another pair flanked probably in the Neopalatial, at least in the Final Palace period, the Throne. In the back of the complex in the west, a small door gave access to the “inner sanctuary” (nr. 44-44b). From here, several other rooms could be accessed. These rooms, i.e. the “Room of the Woman’s Seat (nr. 48)”, “Room of the Stone Bench (nr. 47)”, “Room of the Stone

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<sup>596</sup> Mirié 1979, 56-57 and 77.

<sup>597</sup> Evans 1935, 903-905; Graham 1962, 30-31.

<sup>598</sup> Evans 1935, 893: fig. 872.

<sup>599</sup> Evans 1935, 905.

<sup>600</sup> Mirié 1979, 52.

<sup>601</sup> Mirié 1979, 70; Red colored floor, walls and other elements see Blakolmer (2011, 66) with references; Discussion of the Griffin frescoes flanking the throne see Blakolmer (2011, 64) with references; On the palms see Blakolmer (2011, 65) with references.

<sup>602</sup> Evans 1935, 908-910.



Drum (nr. 45), “Room of the Plaster Table or Kitchen (nr. 46)”, and the other units (46a-b-c) could be interpreted as service areas for the preparation of the actual ritual.<sup>603</sup> As to date, it stays rather difficult to pinpoint exactly the fresco dates for the Throne Room. Mirié argued that the more or less final architectural form of the Throne Room complex with the Throne and Lustral Basin was in use as early as the Neopalatial period, and to her the Griffin frescoes might have been painted as early as the Neopalatial period.<sup>604</sup> The griffins, however, postdate the actual emplacement of the Throne and although one cannot define when they were exactly in place, they have been dated to LMIB-LMII<sup>605</sup>, LMII – LM IIIA1<sup>606</sup>, LM IIIB<sup>607</sup>. Taken all together, the discussion above shows that it might be possible that the entire ensemble of the Throne Room with the griffin frescoes was in place from the Neopalatial period onwards. The Throne Room complex was continuously used till the Mycenaean period and although it received some alterations, one can take it for granted that the Throne Room area played a significant role in the total function of the Palace during its entire life-span, an issue we discuss more detailed in chapter 5.2.2 this dissertation.

South of the anteroom of the Throne Room complex was a large staircase with a central column that led towards the Piano Nobile (the upper floor). South of this staircase one finds the “Tripartite Shrine” and a portico (nr. 35).

One of the complexes traditionally perceived as one of the major ritual loci of the Knossian palace is the Tripartite shrine adjacent to the central court on its western side, and the Central Palace Sanctuary that comprises the cluster of rooms lying behind the facade of the Tripartite shrine. One has to admit that the reconstruction of the Tripartite shrine is not based on clear archaeological evidence. In fact, most of its reconstruction is based on the identification of such a structure in the so-called ‘Grandstand Fresco’<sup>608</sup>: the façade consists of three parts, with the middle part being higher as the other constituent parts. The whole of this structure has been covered with a roof with sacred horns. The fresco and the physical reconstruction have slight differences. The fresco shows two

<sup>603</sup> For a detailed discussion of the Throne Room complex, see Evans 1935, 905-927.

<sup>604</sup> Mirié 1979: plate 35, for a detailed description of the relative chronology.

<sup>605</sup> Niemeier 1986, 67–68.

<sup>606</sup> Immerwahr 1990, 94 and 96–98.

<sup>607</sup> Crowley 1989, 273.

<sup>608</sup> Shaw 1978, 430.

central columns flanked by one column at the two other sides, whereas in reality the Tripartite shrine had only one central column, flanked at both sides by two other smaller columns.<sup>609</sup> It seems that when ritual activities took place in the central court, these should have been performed in front of the façade and the Tripartite Shrine.<sup>610</sup> Directly in front of the Tripartite shrine in the central court a stone base was discovered that could have functioned as an altar (nr. 36).<sup>611</sup>

Thanks to Panagiotaki, the Central Palace Sanctuary is one of the most thoroughly studied areas of the Knossian palace.<sup>612</sup> Not only did she catalogue all of the finds in each of these units, she also tried to reveal the different architectural changes that occurred within this complex throughout the Proto-, Neo-, and Final Palace periods. Apart from the well-known Vat Room Deposit (nr. 31) and the so-called Temple repositories (nr. 34), traditionally seen as storage spaces for the objects used in some kind of ritual<sup>613</sup>, the complex existed out of the Lobby of the Stone Seat (nr. 32), the Great Pithos Room, and the East and West Pillar Crypts (nr. 29-30). It is probably not until the very end of the Neopalatial, early Final Palace Period, that we should also count among these the Tripartite Shrine facing the central court on the west.

The room of the **Temple Repositories**<sup>614</sup> is situated in the northeast part of the Central Palace Sanctuary and its main feature is the presence of two cists that were originally used for the storage of ceramic vessels holding liquids.<sup>615</sup> Interestingly, towards the end of MMIIIB, the two pits were not used anymore for storing vessels but instead were used for the deposition of a wide variety of artefacts. Panagiotaki recognized the very similar placement of artefacts within the two cists, something that could indicate that whoever placed them there did this with the utmost precision, maybe even according to a specific set of instructions. Another indication for the deliberate placement of the artefacts is the almost complete preservation of the ceramic vessels. The ritual importance and luxury nature of some of the ritually deposited objects becomes clear from the archaeological

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<sup>609</sup> Graham 1987, 140-141.

<sup>610</sup> Shaw 1978, 448.

<sup>611</sup> Preziosi 1983, 95.

<sup>612</sup> See also Mac Donald 2002, 39-41.

<sup>613</sup> Graham 1987, 140-141; Graham (1987, 140): "Among the finds were faience, crystal, vases, snake Goddess figurines, libationaltars, shells, and a marble cross".

<sup>614</sup> Panagiotaki 1999, 71-151; Mac Donald 2002, 40-41.

<sup>615</sup> Panagiotaki 1999, 148.

assemblage. Among the finds were various objects made out of faience and ivory, clay tablets, seals, roundels and noduli, natural objects, stone offering tables, several objects of precious and semi-precious materials and a variety of ceramics. It is also here that the figurines of the famous snake goddesses were found. The contents of the Temple Repositories only give a glimpse of the variety of objects used and possibly stored within the actual shrine of the Palace at the time. According to Panagiotaki, 'it seems reasonable to assume that the Temple Repositories were part of a shrine area, but it is an assumption'<sup>616</sup>. There are hardly any clues for the actual identification of an actual shrine close to the Temple Repositories. The date for the Temple Repositories falls within the Neopalatial period. Pottery analysis suggests a date between MMIB to LMIA. However, the clay sealings and faience objects have been dated to LMIA.<sup>617</sup>

Very little material is known prior to the Neopalatial period. The **Vat Room Deposit** is one of the very few units within the Central Palace Sanctuary where deposits were found dating prior to the Neopalatial period. Panagiotaki catalogues, describes and evaluates the different finds from the pit directly under the Neopalatial floor.<sup>618</sup> She seems to break with the traditional interpretation of this deposit being Prepalatial. In fact, after reconsidering all the evidence, she points out that only a small amount of the material falls within the Prepalatial period. Notwithstanding that there are those in favor for the Vat Room Deposit to be dated to the Protopalatial period, she leaves the possibility open for a mixed deposit dated to a period ranging from the end of the Prepalatial up to the LM period. The LM date is only argued based on very small amount of finds, which might be intrusive and as such not part of the actual deposit.<sup>619</sup> Within the Vat Room, a large diversity of MM IB - MMII material was found in a deposit that was sealed off in a way very similar to the Temple Repositories. The Vat Room Deposit contained a series of luxury objects that describe this assemblage as a ritually buried set of items, most probably used for performances held at an early MMIB-MMII (Protopalatial) shrine

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<sup>616</sup> Panagiotaki 1999, 150.

<sup>617</sup> Panagiotaki 1999, 136–48 for dates and argumentation ; LMIA: Panagiotaki 1999, 146 and 148.

<sup>618</sup> Panagiotaki 1999, 8-53.

<sup>619</sup> Panagiotaki 1999, 43.

before they were ritually buried in the same way as discussed in relation to the nearby Temple repositories at the end of the Neopalatial period.<sup>620</sup>

The **Lobby of the Stone Seat** is immediately one of the largest and most controlling units in terms of circulation within the Central Palace Sanctuary, built during the Neopalatial period and equipped with a flight of steps, a bench built identical to the ones found in the Throne Room Complex and a balustrade, all made of gypsum.<sup>621</sup> Interestingly, a large amount of inscribed Linear B tablets was found in this room, all dated to the Final Palace Period, which lead Hallager (1987) to believe the room had no ritual connotation, but rather functioned as a control room, managed and monitored by a scribe noting down all the goods which came in and went out of the west magazines of the Palace.<sup>622</sup> Whatever its function, when the Central Palace Sanctuary was used at times for ritual ceremonies and gatherings, the location of this unit at the junction between the central court and the more private rooms in the back shows it had lots of potential to segregate people and circulation within this complex.

From the very beginning, the **East and West Pillar Crypts** were considered as the most important ritual units within this complex apart from the Tripartite Shrine, both carefully sealed off from the public. This idea was first formulated by Evans and soon followed by others.<sup>623</sup> Both crypts have a very similar layout. The East Pillar Crypt was entered by 2 doors through the Lobby of the Stone Seat and was a dark, unlit room, with no windows, high walls out of rubble masonry, an occasional gypsum block and a floor out of rectangular gypsum slabs.<sup>624</sup> A square gypsum pillar stands roughly in the center of the room, burnt black by fire, and adorned with double-axe symbols on the N, E, and S side. Two stone vats were found on both sides of the pillar together with several pithoi and other objects.<sup>625</sup> The West Pillar Crypt had a similar layout: entirely dark and without windows, equipped with a central pillar in this instance inscribed with double axe signs on all four sides, and a gypsum bench installed on the S wall.<sup>626</sup>

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<sup>620</sup> Panagtioaki 1999, 42-43.

<sup>621</sup> Panagiotaki 1999, 192; 196; 201.

<sup>622</sup> Panagiotaki 1999, 208-209.

<sup>623</sup> Panagiotaki (1999, 223) for further references.

<sup>624</sup> Panagiotaki 1999, 219; Panagiotaki 1999, 222-223.

<sup>625</sup> Panagiotaki 1999, 222-223

<sup>626</sup> Panagiotaki 1999, 225-227.

Evans and others interpreted the East and West Pillar Crypts as places for chthonic worship, the pillars being interpreted as physical representations of the deity. Panagiotaki nuances this view and is rather reluctant to accept such straightforward interpretations. Referring to Renfrew's list of criteria to define whether or not a space's use was ritual or not, she argues that "there is nothing in the Central Palace Sanctuary to declare a cult activity".<sup>627</sup> At this point it is safest to leave the question of whether or not the Central Palace Sanctuary was used for rituals unanswered. The absence of clear archaeological evidences makes both reconstructions perfectly possible and plausible<sup>628</sup> and although Panagiotaki questions the exact nature of the Central Palace Sanctuary, she is inclined to believe in a continuity of religious activities carried out there.<sup>629</sup> In terms of dating, Panagiotaki shows that most of the spaces in the Central Palace Sanctuary had a continuous and almost undifferentiated use from the MMIIIB well into the Final Palace Period (LMII/LMIIIA). Notwithstanding that she dismisses entirely the potential presence of a Tripartite Shrine facing the west court at the end of the Neopalatial/early Final Palace Period, other scholars seem to disagree with her on this point.<sup>630</sup>

Gesell considers the Room of the Lotus Lamp (nr. 51) as a ritual room. In this room the Temple Fresco and horns of consecration were discovered.<sup>631</sup> According to Gesell the actual cult place was on the floor above. Close to the northwestern entrance of the Palace is situated a lustral basin (nr. 62b). Graham states that this room was part of a series of rooms serving as fine guest apartments.<sup>632</sup> Evans, however, argues that it was used to clean the pilgrims before they entered the Palace.<sup>633</sup>

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<sup>627</sup> Panagiotaki 1999, 241; Recently, Begg (2004) dismisses the ritual function of the pillar crypts entirely, arguing that the double axe symbols inscribed on the pillars were probably masons' marks, signifying the work of various teams of masons.

<sup>628</sup> Also Panagiotaki 1999, 273.

<sup>629</sup> Panagiotaki 1999, 273 and 275-276.

<sup>630</sup> See Panagiotaki 1999, 235-240 for further references.

<sup>631</sup> Gesell 1985, 90.

<sup>632</sup> Gesell 1985, 90; Graham (1987, 113): "Perhaps the fragment of an alabaster jar inscribed with the name of Hyksos King Khyan found here was the relic of the visit of some high Egyptian official to the court of King Minos".

<sup>633</sup> Evans (1921, 405): "Its centre point [of the northwestern entrance] was a sunken basin approached by a descending staircase, and this seems to have been the scene of lustral functions performed by pilgrims or others approaching the Palace Sanctuary for religious purposes".

North of the South Propylaeum starts a 53m long corridor that runs in north-south direction (nr. 40). This corridor gives access to 18 small but protracted rooms (I-XVIII) referred to as the west magazines of the Palace. The western walls of these units dominated the look of the western facade from the outside. Both the magazines and the corridor were equipped with sub-floor marble cists and in much of the storage rooms stood large pithoi that gave the western magazines an average storage capacity of 246,000 liters.<sup>634</sup>

There was a square room in the western end of Magazines 15 and 16 that according to Graham was used as the cabinet of an archivist controlling and regulating traffic in and out the western magazines.

#### **4.2.2.4. Courts of the Palace of Knossos**

The central court at Knossos measured ca. 53 by 28 m and is immediately the largest court of all Minoan Palaces. The court was entirely paved and more or less orientated north-south. The northern, eastern, and southern inner facades of the Palace seem to have existed out of one solid wall and sometimes equipped with a pillared portico. Each of the wings is worked open with one major passageway to the inner rooms. The Grand Staircase constituted the major connection between the central court and the rooms of east wing. Access to the north was obtained by passing a corridor in the northwestern corner of the central court. The south part of the Palace could be reached in a more or less direct manner through a corridor in the south façade of the central court.

The west court at Knossos is directly situated to the west of the Palace and is crossed by several raised walkways. A first walkway, the Royal Road, measured ca. 1.4 m in width, and contained a central paved path with two side wings existing of a concrete facing.<sup>635</sup> This road ran directly towards the theatral area, a closed box with two flights of steps on its eastern and southern side. The theatral area contained 18 low steps that ascended in

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<sup>634</sup> Graham 1987, 30 and 130; Evans 1921, 449-462.

<sup>635</sup> Evans 1928, 574.

west-eastern direction<sup>636</sup>, with a total height of 2.2 m and on the south side was positioned against it a square bastion built (nr.65). The southern side also existed of a flight of steps, but these were fewer in number (six in total).

According to Evans, the upper bastion (nr. 65) showed remains of good paving and the archaeological evidence found at the very spot – i.e. fragments of painted stucco – indicate that a decorated canopy may have surmounted this raised platform. Because of the prominent position of the paved bastion – it was the point best adapted for surveying activities in the actual theatral area below and the west court – Evans refers to it as a kind of Royal Box where the most prominent figures of the community gathered.<sup>637</sup> The relatively small dimension of the theatral area – 13m from east to west by 10m from north to south – shows that whatever activity took place in this area was only for a limited number of people.<sup>638</sup> The south arm of the Royal Road branches in two parts south of the theatral area. One causeway ascends towards a small flight of steps (a small stairway), and once these steps were taken, the walkway ran directly towards the entrance of the west porch.<sup>639</sup> The original part of the Royal Road continues in eastern direction and penetrates the north entrance that gives access to the Hall with the Columns.

From the northwest corner of the Palace to the West Porch Entrance the western facade is 60m long and its wall is about 2m thick.<sup>640</sup> At the west court there were also two altars<sup>641</sup>, orientated along an east-west axis, running through the middle of magazine nr. 11-16 and magazine nr. 3-5. The use of these altars, and the kouloures dates to the Protopalatial period. Therefore, and also in view of the interesting evolution and changes of the west court and the overall configuration of the Palace of the Neopalatial period, it is important to reconsider them in this dissertation.

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<sup>636</sup> Graham (1987, 180): “The stairs are each not higher than 12cm.”

<sup>637</sup> Evans 1928, 582.

<sup>638</sup> Evans 1928, 582

<sup>639</sup> Evans 1928, 586-587.

<sup>640</sup> Hägg 1987, 129.

<sup>641</sup> It is actually never proofed that these two structures were indeed altars. Evans only found two stone bases in the West court and reconstructed two altars on it, see Evans 1928, 612-614.

#### 4.2.2.5. The Knossian Entrance- system<sup>642</sup>

The northern entrance at Knossos is flanked at both sides by two small bastions at a distance of about 3 m from each other (nr. 67 and 68). Possibly, the entrance itself existed out of several steps, a threshold, a propylon, two sets of double doors and a guardroom. Behind the bastions that delineate the entrance, the north pillar hall was situated. This hall measured 22 x 10 m and was equipped with eleven columns arranged in two parallel rows.<sup>643</sup> Most probably, this hall functioned as an important reception hall.<sup>644</sup> Evans and Graham surmised that another reception hall was situated directly above the northern pillar hall, but little proof supports this assumption. The only hall that is really suitable for possible occasions is the northern pillar hall itself. From this point an ascending raised walkway ran between two other bastions (nr. 60 and 61) and a guardroom right into the central court. The western Bastion is decorated with fragments of frescoes of a life-size charging bull facing the walkway, dating back to MM IIIB or maybe later in LM IB-II.<sup>645</sup> One could assume that also the walls of the Eastern bastion had a similar decorative programme. Evans regarded the north entrance together with the northern hall as the main public entrance, something that sounds rather implausible. The West Porch Entrance to the Palace had actually a much stronger monumentality and sophisticated construction than the north entrance and therefore it seems probable that the West Porch should be perceived as the public entrance when some kind of publikum took place.

In addition to the north entrance, several other entrances gave access to the Palace. One of these entrances may have been situated at the northwest corner of the Palace. From the north-west-portico, access was granted to the Palace and the rest of the west wing could

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<sup>642</sup> Also Adams 2007, 362-363; Adams (2007) discussed in a recent article the different entrance systems at the different Minoan Palaces of Knossos, Malia, Phaistos and Knossos. She adopts a phenomenological approach to the Minoan Palaces. By constructing a series of categories based on data collected from all the entrances, not just the main ones, she highlights how people would have experienced and approached them. Further, the large variety of entrances suggest that different entrances were used by different people and were therefore important devices for the social structuring of people.

<sup>643</sup> For a detailed description, see Evans 1930, 158-67.

<sup>644</sup> Mac Donald 2002, 43.

<sup>645</sup> See Hood (2005, 58) for a detailed discussion of the fresco dates; Mac Donald 2002, 42-43.



be reached rather easily.<sup>646</sup> Close to the northwestern entrance there is a lustral basin (nr. 63) that was part of the guest apartments.<sup>647</sup>

The Palace of Knossos could be entered from the west court through the West Porch, situated at the southwest corner of the west court and at the very far south corner of the western façade. The West Porch entrance consisted of a propylon that was equipped with a central column part of the base of which has been preserved. This porch had two doors the first of which led to room 12 that gave access to room 13. The other led towards the Corridor of the Procession (17m in length, n. 11).<sup>648</sup> Room 12 has been interpreted as a porter's lodge (a guardroom) and the other bigger room (nr. 13) could serve as a room where maybe even the King could sit when observing the activities in the west court.<sup>649</sup> The more plausible explanation is, however, that a guard was positioned here and controlled passage into the Palace. Evans refers to this unit as the so-called "Reception Area".<sup>650</sup>

The east wall of the propylon at the west entrance was decorated with the representation of a charging or galloping bull, or maybe even a bull-leaping scene.<sup>651</sup> Such a specific iconographical theme can be found at several other spaces throughout the building. There is a charging bull depicted on the southern wall of the anteroom of the Throne Room and at the north entrance passage Evans reconstructs a bull fresco on the wall of the balustrade above the western bastions.<sup>652</sup>

Behind the west entrance starts the Corridor of the Procession, which was originally closed off by a double door, likely very dark and only slightly lit. Of this corridor 17m is preserved. The corridor runs at south for about 20 to 25 m, and then probably turns to the east to eventually turn after a while to the north to reach the south-north corridor and end up into the central court. Both sides of the corridor contained almost life-sized frescoes of people processing.<sup>653</sup> The west wall of this corridor contained very little material evidence of processing figures. The east wall, however, contained the well-known

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<sup>646</sup> Evans 1921, 215–217, and 405–422; Evans 1930, 6–15.

<sup>647</sup> Graham 1987, 113; Mac Donald 2002, 44.

<sup>648</sup> Evans 1928, 678.

<sup>649</sup> Evans 1928, 678-679.

<sup>650</sup> Evans 1928, 673: fig. 427.

<sup>651</sup> Evans 1928, 675-677; Hallager and Hallager 1995, 547-548; Mac Donald 2002, 39.

<sup>652</sup> Evans 1935, 893: fig. 872; Hood 2005, 58.

<sup>653</sup> Evans 1928, 719-723.

Procession fresco with several figures wearing different clothes and objects processing to the innermost parts of the corridor and into the heart of Minoan society, i.e. the central court of the Palace. Evans' interpretation of this fresco still stands for most of it today. His interpretation focuses on the central female figure, a Goddess or Queen, approached from both sides by worshippers carrying some form of tribute. Such a reconstruction is followed by several scholars such as Cameron and Boulotis, for who the central figure was a Goddess, a Queen and/or main priestess.<sup>654</sup> The fresco dates of the west entrance are unclear. Evans dated them to the Neopalatial period, but recent studies tend to date them to LM II.<sup>655</sup> The program may date back to the Neopalatial period, since the bullgrappling scene from the west porch revealed three layers of plaster and so some continuity of iconography.<sup>656</sup>

Recently, Günkel-Maschek argued convincingly that the traditional interpretation of the Procession fresco does not give a sufficient explanation for all the architectural and iconographical data available.<sup>657</sup> A thorough discussion of the function of the west entrance, an alternative reading of the Procession fresco and the sociological interpretation of the bull and procession iconography, can be found in section 5.1.1.1 and 5.2.2 this volume.

A side-way of the corridor of the procession gave into the "Corridor of the Cupbearer" (nr. 10). In this corridor a LM IB-II fresco was found on the western wall with the depiction of a young man holding a large Rhyton.<sup>658</sup> East of the Corridor of the Cupbearer one enters the South Propylaeum, where 4 large columns carried the roof which by estimate may have been 4m high.<sup>659</sup> Evans reconstructed a large stairway north of the South Propylaeum (n. 22) but there is little archaeological proof for his reconstruction. This staircase gave access to the Piano Nobile, where the Sanctuary of the Three Columns was situated.<sup>660</sup>

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<sup>654</sup> Cameron 1987; Boulotis 1987.

<sup>655</sup> Neopalatial date: Evans 1928, 734 –736; Final Palace (LMII) date: Peterson 1981, 39–40; Immerwahr 1990, 88–90 and 174–175; Hood 2000, 203–4; Mac Donald 2002, 39.

<sup>656</sup> Immerwahr 1990, 176; See also Macdonald 2005, 188.

<sup>657</sup> Günkel-Maschek 2011.

<sup>658</sup> Immerwahr 1990, 53; Hood 2005, 55; Mac Donald 2002, 38.

<sup>659</sup> Immerwahr 1990, 89.

<sup>660</sup> Hitchcock 2000, 76; Preziosi 1983, 93.

The “south west porch” that contained a stepped portico formed the southwestern entrance. An ascending stepped ramp west of the “South House” ran towards a more monumental entrance at the south west porch.<sup>661</sup> The south west porch was probably decorated with rosette and half-rosette relief.

The south entrance is situated at the “south porch” and gives in a more or less direct manner access to the central court.<sup>662</sup> The entrance at the south porch was situated on its west side. A raised walkway approached this entrance. In the earliest phase the south entrance gave direct access to the “south north corridor (2)” that ran straight into the central court. In a later phase, direct access from the south entrance to the north south corridor was blocked by a series of basement spaces. At that time a staircase led to the upper north south corridor that granted access towards the central court. Evans suggests that the north south corridor was used in processions from Juktas: “It is to be remembered that the southern entrance, with its cross-road to the bridge-head below, apart from the connection thus established with the great south road, opened on the natural route that pilgrim throngs or solemn processions would have taken – following doubtless a more direct hillpath in preference to the main high road – to the sanctuary of the Goddess on the heights of Juktas.”<sup>663</sup>

The archaeological evidence may suggest that the northsouth corridor was decorated and paved along the same lines as the corridor of the procession at the west entrance.<sup>664</sup> This evidence could prove that both the northsouth corridor, as well as the corridor at the western entrance were adorned with procession scenes. In the northsouth corridor the well-known fresco of the “Priest-King” is found, facing the people who moved in direction of the central court.

The Domestic quarter at Knossos has traditionally been considered as very inaccessible. The only access to this quarter was formed by the “Grand Staircase” leading from the

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<sup>661</sup> Evans 1928, 160–166; 1928, 759; 1928, 141.

<sup>662</sup> Evans 1928, 363–364, and 758–62.

<sup>663</sup> Evans 1928, 761.

<sup>664</sup> Evans (1928, 761): “There is reason, indeed, for believing that its whole course may have exhibited in an even more splendid form the processional scheme of decoration illustrated by the entrance corridor from the West.”

central court into the Domestic quarter by a series of descending flights of steps.<sup>665</sup> However, two relatively small entrances on the east side of the Palace (the east entrance and the east bastion) would have provided fairly direct access to this unit. The “East Bastion” consists of several flights of steps leading up towards the “east postern” (the highest point of the Bastion). At this point, a door gave access to a large corridor leading towards the “Court of the stone Spout”.<sup>666</sup> From there, the northern part of the Domestic quarter was fully accessible. These access point could be service entrances or entrances for people that were obliged to use the “back door” before they could start their job inside the Palace.<sup>667</sup>

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<sup>665</sup> Graham 1959, 47.

<sup>666</sup> Evans 1930, 233–44.

<sup>667</sup> During a ceremonial event, the elite could have taken these doors also, as they could enter the Palace without being seen by the rest of the community.

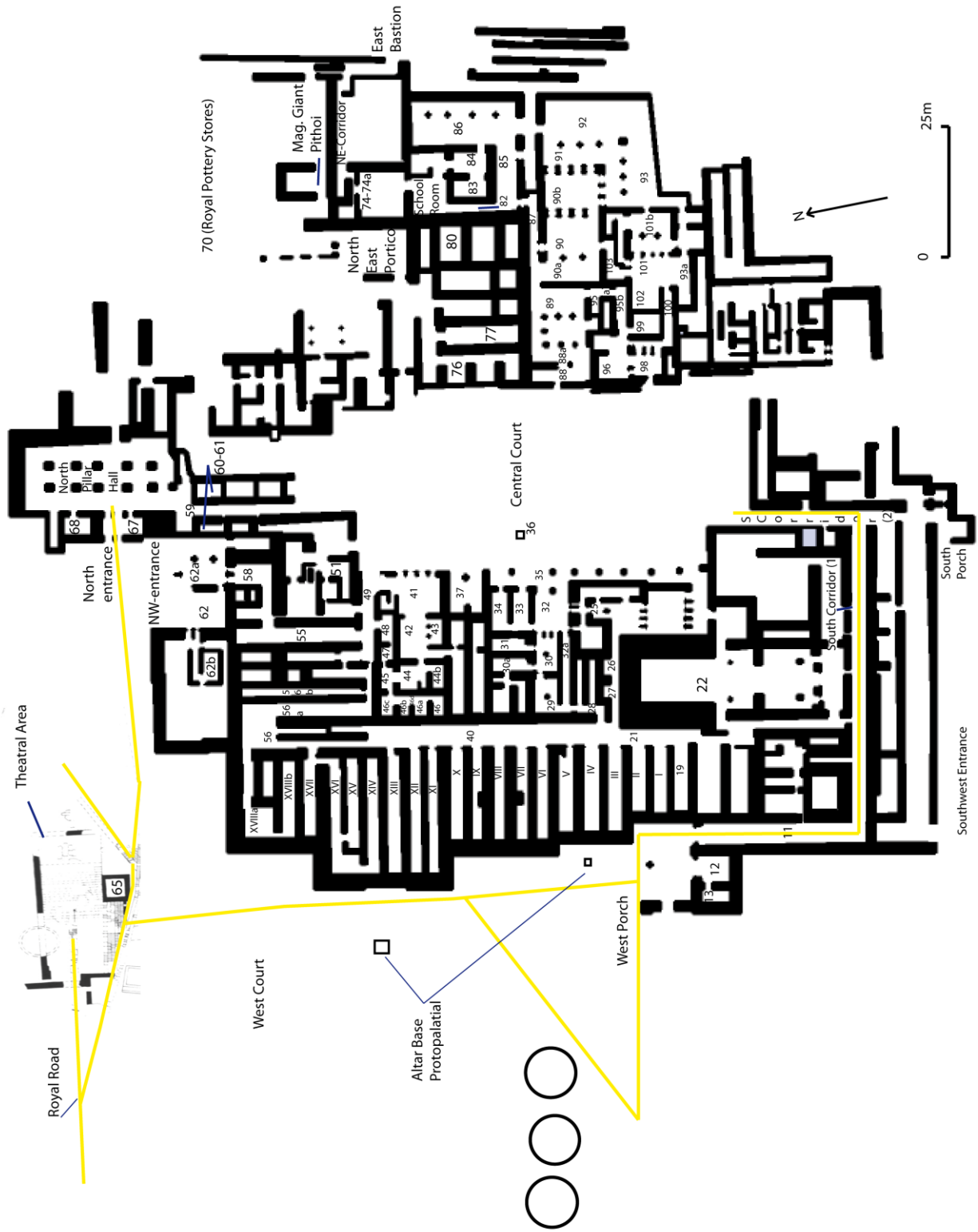


Figure 25 General Plan of Neopalatial Knossos

### 4.2.3. Malia: Internal Venues for Occasions and Description of the Palace (fig. 26)

#### 4.2.3.1. Chronology of the Site

Malia is located some forty-six kilometers from the modern city of Heraklion. The Greek archaeologist Joseph Hazzidakis initially excavated the Palace site of Malia in 1915. Malia was the third Palace to be discovered on Crete after Knossos and Phaistos, and it is also the third largest, measuring around eight thousand square meters. Eventually, the site was under the supervision of the L'Ecole Française d' Athènes.<sup>668</sup> In addition to the Palace site itself, there are a number of residential *quartiers* in the vicinity, which make Malia immediately one of the sites with the most research potential for the future.<sup>669</sup>

Though there was a Palace center at Malia in the Protopalatial period, there are no extent remains. Some soundings in the early nineties in the vicinity of the Neopalatial pillared hall (IX 1-2) revealed some traces of early structures dating to the EMII period.<sup>670</sup> The Protopalatial Palace was erected between EMIII B-MMIA. Pelon, who has been conducting soundings within the later Palace for many years, claims to have found evidence of an EMIII B-MMIA Palace (Protopalatial) at several places inside the building.<sup>671</sup> In the northwest part of the Palace (underneath quarter III) Pelon found traces of a large storage room (room beta) with a plastered floor and stucco platforms running around all the walls and down the center of the room. This room would have contained several storage vessels and collector vases were placed on the floor to catch liquids spilled from them. Room beta opened up onto a court surrounded by a portico. The later Neopalatial hypostyle hall (IX 1-2) had a Protopalatial predecessor existing out of a room with large wooden pillars on a stone basis.<sup>672</sup> Also the east magazines were constructed in the Protopalatial period.<sup>673</sup> Soundings underneath the Neopalatial central court revealed traces of a Protopalatial predecessor, which had a very similar dimensions and

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<sup>668</sup> Chapouthier and Joly 1936, 2-10.

<sup>669</sup> Van Effenterre 1980, 156.

<sup>670</sup> Hue and Pelon 1992, 31; Pelon 1993, 546.

<sup>671</sup> For a detailed reading, see Pelon 1982, 80-81; 1986; 1993, 544-546; 2005, 189.

<sup>672</sup> Hue and Pelon 1992; 1992b ; Pelon 1993.

<sup>673</sup> Pelon 1992, 46.

orientations as the Neopalatial one.<sup>674</sup> An earthquake would cause widespread destruction throughout the building in MM IIB.<sup>675</sup> It is in the MM III period that one sees the first attempts to built the Neopalatial Palace at Malia.<sup>676</sup> However, the earliest period between MMIII and LMIA is poorly understood. The main period of the Palace was probably LMIA, with a second phase of repairs and alterations in LMIA-LMIB. It is generally accepted that the building gets destroyed in LMIB, around 1450 BCE.<sup>677</sup>

#### 4.2.3.2. The Minoan Hall or Residential Quarter in the West Wing

On its west side, the northwest court at Malia gave access to a more or less square room (IV2a-b) that channeled circulation to “Le quartier d’apparat” or the political and residential heart of the Palace (quarter III).<sup>678</sup> In the center of quarter III we find a Minoan hall (III7a-b-c) in its canonical form with a major centerpiece, a vestibule and a light well.<sup>679</sup> The floor of the Minoan hall was paved with irregular blocks of marble and its form resembles strongly the hall of the double axes at Knossos.<sup>680</sup> The main unit was equipped with pier-and-door partitions and on the north and the east side of the hall a portico was constructed that existed out of six columns in the north and respectively two on the east side of unit IV1.<sup>681</sup> Most of the other units in this quarter (IV3, IV4, IV5, IV6 and IVa-b) are corridors or vestibules the purpose of which is to block or ensure circulation between the different rooms in this complex, which makes the Minoan hall a difficult place to reach. The area of the Minoan hall is strongly isolated since in order to reach it from the central court one had to pass the paved corridor to continue to the north and to arrive in the northwestern court. Only from this court one could access the system of vestibules and corridors (quarter IV) that in the end gave access to quarter III.

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<sup>674</sup> Pelon 2005, 188.

<sup>675</sup> Pelon 2005, 189-190.

<sup>676</sup> Pelon 2005, 190.

<sup>677</sup> Van Effenterre 1980, 42.

<sup>678</sup> For a detailed description of all the units, see Pelon 1980, 100-123.; Also Pelon 2002, 112-113.

<sup>679</sup> Pelon 1980, 110-112.

<sup>680</sup> Pelon 1980, 111.

<sup>681</sup> Pelon 1980, 113-115.

From the central part of the Minoan hall, access could be gained to unit III1 through a corridor that was paved in the same way as the hall. Unit III1 gave access to units III2 and unit III4, which is a lustral basin.<sup>682</sup> At most of the Palaces the lustral basin could only be reached by throughpassing the Minoan hall. At Malia, the placement of the lustral basin is atypical because one was not obliged to pass through the Minoan hall. The Minoan hall could be avoided and the lustral basin could be reached by walking through the portico further into the vestibule (III1). The function of III5 and III6 is uncertain.<sup>683</sup> Unit III8 may have had a special function. Here a large column was found. According to Pelon this room should be classified as a small “Crypte ou salles cultuelles à pilier”<sup>684</sup> and had a ritual function.

The Malian Minoan hall complex truly is an isolated suite and therefore there is a close connection with what we saw at Knossos. At Knossos the principle Minoan halls are situated on a lower level than the central court and once inside the Palace could only be reached by descending the turned stairs of the Grand Staircase. Here also, the builders managed to create the impression of true physical distance for those who entered the building at the primary “public” entrances, just as is the case at Malia.

#### **4.2.3.3. The Pillar Crypt Complex in the West Wing**

Apart from the residential quarter the west wing comprises some other interesting units. Quarter VII has traditionally been considered as the second major locus in the west wing. Together with sector VI it forms a very interesting configuration. The real heart of complex VII are units VII 3-4, which is a pillar crypt. Units VII 1-2 are vestibules.<sup>685</sup>

Unit VII 3 had a bench on the south wall and in the pillar crypt itself (VII 4) two central columns were erected.<sup>686</sup> Units VII 13-14 and VII 7 constitute important passageways in

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<sup>682</sup> Gesell 1985, 105.

<sup>683</sup> Pelon 1980, 122.

<sup>684</sup> Pelon 1980, 123.

<sup>685</sup> Pelon 1980, 161.

<sup>686</sup> Pelon 1980, 164-165: both columns have been decorated with several inscriptions (signs) such as double axes, tridents and 8-pointed stars.; Also Gesell 1985, 105.



the quarter.<sup>687</sup> Units VII 8-9 were the main areas for the essential preparations for the rites which were performed in the pillar crypt itself.<sup>688</sup>

#### 4.2.3.4. Sanctuary Complex at the South Entrance

Directly to the east of the southern entrance there are two zones of the west wing with interesting configurations (XVII and XVIII). This complex was accessible through an opening in unit XVII 1 and also through a small entrance in unit XVIII1. Unit XVIII 1 was furnished with a bench at the south wall and small ritual vessels. The excavators concluded that this part of the complex was a sanctuary.<sup>689</sup> Unit XVIII2 can be considered as an annex of the sanctuary and contained a small dump wherein all the vessels were thrown when they got out of use.<sup>690</sup> A door separated XVIII3 and XVIII4, with unit XVIII4 being without any doubt a storeroom.<sup>691</sup> Next to this quarter a large block of silos/granaries (n°1-8) was found which seems to be accessible only from the exterior of the Palace.<sup>692</sup>

The description of all zones of the west wing illustrates the strong ritual connotation of this wing of the Palace.<sup>693</sup>

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<sup>687</sup> In unit VII 13 a flat stone decorated with little holes in the stone was found that is interpreted as a kernos, see Pelon 1980, 166.; Pelon 2002, 113 – 114.

<sup>688</sup> Unit VII 8 served as a kitchen with its bench and fireplace, see Pelon 1980, 171.

<sup>689</sup> Pelon 1980, 214 ; Pelon 2002, 114 ;

<sup>690</sup> Pelon (1980, 218-219): “Il s’agissait sans doute d’un dépotoir, où étaient entassés les vases cultuels mis hors d’usage dans la pièce principale, selon une pratique coutumière dans les religions orientales.”. Pelon 2002, 114.

<sup>691</sup> Pelon 1980, 219. ; Pelon 2002, 114.

<sup>692</sup> The entrance was granted through the west court and there was no possibility to enter the silos once inside the Palace, see Pelon 1980, 222; The walls of the northern magazine rooms (I) have incisions with following symbols: trident, stars, and double axes, see Pelon 1980, 227-235.

<sup>693</sup> Two other quarters are formed by the clusters XIX and XX. Very little is known about both sectors, but one of the shared opinions about this quarter is that they functioned primarily as supports for the upper storey of the building. Most material found in these sectors originated from the upper floors. The presence of stucco fragments in unit XIX7 falling from the upper floor levels is a good example (Pelon 1980, 156-159); Also more recently Pelon (1982, 65) : “Il est clair d’après l’aspect et l’organisation de ces pièces qu’elles ne sont en fait, avec leur forme très allongée, leurs contreforts régulièrement répartis, leurs communications étroites ou inexistantes, l’épaisseur anormale de leurs murs, que des pièces noyées dans les soubassements de l’édifice dont la fonction n’était guère que de supporter une architecture d’étage.”

#### **4.2.3.5. The Loggia**

The most prominent and characteristic unit of zone VI is “the Loggia” (VI 1) directly facing the central court. A network of small stairs connected all other units in the back and to the north of the loggia.<sup>694</sup> The loggia is entirely elevated above ground level and was equipped with four large stairs at the side that faces the central court. A remarkable observation: this unit is directly connected with all surrounding units at the sides, the back and the front. In the west there were 2 columns with at the back a small staircase that gave access to unit VI6. Just in front of the columns the excavators found a big piece of marble that has been interpreted as a libation table.

At Malia, the western façade was extremely “open” to the central court. The loggia, stairs with the kernos (unit XVI), stone platforms and bothros give at least the impression that the central court was actively used as a place for the execution of ritual performances.<sup>695</sup>

#### **4.2.3.6. The Hypostyle Hall at Malia, Complex XXVIII and the North Wing.**

The Hypostyle Hall of Malia is situated in the north wing of the Palace, just as was the case at Knossos. Apart from that, more divergences than similarities exist between them.

At Malia, this “banquet hall” consists of two main units (IX1 and IX2).<sup>696</sup> Both units have been arranged according to the “but and ben” type. Unit IX 1 was some form of anteroom or vestibule and was orientated northsouth. This unit was packed with plates, dishes, and cups indicating that it was used as a place for dining or maybe a pantry or cupboard for the storage of these ceramics.<sup>697</sup>

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<sup>694</sup> Pelon 1980, 171.

<sup>695</sup> Pelon 2002, 116.

<sup>696</sup> Pelon 1980, 184-191; Pelon 2002, 116.

<sup>697</sup> Pelon 1980, 190.

The second unit (IX 2) was “a hypostyle” hall with two rows of three square columns that were aligned in an east-west orientation.<sup>698</sup> The upper paved floor was reached by a double stairway (IX a,b). The two large thresholds between the columns of the portico in front of this architectural suite are interesting. One is situated in front of the paved corridor that connected the central court with the north court; the other one is aligned in front of the stairway that gives access to the upper floor area of unit IX. Since the thresholds both function as a clear boundary signal to delineate the transition of one area to the other, one could argue that access from the central court to the north wing (or vice versa), as well as access from the central court to the upper floor gathering area of unit IX was clearly demarcated and most probably not accessible to everyone. The suggestion of doors in the openings reinforces the possibility of controlling access throughout the building.

Two interconnected courts, i.e. the north and northwest court, dominated circulation in the north wing. The paved north court was accessible through both entrances in the north wing. On three sides a portico with round columns bordered it. On the west side this court was equipped with a drain for the evacuation of water, the trace of which can be followed to the north entrance.<sup>699</sup> The northwest court with a length of 18,7 m and 12.3 m wide is situated to the southwest of the north court.<sup>700</sup> The west wall of this court has been preserved poorly but gives the impression that at least the part facing the court was well decorated<sup>701</sup> The north side of the court was probably equipped with a portico, which gave access to unit XXVIII 2b<sup>702</sup>. At the south the court gave access to unit V.<sup>703</sup>

Another sector in the north that deserves to be briefly discussed is sector XXVIII, which faces the north entrance to the south.<sup>704</sup> The most northern unit was room XXVIII1, and

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<sup>698</sup> Pelon 1980, 186; Pelon 2002, 116.

<sup>699</sup> The later “Batiment Oblique” (XXIII) was constructed after the destruction of the Palace and is therefore not considered in this description. The north court measures 19,7m in length and is 10 m wide, see Pelon 1980, 78-84.

<sup>700</sup> Pelon 1980, 84.

<sup>701</sup> Pelon (1980, 84): “Le mur ouest est [...] malheureusement assez dégradé aujourd’hui. Avec le mur sud de la cour centrale, il est le seul à l’intérieur du palais à présenter des décrochements décoratifs.”

<sup>702</sup> Pelon 1980, 86.

<sup>703</sup> Pelon 1980, 87.

<sup>704</sup> For a detailed description of all units, see Pelon 1980, 88-91. The sector measures 14m by 8m.

to the south three other rooms were accessible XXVIII2-4. Because of the building activity inside these units it is very difficult to create a clear picture of what the rooms looked like when they were in use. What is clear, however, is that unit XXVIII1 was accessed through a door with a large threshold (0.78m x 0.32m) and that it was divided in two parts by a solid wall construction. XXVIII1 had benches around the sides of all walls.<sup>705</sup> XXVIII 2 was divided in two distinct parts. The north part XXVIII 2a comprised a large pithos decorated with spirals and lilies.<sup>706</sup> Room XXVIII 2b was accessed by two little stairs from the northeast court. The functioning of these units remains uncertain. Some argue that they formed a sanctuary, others describe them as a storage room for olive oil and the treatment of olives.<sup>707</sup>

The northern magazines (XXVII) are divided in three different parts and form a rectangle of 22 by 8 m.<sup>708</sup> The first unit is XXVII1 and is directly accessible from the court in front of it. The other units XXVII 2-3 were also accessible through the court and a small entrance in the northeast corridor leading directly to the northeast entrance accessed units XXVII 4-6.<sup>709</sup>

Units XXIV, XXV and XXVI functioned as a quarter for domestic activities.<sup>710</sup> Unit XXV2 has a bench on the south wall with vessels on it. In XXV3 several vessels were positioned along the walls in one of which carbonized grains were found.<sup>711</sup> XXIV2 is considered as a storeroom. In room XXV1 an oven was reconstructed in the northwest corner, denoting that this area was probably a kitchen area.<sup>712</sup> Because of the close connection of the quarter with the northern magazines, there are numerous reasons to believe that the domestic quarter served for storage and preparation of food.<sup>713</sup> Unit XXII3 forms a staircase giving access to the sottoscala XXII1 that, in turn, gave direct

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<sup>705</sup> Pelon 1980, 88-89.

<sup>706</sup> Pelon 1980, 89.

<sup>707</sup> For a thorough discussion, see Pelon 1980, 91.

<sup>708</sup> Pelon 1980, 91-94.

<sup>709</sup> The interpretation of these units as magazines is based on the numerous finds of rough ceramic vessels and a grinding stone in unit XXVII5, see Pelon 1980, 92.

<sup>710</sup> Pelon 1980, 94-96.

<sup>711</sup> Pelon 1980, 96.

<sup>712</sup> Pelon 1980, 96.

<sup>713</sup> Pelon 1980, 96.

access to unit XXII2. Unit XXII2 probably served also as a storage room.<sup>714</sup> Sector V exists of two different units that share a common vestibule giving direct access or being accessed from the northwest court through two stairs.<sup>715</sup> The entrance to sector V itself was marked by a large threshold (1.45m by 0.55m). These units were deposit rooms.<sup>716</sup>

#### **4.2.3.7. The Hall and Other Units in the East Wing at Malia**

The east wing of Malia comprises sectors X, XI, XII, and XIII. Sector X is situated in the north side of the east wing and in reality is not one solid quarter. This sector is divided in two separate parts with Unit X4 and X1 in the north and X2 and X3 to the south.<sup>717</sup>

Unit X4 is a large hall and X1 constitutes a strongly compartmentalized space. According to the excavators, X1 consisted of different spaces for gatherings that could be closed off from each other by using small portable closing elements. Traditionally, the units inside X1 were interpreted as kitchens, but this hypothesis is rather implausible since no real installations or archaeological material are found to confirm this.<sup>718</sup> Pelon has argued that these spaces were storage spaces for vessels that served the activities on the upper floor of the Palace.<sup>719</sup> Unit X2 formed a real hall paved with schist slabs. Unit X3 has been created at a later stage. Originally unit X2 was one large hall; later the decision was made to build a wall on the west side in north-south direction thus creating a new unit: X3.<sup>720</sup>

South of unit X3 we find a large complex of units, XI, which has traditionally been interpreted as the major storage area of Malia.<sup>721</sup> This complex consisted of six similarly formed units (XI2-XI7). A corridor on the west side granted access to the different magazines and was entered through the central court. The eastern magazines were used in two successive phases. In a first phase, they had a drainage system and contained small and medium sized vases for the collection of fluids and nourishment embedded in stucco

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<sup>714</sup> Pelon 1980, 123-128.

<sup>715</sup> Pelon 1980, 98-99 ; Pelon 2002, 116-117.

<sup>716</sup> Pelon 1980, 99.

<sup>717</sup> Pelon 1980, 192.

<sup>718</sup> Pelon 1980, 196.

<sup>719</sup> Pelon 1980, 196.

<sup>720</sup> Pelon 1980, 197-198.

<sup>721</sup> Pelon 2002, 117-118.

platforms.<sup>722</sup> In some of the vases the excavators recovered the rests of burned grains that could show a change in the use of the magazines. These magazines had as primary function the storage of fluids and nourishment for the Palace.<sup>723</sup>

Block XII also was a storage area.<sup>724</sup> Sector XIII had a similar function since in this block luxury goods were stored.<sup>725</sup>

#### 4.2.3.8. Courts of the Palace

Malia had several internal courts, of which the north and northwest court have already been mentioned. As a Minoan Palace *pur sang*, Malia, just like Knossos and Phaistos, also had a west court (an esplanade) and a central court. The central court of Malia is not perfectly rectangular in that all sides differ slightly in length. The central court of Malia measures 47.85m west, 48.27 east, 22.39 north, and 23.10 south.<sup>726</sup> According to the excavators several superposing pavings can be recognized in the central court.<sup>727</sup> The fact that the central court did not change during these re-pavements means that the central court shows a strong continuity of place in time.

At the central court at some places large slabs were found, of which we can suppose that they were intentionally placed at these places. A first one is situated in the southeast corner; the second is situated in the northeast. Both large slabs are situated in front of an entrance going towards other units of the complex around the central court, respectively unit IX a-b and X 1. It may be argued that these slabs both form large thresholds that mark the passage from the central court to each of these spaces. At the west side of the central court, in front of units VI 3-4, there is a paved zone of almost perfect rectangular form. Both its form and functioning are the subject of controversy. Some meters to the south of the small paved platform the excavators found a limestone ball. Both elements,

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<sup>722</sup> Pelon 2002, 118.

<sup>723</sup> Pelon 1980, 203.

<sup>724</sup> Pelon 2002, 118.

<sup>725</sup> Pelon (1980, 206) on the other hand argues that this quarter constitutes the residential quarter of the Palace.

<sup>726</sup> Pelon 1980, 128.

<sup>727</sup> Pelon 1980, 129.

the platform and the limestone ball have been traditionally linked with the loggia (unit VI 1).<sup>728</sup> Almost perfectly in the centre of the central court there is a pit in the ground bordered at all sides with bricks that show strong traces of burning. This pit may have served as a place for ritual burning and is often called “bothros”<sup>729</sup>. Based on the description it is more than obvious that all these elements in the central court have functioned during performances as an important setting.

This brings the description to the different facades surrounding the central court. The facades are all different in form and elaboration but each façade represents the grandeur that is expected of the central court.<sup>730</sup> To the north a simple colonnade bordered the central court. The western façade is with ease the most elaborated façade of all and is the only façade at which all units directly connect to the central court. The most impressive construction that gave out to the central court was the loggia, already discussed higher in this description. At the south side of the western façade some large stairs are situated, often interpreted as a theatral stand for some form of cult.<sup>731</sup> The functional interpretation of the stairs as theatral stand is a result of their close connection to units XVII and XVI2. Unit XVII was accessible through the stairs and was equipped with a

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<sup>728</sup> Pelon (1980, 130): “Même si ce rapprochement peut être l’effet d’une simple coïncidence, il faut noter qu’elle est placée à égale distance du dallage et de la base qui sépare en deux parties égales l’escalier de la loggia. Ainsi se trouve définie une aire triangulaire dont le rôle devra être précisé dans l’étude de la pièce VI 1 qui lui est incontestablement liée et sans doute expliquée l’orientation aberrante, par rapport à l’ensemble palatial, du dallage qui la borde au Nord.”; Pelon 1980, 85: Plate 84. ; Pelon 2002, 116 : « L’espace situé en face de la ‘loggia’ est marqué à la fois par le dallage rectangulaire déjà mentionné et par la boule à cupule ; si l’on ne peut être catégorique sur la fonction exacte de ces deux éléments, il n’en est pas moins évident que l’espace ainsi délimité jouait un rôle particulier dans le déroulement de cérémonies en relation avec la ‘loggia’. »

<sup>729</sup> Pelon 1980, 131-133 ; Pelon 1980, 130 : « Dès lors, ne faut-il pas supposer que cette fosse sacrificielle n’a été utilisée que pour une cérémonie particulière ou encore pour un cycle de cérémonies limité dans le temps et, au lieu d’en faire une des caractéristiques de l’architecture du palais, ne doit on pas la considérer comme un dispositif spécial, créé pour des raisons purement occasionnelles. »; Pelon 2002, 115 and 117.

<sup>730</sup> Pelon (1980, 133): “Les quatre facades qui donnent sur la cour présentent un aspect bien différent selon les cotes, mais toutes ont une ordonnance majestueuse qui fait de la cour centrale le coeur de l’édifice palatial.” ; Pelon 2002, 115-116.

<sup>731</sup> Pelon, 1980, 133-135; Pelon 2002, 114-115.

bench in the west and a stone-offering table (kernos) in the middle, probably a bench sanctuary.<sup>732</sup> Unit XVI2 probably formed an annex of unit XVII1.

The other facades were separated from the central court by a retaining wall, a colonnade or a real stoa. The southern façade was decorated with marbles and formed a solid façade without openings.<sup>733</sup> The south entrance forms the only opening in the south façade.<sup>734</sup> The east façade of the central court existed of a stoa formed by circular and square columns.<sup>735</sup> The portico was accessible in two ways. The first entrance was situated in the southeast at the southeast entrance; the second is situated in unit X 2 (between the wall of X3 and the south wall of X2), where a small door gave access to the portico and the central court connected to it.<sup>736</sup>

The west court at Malia looked slightly different from the courts at Knossos and Phaistos. At Malia it actually forms an “esplanade” at the west side of the Palace running over the entire trace of the western façade. It ran about 100m north south and had a width of more than 20 m east west. Its limits coincide with the Hypostyle Crypt in the north and with the magazines in the south.<sup>737</sup> The entire esplanade was paved with little blocks of “kalderim”. At Malia, like at Knossos and Phaistos, the western esplanade was equipped with raised walkways in order to facilitate circulation on the kalderim paving. At the west court, this major pathway ran in north-south direction. At the south end of the façade this walkway runs towards the large magazines and ends right in front of them. This walkway, conserved over a trace of 13.4 m, was paved with white slabs and ca. 1.05 m wide.<sup>738</sup> In the north this walkway penetrates the Palace at the north entrance.

A small part of a second walkway was discovered running in east-south-east direction, towards the silos. It seems that both walkways ended up in some form of triangle where

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<sup>732</sup> Gesell 1985, 105.; Pelon 2002, 116.

<sup>733</sup> Pelon 1980, 154-156.

<sup>734</sup> Pelon 1980, 154.

<sup>735</sup> Pelon 1980, 150-154.

<sup>736</sup> Pelon 1980, 150-151.

<sup>737</sup> Pelon 1980, 44.

<sup>738</sup> Pelon 1980, 45.



all roads came together: the one coming from the town, that from the Palace and that from the silos.<sup>739</sup>

#### 4.2.3.9. The Malian Entrance-System<sup>740</sup>

The Palace of Malia had at least five entrances and one other is still matter of debate. One of the primary entrances at Malia was situated southwest of the central court. This southern entrance was about 5,5 – 5,57 m wide, 15,5 m long and had a paved floor of “Aspropeta” large blocks of which were laid down in eleven horizontal bands.<sup>741</sup> The south entrance is considered as the “Grande entrée du Palais”<sup>742</sup>. Additionally, this entrance was equipped with a large schist threshold of 1,75m wide and a porter’s lodge for the guard. It is clear that this entrance was highly elaborated. This entrance connected directly the outside with the central court. A ‘bench sanctuary’ bordered the south entrance where the famous kernos was found (room XVI 1).<sup>743</sup>

The north entrance appears to be the second major entrance to the Palace.<sup>744</sup> At this entrance two distinct construction phases can be recognized. In the earlier phase the entrance was very open, uncontrolled and about 6.45 m wide. In a second phase a large threshold of 2.8 m wide was added to mark the entrance. The entrance could be closed off by means of a double door the doorjamb of which was recovered. The second vestibule behind this double door also had a threshold of 1.8 m wide. What is remarkable is that a raised walkway penetrates the building through the north entrance and that both the vestibules and the entire route towards the central court were paved with sederopetra. This paving stops abruptly at the central court. The northern entrance with its form of a chicane can be regarded as one of or maybe even the “most monumental entrance” to the Palace.<sup>745</sup> In the case of large events both the north and south entrance could serve as the

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<sup>739</sup> Pelon 1980, 46.

<sup>740</sup> See Adams 2007, 363 and 364, fig. 2.

<sup>741</sup> Pelon 1980, 75-77.

<sup>742</sup> Pelon 1980, 75.

<sup>743</sup> On the south entrance, see Van Effenterre 1980, 61–63; Gesell 1985, 105; Pelon 2002, 116.

<sup>744</sup> Pelon 1980, 67-72.

<sup>745</sup> Pelon 1980, 71-72; Pelon 1982, 60-61.

main public entrances. The closer position of the north entrance to the western esplanade speaks in favor of the view that the north entrance was the primary public entrance.

The northeast entrance is totally different from the one in the north. This entrance formed no chicane but a straight corridor of about 2.1m wide and was equipped with a rudimentary preserved threshold. The floor was not paved but instead consisted of stamped earth. During LM times, this part was entirely reconstructed with robust walls. The circulation pattern changed considerably in LM times. This entrance is traditionally interpreted as a service entrance.<sup>746</sup>

The southeast entrance is connected to a street coming from “Quarter Zeta” and consists of a rectangular corridor of 2.70-2.80m wide.<sup>747</sup> Two different phases may be distinguished for this entrance. In a first phase this corridor was demarcated by two monolithic thresholds at both the west and east end. In a second phase, the western threshold was replaced by a wooden door, of which the doorjambs were recovered.<sup>748</sup> Outside the southeast entrance a base was found that was probably used for placing a flagpole.<sup>749</sup>

At Malia, another direct entrance of ca. 1.0m wide gave access to shrine XVIII, next to the south entrance.<sup>750</sup> Gesell labeled this a bench sanctuary complex<sup>751</sup> with storerooms in analogy with what she had seen at Phaistos. However, Van Effenterre puts forward that the layout of the sanctuary was not practical to receive votives.<sup>752</sup> One room, unit XVIII1 in this sanctuary was paved with slabs. The presence of the bench and paved floor renders this unit the most important room in the complex. The west entrance of the Palace, if there really was an entrance in the western façade, certainly is the most modest entrance

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<sup>746</sup> Graham 1987, 44; Pelon 1980, 72.

<sup>747</sup> Pelon 1980, 72-75.

<sup>748</sup> Pelon 1980, 73.

<sup>749</sup> Pelon 1980, 74.

<sup>750</sup> In the end, it is not certain if the opening in the wall was really an entrance or a window. Nevertheless this space was intended to create visibility or to make circulation possible, see Van Effenterre 1980, 445-446.

<sup>751</sup> Gesell 1985, 106.

<sup>752</sup> The placement of the bench was in his opinion poorly done; Van Effenterre (1980, 446): “En tout cas, elle était trop basse et mal placée près de l’entrée pour recevoir images de culte ou offrandes.”

of the entire building. At the western façade there is a small opening of no more than 1.2m wide between spaces III5 – III6, and I6. Because of its small dimensions, Pelon doubted that the opening really was an intended entrance or simply a block that disappeared during conservation.<sup>753</sup> A bench flanked this entrance. It should be noted that doors could close off all entrances.

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<sup>753</sup> Pelon (1980, 56): “La banquette s’interrompt au Nord de l’embrasure à la hauteur de l’extrémité sud du mur et reprend en direction de l’Ouest le long du mur nord du redan I. L’espace laissé vide, qui n’est que de 1.2 m, pourrait représenter la longueur d’un bloc disparu.”; Further discussion on the west entrance, see Van Effenterre 1987, 87; Graham 1979, 57; Preziosi 1983, 109; Driessen 1997, 76-77.

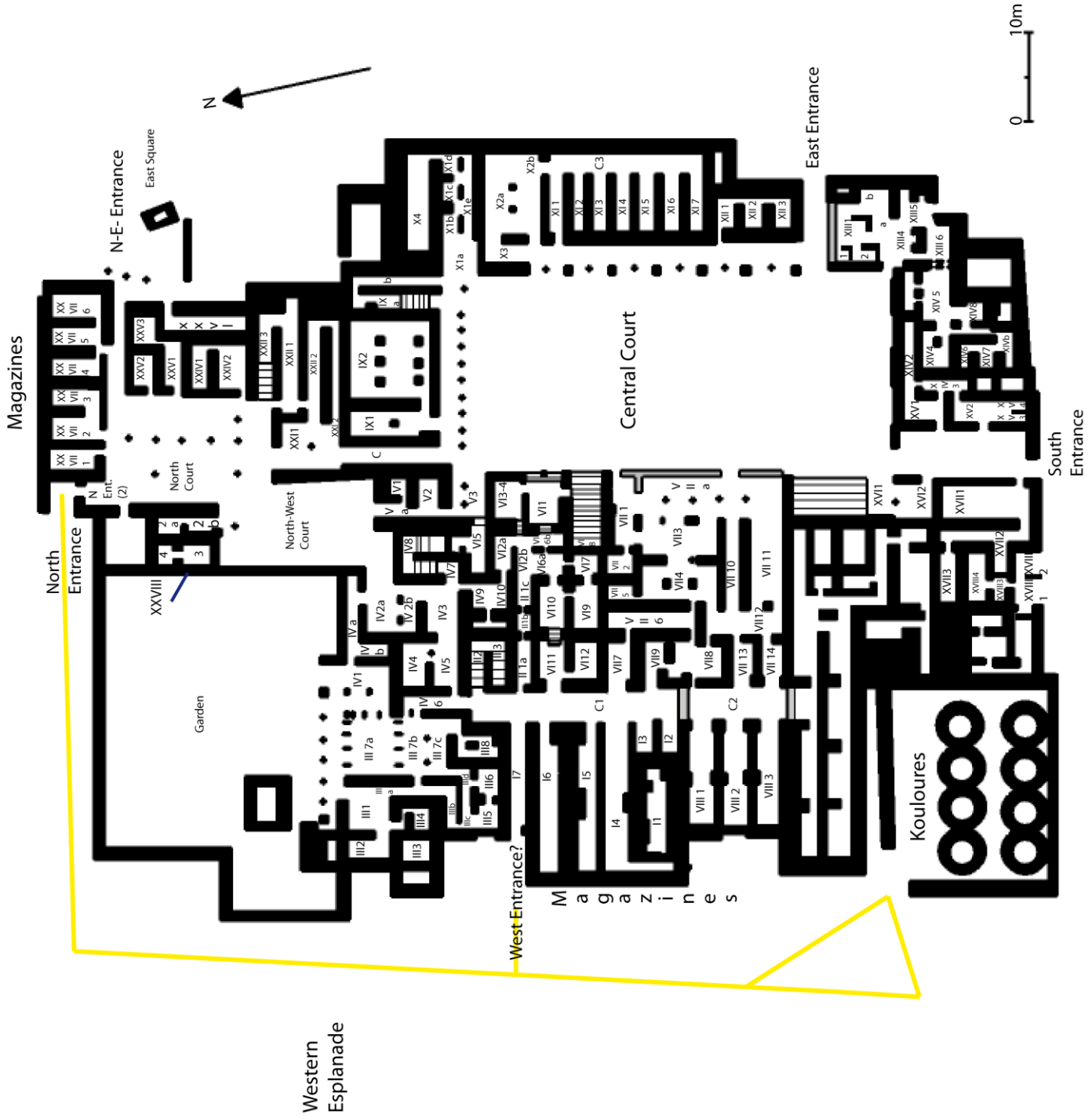


Figure 26 General Plan of Neopalatial Malia

#### 4.2.4. Phaistos: Internal Venues for Occasions and Description of the Palace (fig.27)

##### 4.2.4.1. Chronology of the Site

The Palace at Phaistos is situated at the eastern edge of a large hill overlooking the Mesara Valley, within direct sight of the peak sanctuary of Mount Ida. Research showed that this hill had a continuous occupation from the EM period to the Hellenistic, with two successive Palace centers having been constructed in the Protopalatial and Neopalatial periods. The Neopalatial Palace is the best-known architectural face, however, the southeastern quarter is badly known because this part fell away in antiquity.<sup>754</sup> Savignoni started the first excavations in 1899 in the southwest corner of the Palace. The next year, systematic excavation of the Palace site began under the direction of L. Pernier, which uncovered most of the Palace itself by 1909. The initial excavations ended and publication of the site occurred between 1928 and 1932. In the 1950's excavations resumed under the direction of D. Levi in order to procure an in-depth study of the material and the different architectural phases of the site.<sup>755</sup>

The first real constructions of the Protopalatial Palace were carried out in MM IA and at MMIB the first Palace of Phaistos appears.<sup>756</sup> The western quarter of the Protopalatial Palace at Phaistos is best preserved in the archaeological record. This area includes the western terraces, the traces of the western façade of the Protopalatial Palace, a series of adjacent small (storage) rooms, a central court, a shrine, a west court with a theatral area on its northern side and four *kouloures*, to the south. The Protopalatial Palace had a strong north-south orientation with all different units concentrated around several paved courts.<sup>757</sup>

The west court existed out of 2 larger parts connected with each other through a stairway. Above the “lower west court” that contained the theatral area, the “west upper court” was

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<sup>754</sup> La Rosa 1985, 78; Preziosi and Hitchcock 1999, 65-66.

<sup>755</sup> La Rosa 1985, 79-87.

<sup>756</sup> La Rosa 2004.

<sup>757</sup> Shaw 1973b, 50-51.

situated.<sup>758</sup> The theatral area existed out of twelve stairs and was fully integrated with the raised walkways that ran up the theatral area and that formed a triangle in the lower west court in front of the western façade of the Palace. One branch of the raised walkways ran right through the primary entrance (Room II) of the Protopalatial Palace, which was marked by a central column.<sup>759</sup> A closer look to the units of rooms behind the façade shows that much of them contained small benches where vessels and foodstuffs were placed and stocked. Whatever happened at these places, it seems that the activities here had nothing to do with the purpose of the visit of the visitor. From this phase the most remarkable finds are lots of fragments of Kamares style pottery and a large archive of over 7500 sealings and linear A tablets.<sup>760</sup> This archive was found underneath room 25 of the Neopalatial Palace. The Protopalatial Palace was destroyed at the end of MMIIB. At the end of MM IIB, the first palace was destroyed and traditionally they placed the beginnings of the construction of the second palace in MM III, its actual completion to the end of LMI A.<sup>761</sup> After the destructions at the end of the Protopalatial period, likely due to earthquakes, the Old Palace was covered by a cement surface and built over by the New Palace.<sup>762</sup>

The construction of the Neopalatial Palace is a complex process of building activities accompanied with periods of non-activity and desertion.<sup>763</sup> Most of the central terrace of the west court is entirely repaved. The kouloures and walkways disappeared because of the new pavement and the theatral area was reduced to four steps instead of twelve. Another interesting observation is the repositioning of the western façade with 7-8m to the east, which resulted in an increased size of the west court.

Recently, La Rosa proposed a different sequence of events that contrast with the traditional chronology.<sup>764</sup> La Rosa agrees that the first palace was destroyed in MMIIB

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<sup>758</sup> La Rosa 1992, 234 and 240; Preziosi 1983, 122.

<sup>759</sup> Preziosi 1983, 124.

<sup>760</sup> Myers et al. 1992, 234.

<sup>761</sup> Carinci 1989; Myers 1992, 195 ; La Rosa 1992, 234; 2002, 74 and 82.

<sup>762</sup> Immerwahr 1990, 9.

<sup>763</sup> For detailed information about the re-examination of the data, see La Rosa 2002, 82-87.

<sup>764</sup> La Rosa's (2002, 82) remarks are based on the reexamination of the cement 'Astraki' surface covering the Protopalatial Palace for the construction of the New Palace and on the building activities at Haghia Triada.

with a series of levelling operations immediately thereafter, however, for reasons unknown, there seems to be a brief interruption in construction till MM IIIA. After a period of non-activity, people restart constructional activities but it seems that the site was abandoned soon again. It took ultimately till LM I B to finish the construction of the second Palace as it appears to us today.<sup>765</sup> At the end of LM I B the palace of Phaistos was finally abandoned.<sup>766</sup> In support of his Neopalatial chronology, La Rosa highlighted the complete absence of LM IA deposits inside the second palace and stressed the fact it was impossible to distinguish with certainty two distinct Neopalatial phases within the complex.<sup>767</sup>

Further there was a remarkable difference in the development of Phaistos and Haghia Triada during the LM IA and LM I B periods. The role of Phaistos and Haghia Triada would have been significantly different in LM IA and LM IB. Unlike Agia Triada, Phaistos was absent of tablets and contained few material indicating storage.<sup>768</sup> Of the

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<sup>765</sup> La Rosa 2002, 82- 83 : « [...] sur une étendue sûrement moindre par rapport au projet initial documenté par la plate-forme d'*astraki*. Au minimum, tout le secteur sud-ouest du premier palais (là où l'*astraki* fut ôté par Levi), fut en effet laissé libre de toute construction. Enlèvement, au même moment, d'une partie de la coulée d'*astraki* qui gênait (ou n'était pas nécessaire à la construction du nouvel édifice) [...] Ensevelissement, dans le même projet, de l'espace de la cour du théâtre, jusqu'à atteindre le seuil du nouveau sol. »

<sup>766</sup> Destruction by fire is mentioned but we do not exclude the concurrent existence of a seismic event, see La Rosa 2002, 88 and 99.

<sup>767</sup> La Rosa 2002, 83-87 : « Il faut donner un sens différent aux réfections partielles ou aux changements concernant les passages entre certaines pièces du palais : ils semblent avoir eu une importance relative, éventuellement interprétables comme modifications en cours de réalisation du projet. [...] Enfin, les réfections des enduits sur les parois [...] ne nous semblent guère déterminantes pour affirmer la présence de deux moments architecturaux distincts. [...] Le réexamen rapide des structures que nous venons d'effectuer ne fournit donc pas de preuves indéniables pour admettre l'existence de deux phases du MR I. [...] Il reste la situation inhérente au secteur de la cour 90, où l'élément ayant entraîné les ajouts et les changements est probablement représenté par l'installation du four à poterie, insuffisant toutefois pour justifier une phase architecturale concernant la totalité du palais. »

<sup>768</sup> A vast quantity of tablets was found at the Casa del Lebete in Haghia Triada. At Phaistos about 11 pithoi (whole or fragmentary) were found within the Palace of which more than half were found in unit 11, whereas Haghia Triada alone contained approximately 50 pieces. La Rosa 2002, 91-92: « Les trouvailles dans le remblais de la pièce 70 prouvent l'existence de denrées à l'étage supérieur ; mais le fait qu'il nous manque un point de comparaison pour le stockage dans le palais du MM IIIA (ou que ne soit attesté aucun dépôt du MR IA à l'intérieur de l'édifice), ne permet pas d'accepter l'hypothèse d'une diminution de l'emmagasinage pendant le MR IB. L'impression est plutôt celle d'un stockage inachevé, justement à cause de son caractère dérisoire par rapport aux espaces qui y étaient consacrés dans le quartier si bien organisé des magasins. »

material found at Phaistos, the three major deposits all contained ceramics mainly associated with rituals.<sup>769</sup>

Therefore, it seems that LMI A initiated the rise of Haghia Triada both on the administrative and political level:

« La villa d'Haghia Triada, en l'absence totale d'un palais à Phaistos (mais aussi avec des témoignages réduits pour l'habitat), représenterait [...] le coeur politique et administratif de la région (même si, rappelons-le, les archives en linéaire A se rapportent à la période suivante). Le MR IA, donc, et non pas le MR IB, aurait été pour Phaistos une sorte de 'unsettled period'. »<sup>770</sup>

In LMI B, the dynamic between the two centers is challenged, however, it stays uncertain whether or not Phaistos was able to reclaim its importance in the region:

« La période MR IB (et, en tout cas, la situation historique après l'éruption de Santorin), ferait enregistrer d'importantes variations, dont certaines incompatibles dans notre région avec les conditions de 'déclin' et d'anarchie récemment proposées. [...] La nouveauté étonnante est représentée par la reconstruction à une échelle monumentale du palais de Phaistos et par la reprise de l'habitat, ce qui ne va certainement pas dans le sens d'une diminution de la population. [...] Dans notre scénario local, il reste encore néanmoins plusieurs points obscurs, représentés en premier lieu par la profonde différence entre les couches de destruction de Phaistos et d'Haghia Triada, différence qui ne peut simplement s'expliquer par les épisodes architecturaux postérieurs. Nous avons l'impression que le processus de 'restauration' politique à Phaistos était resté inachevé, en grande partie parce que la capitale administrative de la région se serait maintenue à Haghia Triada. »<sup>771</sup>

For these reasons, a description of the Palace of Phaistos in the Neopalatial period is not an easy venture. In some parts of the Palace, the traces of the Protopalatial Palace are used as foundations or integrated in the new one, which makes a clear distinction between the two successive stages sometimes very difficult. In contrast to Malia, where Minoan halls and internal gathering spaces were kept to a minimum at ground level, Phaistos devotes plenty of space to assembly. Minoan hall systems occur in the north and the east wing and are accompanied by lustral basins. Two more lustral basins were found

<sup>769</sup> La Rosa 2002, 87 n. 92 and 88 n. 94-97.

<sup>770</sup> La Rosa 2002, 94.

<sup>771</sup> La Rosa 2002, 94-95.



in the west wing. Additionally, there are several other units in the building that were suitable for small or large-scale gatherings.

#### 4.2.4.2. The North Minoan Hall System or “Residential Quarter”

It is rather complex to describe the north wing of Phaistos in general because of the numerous units of this wing. Several corridors (nr. 41, 56 and 58) control the circulation between the different units of this wing and between the central court and the north wing itself. The north wing of the Palace is traditionally referred to as the “King’s and Queen’s Megaron” (nr. 77-79, 50-51). The north Domestic quarter (nr. 50-51, 77-86) and its annexes could only be accessed through a vestibule (nr. 75) that was connected to staircase 39 that connected this vestibule with the central court and by corridor 41 that gave out onto staircase 42-43. Vestibule 75 gave access to a peristyle court (nr. 74) that was completely open in the center. This space probably served as a banquet area (nr. 75-74-93) for private gatherings.<sup>772</sup> The neighbouring rooms (nr. 44-46) probably served as storage spaces for some kind of banquet hall at the floor above.<sup>773</sup> To access this storage space, one had to pass corridor 41 running through the middle of the beautifully elaborated façade facing the central court. Corridor 41 is paved with large white irregular marble slabs and on the east side it has a channel running through it lengthwise.<sup>774</sup> The corridor had a little niche close to the central court at the west side that was elaborately decorated with geometrical motives.<sup>775</sup> According to Graham, this place functioned as a porters lodge for the guard because it controls circulation towards and from the central court (42-43).<sup>776</sup>

Possibly a stairway (nr. 76) was situated in the rear part of the peristyle court in the north wing giving access to the Domestic quarter and connecting the two “Megara” complexes with each other (nr. 50-51 and nr. 77-86). Spaces 79-78-77 formed the largest Minoan

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<sup>772</sup> Pernier and Banti 1951, 237.

<sup>773</sup> Pernier and Banti 1951, 246-247; Graham 1962, 38-39 and 125-128; Preziosi 1983, 134; These rooms date back to the First Palatial Period and were fully integrated in the Second Palace.

<sup>774</sup> Pernier and Banti 1951, 56-62.

<sup>775</sup> Graham 1962, 37-38.

<sup>776</sup> Graham 1970, 232-234; Pernier and Banti 1951, 222-224.

hall, which gave access towards a portico (nr. 85) to the north. The Minoan hall has the following arrangement: inner hall (nr. 79), portico (nr. 85), and light well (nr. 78).<sup>777</sup> A dogleg corridor on the west connects it to an anteroom (nr. 81), lustral basin and toilet or room with drain (nr. 82-83).<sup>778</sup> Unit 81 and 83 were decorated with frescoes and paved with gypsum.<sup>779</sup> The Minoan hall directly to the south of the largest Minoan hall consisted of a benched hall, a portico, a light well, a second portico and a rear hall. These rooms were paved with gypsum panels of red stucco. Fragments of the wall reveal some interesting motifs, which proves that the walls were decorated with floral, vegetal and probably also geometric motifs.<sup>780</sup>

#### 4.2.4.3. The Minoan Hall System in the East Wing

A possible southeast entrance gave direct access to another peristyle court (nr. 64).<sup>781</sup> Graham and Preziosi argue that a garden was installed here.<sup>782</sup> The column bases were immediately placed on the rock and a floor of plaster was laid down in this courtyard. A double door in the northwestern corner gave access to the main room 63. This room formed a Minoan hall divided in two parts (nr. 63a-63b) that were set apart by a set of double doors.<sup>783</sup> Room 63b gave access to the central court and the other rooms in the quarter. This set of rooms could also be entered from the central court. Other rooms were a lustral basin (63d) and a latrine (63c and 63e) with drainage system. In the lustral basin of the complex (63d), the excavators found a bulls' head rhyton and two horns of consecration, together with an assortment of bronze and stone tools, which can be related to certain cult practices.<sup>784</sup> The spatial relationships between the different units and

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<sup>777</sup> Preziosi 1983, 135.

<sup>778</sup> Pernier and Banti 1951, 291-296.

<sup>779</sup> Pernier and Banti 1951, 295-296 and 301-303; La Rosa 2002, 90.

<sup>780</sup> Immerwahr 1990, 183.

<sup>781</sup> Pernier and Banti 1951, 186-187; According to Shaw (1993: fig. 21-23) this court could have functioned as some kind of veranda for those passing time in the hall. However, she notes that the bedrock area adjacent to the Minoan hall with its numerous cuttings, holes, and cupules, could serve as some kind of garden.

<sup>782</sup> Graham 1962, 89 – 91; Preziosi 1983, 133; La Rosa (2002, 90) says this place could have been some for of 'rock garden'.

<sup>783</sup> Pernier and Banti 1951, 466-467; Hitchcock 2000, 172-173.

<sup>784</sup> Gesell 1985, 128-129; Pernier and Banti 1951, 171-178.

circulation pattern were very clear in this complex. Standing in the central court, one enters the complex through a dog-leg corridor and accesses the Minoan hall after which one should proceed south through the Minoan hall in order to reach the ante-room. From this point one could decide whether to enter the latrine or the lustral basin. Much discussion exists whether or not this part should be interpreted as a cult complex or as a living quarter.<sup>785</sup> No conclusive proof survives to exclude one interpretation and therefore for the moment it seems better to leave this question open. Indeed, the complex may well have been used for both purposes at different times.

Entrance 53 controlled access towards corridor 52, which leads up to court 48 and the east court (90). From this entrance, the northern Domestic quarter could **not** be accessed in a quicker way, since to access these one had to pass the small staircase (39) and the peristyle court (74). Therefore, this entrance (53) probably served a specific function, giving personnel swift access to the industrial area.<sup>786</sup> The industrial area is formed by the court with the pottery furnace (90) and functioned most probably as an open-air workshop.<sup>787</sup>

#### 4.2.4.4. The Propylaeum and the West wing

The propylaeum (nr. 66–69) at Phaistos has traditionally been considered as a large monumental entrance hall of even greater size than the west porch at Knossos.<sup>788</sup> The propylaeum consisted of a monumental staircase, a large hall with pier-and-door partitions and projection walls, a central column, and three columns in the back. The German scholar Beyer argued that this cluster was a temple complex, a reconstruction which today is no longer accepted.<sup>789</sup> The generous proportions and the flight of steps leading up to the propylaeum led Preziosi to suggest that it functioned as a monumental

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<sup>785</sup> Cadogan (1976, 103) is one of the few who gave an interpretation to the eastern quarter stating that perhaps the son of the ruler at Phaistos lived in this unit.

<sup>786</sup> This entrance was a back entrance for personnel to work daily inside the workshop.

<sup>787</sup> Pernier and Banti 1951, 215-217.

<sup>788</sup> Pernier and Banti 1951, 305-326; Hitchcock 2000, 69-71.

<sup>789</sup> Beyer 1987, 213-225.

stand or theatral area, rather than a monumental entrance.<sup>790</sup> Inside the complex, the view into the inner parts of the propylaeum was managed by pier-and-door partitions. Additionally, if room 70 functioned as a porter's lodge then access towards staircase 39 through the small entrance in the back was strongly guarded.<sup>791</sup> Unit 71 forms another narrow entrance to building. Because this space is delineated by a retaining wall to the west, one could argue that this narrow opening was not visible to the visitor when he stood in the opening of the hall. This is also true for the porter's lodge. The small entrance points at the propylaeum and the ways in which they were carefully camouflaged suggests that both entrances formed in fact "exits", and so the monumental staircase formed indeed a "place of appearance" for the palatial elite that appeared to the people in the west court when some kind of ceremonial gathering was held.<sup>792</sup> Because of the fact that unit 71 was easily accessible from the Domestic quarters by crossing the peristyle court (74) speaks in favor of the view that this space served as a "passage" for the inhabitants to appear to the people in the west court at the monumental stand. However, the peristyle court also functioned as an important place of assembly, as will be argued later on.

From corridor 7, one gained access to spaces 12, 13, and 14, that managed the circulation through the cluster of rooms south of the corridor. The different units in this sector were equipped with doors, and the floors existed of stamped earth. The corridors forced the visitor to make several turns before ending up in the most secluded parts of the complex. The southern part consists of a cluster of rooms 13-21, and 95-95'.<sup>793</sup> At least two lustral basins were present in the southern part of the west wing (nr. 19 and 21).<sup>794</sup> Units 16, 20, 21 form the first cluster and units 17, 18, 19 the second one. Graham refers to these

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<sup>790</sup> Preziosi 1983, 127; Graham on the other hand is strongly convinced that this complex formed the major formal entrance to the Palace, see Graham 1956, 153.

<sup>791</sup> Graham 1962, 41; Cadogan 1976, 97.

<sup>792</sup> Preziosi 1983, 127.

<sup>793</sup> Pernier and Banti 1951, 118-130: fig. 66-74.

<sup>794</sup> Pernier and Banti 1951, 125-130; Gesell 1985, 128.

spaces as “guest apartments”<sup>795</sup>. Both apartments shared one space (15) that secured the circulation between the two.<sup>796</sup>

The north part of the west wing at Phaistos does not only comprise the propylaeum. This part consists of large magazines (corridor 26 and its surrounding storage rooms) and unit 25. The magazines at Phaistos are completely different from those encountered at Malia and Knossos. As Preziosi points out, they are organised within a block of two rows of slightly shallower rooms – five on each side – arranged north-south and all opening up to a central corridor with columns in the middle.<sup>797</sup> The central corridor B was unusually wide (4.3 x 20.15m) for a ‘simple magazine’ corridor. In fact, this corridor is even wider than the magazine corridor at Knossos, which is the most elaborated of these corridors. Therefore, the magazine block should have had a functionality beyond that of a corridor. Based on the reconstructions there is much reason to believe that unit 25 had a richly decorated and monumental façade consisting of three parts with a column in the centre, and two worked open flanks with windows facing the central court. Today, this space (25) is still object of controversy. The entire spatial description of this cluster illustrates that unit 25 should have served in particular circumstances a more sophisticated function than solely that of a transit zone between the central court and the magazines (i.e. the cluster of stockage rooms around corridor 26). Corridor 26 is separated from room 25 by a double door or “dithyron”. In the northeastern corner of room 25 a door leads to stairway 39, which formed one of the principle access points between the west and north wing of the complex. Two units of the magazine complex deserve special attention because of their special spatial properties. The first unit is room 32. This unit is part of the magazine block but is not functionally a part of it because it does not connect with the other magazines and is therefore relatively far away from the central corridor compared to the other magazines. It is only accessible from corridor 7, and this only through passing a large double doorway. Pernier and Banti believe it was used by a “watchman” or as a “guardroom”. The close connection to the magazine block and the special layout of unit 31 next to room 32 speaks in favor of the hypothesis that it indeed was used by someone who controlled the commodities that should be stocked in the magazines and

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<sup>795</sup> Graham 1962, 40.

<sup>796</sup> Preziosi 1983, 130; Hitchcock 2000, 181.

<sup>797</sup> Preziosi 1983, 128-129.

the people that entered the Palace through the main corridor 7. Unit 31 distinguishes itself from the other units by the gap in the south wall that gave direct access to the central corridor. Although there is no direct evidence for a door, Preziosi argues the presence of a large amount of doors inside the Neopalatial Palaces and therefore one should suspect that these spaces indeed should have been equipped with doors.<sup>798</sup> This opening would facilitate the transfer of objects and/or commodities without the necessity of individuals to enter the Palaces proper or the magazine block.<sup>799</sup>

#### 4.2.4.5. Courts at Phaistos

##### 4.2.4.5.1. The Central Court and Rooms 23, 24

In the Neopalatial period, the central court at Phaistos was paved in white marble stone and even today it is almost entirely preserved. During the Neopalatial period the central court measured ca. 51,5 m x 22,2 m and was bordered to the east and west by colonnades. Because of poor preservation one can only guess whether or not the colonnade also extended to the south.<sup>800</sup>

A fine well-elaborated ashlar masonry wall borders the central court to the north.<sup>801</sup> This wall is immediately the most imposing “inner” façade of the Palace. Graham stresses the strong symmetry formed by a semi-column followed by a niche on both sides of the corridor and he imagined that the façade was strongly decorated with drapes, colored marbles, and that the niches served as places for guards.<sup>802</sup> Although this kind of interpretation goes very far, it stays a fact that this façade seems to have been the most impressive enclosure bordering the central court. Preziosi argued that the elaboration of the northern façade should be connected with the orientation of the Palace towards Mount

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<sup>798</sup> Preziosi 1983, 128.

<sup>799</sup> See Hitchcock (1999, 217-242) for a detailed description of the entire magazine suite.

<sup>800</sup> Preziosi 1983, 131.

<sup>801</sup> Preziosi 1983, 131.

<sup>802</sup> Graham (1970, 233) claims that the semi-circular bases columns served as bases for the placing of flagpoles like in Egypt Temples where Pylon-facades are much used.

Ida where the sacred Dictean Cave and the Kamares are situated.<sup>803</sup> The elaboration of the northern façade functioned therefore as a clear orientation point towards Mount Ida as it took a Minoan visitor's immediate attention.

If the reconstruction of the Palace of Phaistos with three floors is correct, then Mount Ida would not be directly visible from the central court.<sup>804</sup> However, the high degree of elaboration of the north façade suggests that the façade received an intentional investment that had to serve some purpose. It could be possible that in the case of ritual events the northern façade at Phaistos was a dominant focal point, where some individuals “appear” through the gate of the corridor (41) to the people that are gathered at the central court. The placement of this façade in alignment with Mount Ida would enforce the ritual character of the event. Additionally, I want to mention a strange construction in the northwest corner of the north wing of the central court. It looks like a very small staircase.<sup>805</sup> According to Graham this construction formed some kind of platform for bull leaping.<sup>806</sup> However, if this construction is compared to the situation at Malia it is possible that this platform was some kind of altar, or a place where people could stand at an elevated level, however, it would be at least some architectural feature that could be used to place things on.

Several other spaces could function as places of appearance or stands at Phaistos. I already mentioned the Grand Propylon (66-69), but also the stairs at unit 25 facing the central court could function as a place of appearance. I will discuss the functioning of all spaces during large social events later on in detail.

We mentioned already elsewhere that colonnades on the east and the west sides bordered the central court. The eastern stoa exists of square pillars and round columns. This sheltered stoa was equipped with a small bench in the north. The western stoa is not very well preserved. Most probably the southern part of the western inner façade was also bordered by a stoa. Rooms 23 and 24 were situated in the north part of the west wing and both open up towards the central court. Both rooms had benches at three sides made out

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<sup>803</sup> Preziosi 1983, 132.

<sup>804</sup> Preziosi 1983, 132.

<sup>805</sup> The stairs are oriented in east-west direction.

<sup>806</sup> Graham 1957, 260.

of gypsum and a column in the middle of the opening. Gesell identified room 24 as a bench sanctuary because in the middle of the room two circular depressions were found, interpreted as an offering table.<sup>807</sup>

#### 4.2.4.5.2. West Court and Cluster 8-11

Because of the large complexity of the west court, focus should first be directed to the Protopalatial period. In the Protopalatial period the west court existed of three terraces, with the middle terrace existing of raised walkways, a theatral area and four kouloures.

A closer look at the theatral area and the raised walkways gives rise to some interesting considerations. The stairs of the theatre area at Phaistos are not really high and were rather used to stand than to sit. Further, the theatral area is not really large in the sense that it could accommodate a large number of people, and so they were rather used by a selective number when an event, a ritual, or some other form of gathering was taking place. The raised walkways, created in white marble stone with a width between 1.0 and 1.4 m, formed some kind of triangle in front of the theatral area.

For Protopalatial Phaistos, these raised walkways climb up the theatral area and run in the other direction right through the primary entrance (7) of the Palace, an observation first made by Palyvou.<sup>808</sup> In the Neopalatial period, however, most of the central terrace of the west court is entirely repaved. The kouloures and walkways disappeared because of the new pavement and the theatral area is reduced to 4 steps instead of twelve. An interesting innovation is the appearance of the monumental staircase (nr. 66) and the repositioning of the western façade with 7-8m to the east, which resulted in an increased size of the west

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<sup>807</sup> Gesell 1985,128; Pernier and Banti 1951,152; Hitchcock 2000,183-184; On the bench sanctuaries see also La Rosa 2002, 92: « Il a été proposé quelques interprétations fonctionnelles pour l'élégante exèdre 24 et pour la pièce 23, attenante, qui s'ouvraient directement sur la cour centrale : la plus suggestive prévoit que l'exèdre a pu constituer une sorte de substitution de la salle du trône, 'pour des contacts de nature administrative et judiciaire avec le personnel du palais ou avec les sujets'. L'impression d'ensemble reste toutefois celle d'une non-visibilité des espaces réservés à l'exercice du pouvoir, aussi bien au niveau architectural qu'au niveau des trouvailles. »

<sup>808</sup> Palyvou 2004, 214; Marinatos (1987, 137) states that this was no theatre but a Grand Stand, used by the highest officials to see and to be seen.



court. The upper court (nr. 94) was accessible through a flight of steps from the median part (nr. 6) and did not undergo large changes staying mainly in use in this period. The function of the upper court stays, however, uncertain.<sup>809</sup>

Another interesting cluster of units are numbers 8-11 which are directly accessible from the west court. According to Preziosi, this cluster of rooms constitutes some kind of sanctuary, and their particular location at the transition between the west and the central court only enforces this interpretation.<sup>810</sup> Additionally it is interesting to note that this complex is situated directly next to the primary entrance of the Palace. Gesell argued that unit 10 was a bench sanctuary and the other rooms were annexes for the storage of objects and/or victuals related to the cult activities performed in room 10.<sup>811</sup> Based on a recent study of the material found in this complex, strong evidence suggests that this cluster functioned as a cult place.<sup>812</sup>

#### **4.2.4.6. Entrance System at Phaistos**

At Phaistos there is ample evidence for the location of three certain and two possible entrances.<sup>813</sup> From the west court there were two main entrances to the Palace. The first is formed by corridor 7. This entrance secured the circulation between the west and the central court and was equipped with two sets of double doors – one at the entrance and one further inside the corridor at the central column. This entrance has traditionally been considered as the primary entrance towards the building.<sup>814</sup> If we accept that the double door in the western façade leading to corridor 7 was the only entrance for the visitors, one could argue that both visibility and circulation between the outside and the inside was strongly controlled. Phaistos is the only Palace where one has the possibility to create a

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<sup>809</sup> Cadogan (1976, 95): “Perhaps it was used as a market, the wooden columns supporting stalls.”

<sup>810</sup> Preziosi 1983, 130; Pernier and Banti 1951, 582-583; La Rosa 2002, 91.

<sup>811</sup> Gesell 1985, 127-128.

<sup>812</sup> Palio 2001 discussed in La Rosa 2002, 91: « En particulier une récente analyse de travailles dans le complexe 8-11, a démontré le caractère cultuel de ces pièces et leur lien avec la tradition protopalatiale, lien accentué ainsi par leur localisation derrière les pièces XXII-XXV qui, avec une ouverture analogue directement vers l’extérieur, avaient joué un rôle semblable dans le palais MM II.»

<sup>813</sup> Also Adams 2007, 363 and 365, fig. 3.

<sup>814</sup> Pernier and Banti 1951, 41-46: fig. 15-17; Preziosi 1983, 128; Hitchcock 2000, 85.

clear intervisibility between the central and the west court. According to the traditional interpretations, space 32 at the north side of the corridor functioned as a porters lodge.<sup>815</sup> The second entrance in the west is the monumental staircase (66-69).<sup>816</sup>

There is a small entrance in the northeast (nr. 53) built in ashlar stone and interpreted as a guardroom in the Neopalatial period. This unit had benches and large thresholds and gave direct access to the court of the pottery furnace (nr. 90) and the other spaces surrounding it.<sup>817</sup>

A possible third and fourth entrance was situated in the north part of the building (nr. 85 and 87). Since the excavators have no idea where these entrances should be situated, their positioning stays largely hypothetical and because of this they are not considered as entrances in this dissertation. If there were entrances somewhere on the north side it is beyond reasonable doubt that they served primarily as direct access points to the main Domestic quarter.

A last possible entrance is situated in the southeast, with three broad steps that gave access towards a peristyle court (nr. 64) with a beautiful view down the plain to the Lasithi Mountains.<sup>818</sup> Around this court was situated the eastern domestic or cult quarter. The southeastern entrance gave direct access to the peristyle court (nr. 64). The column bases were immediately placed on the rock and a floor of plaster was laid down in this courtyard. However, one has to admit that also for this entrance the archaeological evidence is poor if not entirely absent. Therefore, one should not include this possibility in further analysis, as I do not believe that a direct entrance was constructed here.

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<sup>815</sup> Hitchcock 2000, 85.

<sup>816</sup> See Chapter 4.2.4.4. this dissertation.

<sup>817</sup> Pernier and Banti 1951, 181-191 and 210-213; Driessen 1995, 76.

<sup>818</sup> Pernier and Banti 1951, 186-187.

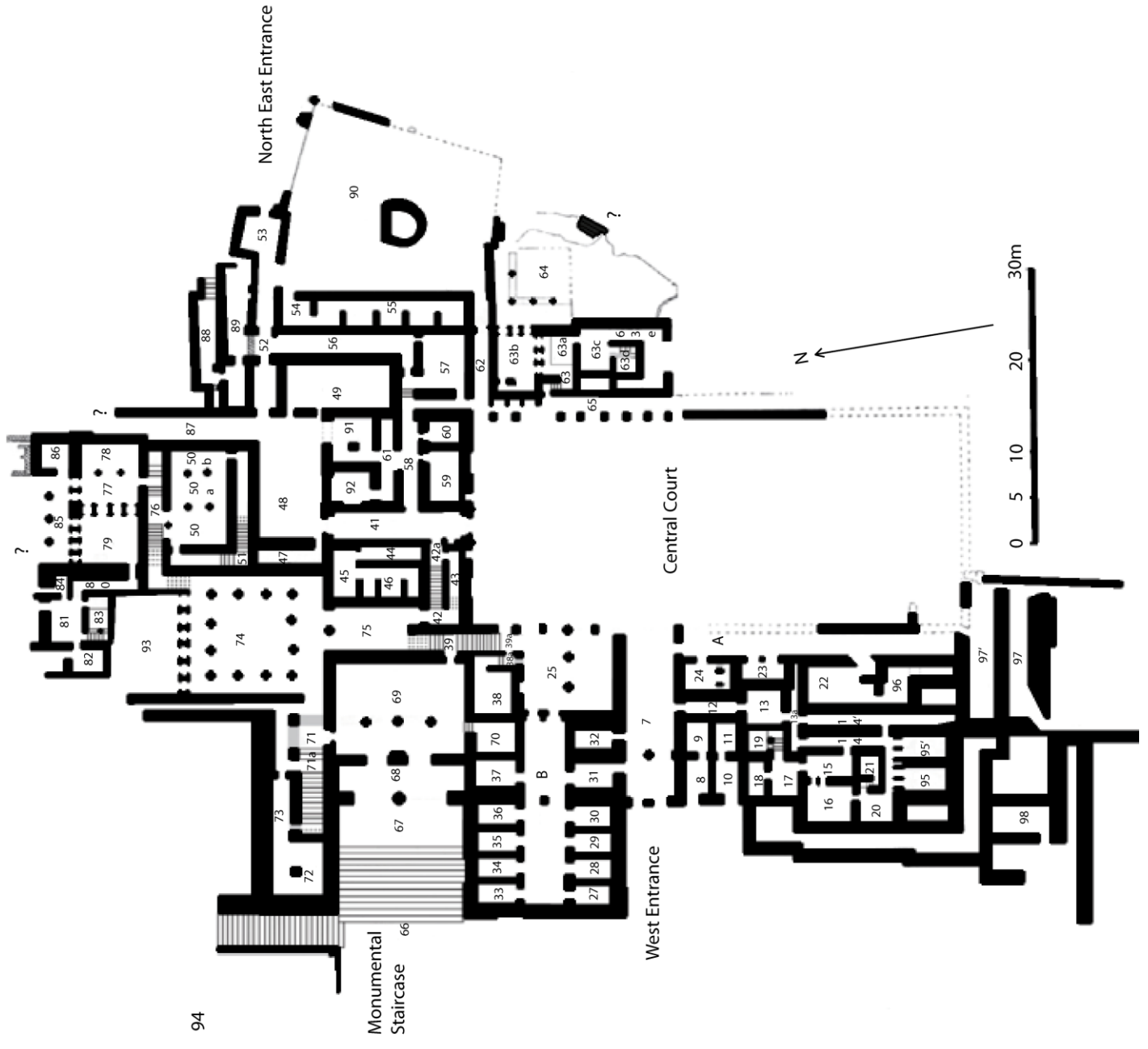


Figure 27 General Plan of Phaistos

#### 4.2.5. Zakros: Internal Venues for Occasions and Description of the Palace (fig.28)

##### 4.2.5.1 Chronology of the Site

The fourth largest Palace centre on Crete was found at Kato Zakros, the site of an important trading centre before 1700 BCE. Zakros was an important trading centre to the east, which is not at all surprising given its proximity to Egypt and the Near East, and in particular, to Rhodes. The natural harbour at Kato Zakros further facilitated its importance in trade with the East.<sup>819</sup> Excavations were first conducted under the direction of D.G. Hogarth in 1902. Hogarth uncovered the first Minoan harbour town, though the Palace itself remained undiscovered until 1961 under the direction of Nikolas Platon.<sup>820</sup> It has been suggested by the archaeological evidence that a Palace existed here in the Protopalatial period, but no extant remains have been found. Much as at Malia, only the remains of the second Palace have been excavated and published in any detail.<sup>821</sup> The Neopalatial Palace center at Zakros had approximately the same dimensions as the Palace at Malia, measuring around six thousand square meters.<sup>822</sup> While some early MMIIIB-early LMIA material has been found in the east and south wings of the Palace, L. Platon argued on the basis of ceramic evidence, that the main construction phase dates to mature LMIA and continued into LMIB.<sup>823</sup> It seems that the town (and Palace) of Zakros underwent two major destructions: one during LMIA, which is related to the Santorini eruption, and a final destruction in LMIB. At the end of LMIB, a fire destroyed the Palace of Zakros with most of its contents in place and only portions of the east- western hill were reoccupied till LMIIIA2.<sup>824</sup>

The Palace of Zakros had a curious location and a unique complexity that consisted of a central building and some annexes. After the excavations it became clear that the structures on the northeast hill were extensions or annexes directly controlled by the

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<sup>819</sup> Platon 1971, 34-35; Preziosi and Hitchcock 1999, 106-108.

<sup>820</sup> Platon 1971, 24-26 ; Preziosi 1983, 139.

<sup>821</sup> Preziosi and Hitchcock 1999, 107.

<sup>822</sup> Platon 1971, 74.

<sup>823</sup> Platon 1971, 265-297.

<sup>824</sup> Platon 2002, 145; Platon 2004, 390.

Palace itself.<sup>825</sup> The description of the Palace's architecture shows many similarities to the other Minoan Palaces. The only strong difference between Zakros and the rest is its relatively small size and orientation.

Platon: "Nevertheless, though inferior in size, in charm this Palace is certainly comparable if not superior to Knossos"<sup>826</sup>. A detailed discussion of Zakros shows that the latter statement was at least a little bit exaggerated.

#### **4.2.5.2. The Royal Living Quarters and Cistern in the East wing**

The east wing of Zakros is considered as the "Royal and State quarter" of the Palace. Most parts of this wing are badly preserved due to erosion and cultivation of the area. These processes cut straight through the Minoan layers of the Palace. Based on comparison with the east wings of the other Palaces it was possible to reconstruct most part of the east wing.<sup>827</sup>

Behind the east portico of the central court, a complex with two Minoan halls was discovered which traditionally has been called the Royal rooms.<sup>828</sup> The Minoan halls existed out of a lightwell and a pier-and-door partition (polytheron). The southern hall was the largest (XXXVII) measuring 6 by 9.5 meters and is called the King's apartment. XXXVI is considered as the Queen's apartment.

Other units that lie in length with the Minoan halls and border the northeast court with are the storerooms (LVI-LVII), a lustral basin (LVIII) with an antechamber/vestibule (LXI).<sup>829</sup>

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<sup>825</sup> Platon 1985, 79.

<sup>826</sup> Platon 1985, 83.

<sup>827</sup> Platon 1985, 174-175.

<sup>828</sup> Preziosi 1983, 140-141; Hitchcock 2000, 173-174.

<sup>829</sup> It seems that this unit did not only function as an ordinary bathroom for the palatial elite. It seems that this unit was also used for ritual purification based on the archaeological evidence present. The rear walls of the niches were painted with religious themes like horns of consecration, crowning platforms or altars. Also a bench or podium lined with plaster appeared

In the western corner of the Queen's apartment the floor was paved with the same panels which were also encountered in several other rooms. The corridor that runs in between the Queens' apartment and the storerooms was also paved in a "carpet like" way<sup>830</sup>. As in the other Palaces, these Minoan halls were probably the living quarters of the palatial elite. The bedrooms on the other hand were probably located upstairs, but nothing was preserved.<sup>831</sup> A remarkable observation is that the Minoan halls at Zakros have six access points from the central court, something that makes them remarkably distinctive compared to the hall systems at the other Palaces which have been discussed above. In the latter the halls have one or two direct access points, which compared to Zakros makes them more secluded areas. Additionally, at Zakros no noteworthy finds prove the residential character of these quarters. As has been stated earlier, I do not want to adhere to the simple one sided function of rooms but rather turn towards their multifunctional character and argue that in particular circumstances they functioned as important venues for occasions.

To the east of the Minoan halls there was a large hall called the "hall of the cistern (LXII)". This hall was immediately accessible from the kings' apartment. It was not a normal reservoir for storing rainwater, but had a unique construction for retaining the underground spring water at a continuous level inside the cistern.<sup>832</sup> The excavators have evidence to believe that this unit was not an unroofed space, but that a circular portico covered the area around the cistern.<sup>833</sup> A flight of eight steps, of which seven have been perfectly preserved, led down to the bottom of the cistern. This hall can be a throne room

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against the south wall of the descending staircase. See Platon (1985, 182-183) for a detailed description; Also Gesell 1985, 140 and Hitchcock 2000, 179 for the interpretation of LVIII as a lustral basin.

<sup>830</sup> Platon 1985, 178.

<sup>831</sup> Platon 1985, 179.

<sup>832</sup> Platon 1985, 186.

<sup>833</sup> One piece of evidence is that the floor was not paved with large slabs, but with a delicate plaster; speaking in favor that the area was indeed roofed. Another element is that this unit was equipped with a wooden polytheron in the west side that could hardly have been exposed to an unsheltered area. Everywhere else in Minoan buildings polytherons are within rooms or behind porticos, see Platon 1985, 187; Preziosi (1983, 140) and Hitchcock (2000, 174-175) for nuances.

or room for the daily activities of members of the palatial family, maybe a swimming pool.<sup>834</sup>

#### 4.2.5.3 The Hall of the Ceremonies and the Banquet Hall in the West Wing

Some units at the west wing of Zakros can be labeled as “halls” and served as the main places for assembly throughout the Palace. XXVIII is one of these and is situated directly east of the shrine compartments. The hall measures 12 by 10 meters and was accessible from the north through a wide opening with a column.<sup>835</sup> From the central court a door with a large monolithic threshold and a step in front of it gave access to the hall. The threshold marked a clear border between the actual hall and the central court itself. The hall existed of two compartments and was equipped with a polytheron (a system of piers and doors) and a colonnaded lightwell.<sup>836</sup> The lightwell is situated in the northwest corner of the hall and consisted out of a paved courtyard with columns on all sides.<sup>837</sup> Probably the floors were paved with concrete, plastered or painted.

Unit XXIX has traditionally been interpreted as the banquet hall of the Palace. From a triple entrance in the east section of the hall of the ceremonies, visitors arrive in the banquet hall that served a possible function in close connection with the shrine complex. In this hall Platon found a large quantity of wine vessels, which could point towards its function.<sup>838</sup> The banquet hall had the same decoration as the hall of the ceremonies: two parallel lines of panels compartmentalized in smaller parts in stucco in the center of the

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<sup>834</sup> Platon (1985, 188): “Since water could be drawn from above without descending into the cistern, the staircase must have served other purposes as well, such as going down to the water level to swim or bathe. If so, this would be the first instance of a private swimming pool in prehistoric times. Another possibility is that the cistern could have served as an aquarium for local and exotic fish.”

<sup>835</sup> Platon 1985, 155.

<sup>836</sup> Hitchcock 2000, 176.

<sup>837</sup> Platon 1985, 157.

<sup>838</sup> The amphoras were found at the most eastern door. The tiny wine jugs were found near the south wall. Although the name banquet hall stays hypothetical it may be clearly stated that the finds in this room indicate that the amphoras were not stored but really used here; excluding the possibility of storage space, see Platon 1985, 170.

room, “vividly painted in red”, giving the impression of a carpet.<sup>839</sup> The walls were painted with impressive stucco relief arranged in a frieze just below the ceiling running over the four walls (about 26 meters in total length). The frieze was adorned with large spirals linked together, rendered in high relief.<sup>840</sup>

Three different entrances gave access to the west wing from the central court. The central entrance formed the most monumental and wide one, resembling the tripartite façade of the central shrine at Knossos.

As at Knossos, the central shrine at Zakros could be entered through a triple entrance, with the central entrance being the widest one of the three. Before one entered the complex, one had to cross a threshold of about 2.1 meters long. Behind the central entrance visitors to the complex arrived in an anteroom with a central column (XXX). Behind this unit lay a spacious and almost square room (IX) with a pavement of concrete and in the center a quadrangular covering of tiles.<sup>841</sup> To the north of this room lay two sets of storerooms used for the storage of victuals etc. of the shrine (Units I-VIII). Both the north wing and the kitchen area (XXXII) could be reached through a corridor (XXXI). From unit IX, a square vestibule with the same decorative panels on the floor as I have already discussed elsewhere, one entered the actual central shrine complex that consisted out of several units (eleven) connected through a web of small and narrow corridors.<sup>842</sup> Unit XIII is considered as the pantry of the shrine. Against the west wall of this unit little pots were placed on shelves or in cupboards over the entire height of the wall. Additionally, this unit was used for the storage of cups, jugs, pitchers, bridge spouted vases and some stirrup jars, many of which were decorated in floral and marine style. A partition at the doorjamb of one of the two entrances divided this unit in two parts.<sup>843</sup> To date, the function of room XII is unknown. In this unit two bronze swords

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<sup>839</sup> Platon 1985, 171.

<sup>840</sup> Platon 1985, 172.

<sup>841</sup> Platon 1985, 103.

<sup>842</sup> Platon 1985, 115.

<sup>843</sup> Platon 1985, 120-121.



were found; one belongs with certainty to a room from the upper floor of the Palace. The most remarkable find is the skull of a child.<sup>844</sup>

Above the central shrine complex, on the upper floor, there must have been a workshop for the manufacturing of stone objects and metallurgy as is shown by the presence of steatite, sheets of bronze and a few bronze tools.<sup>845</sup> The corridor of shrine XIV dominates the circulation pattern through the west shrine complex. The corridor is small, bent at right angles and attached the actual shrine to the other units and connected the complex as such with the staircase leading to the upper floor. The unit immediately south of the pantry (XIII) is considered the archive room (XVI).

Unit XXIII is the actual shrine which had two entrances on the north and the south side. It was a small sanctuary chamber with a ledge (podium) at the back of the shrine and built within a niche in the south wall. Nothing was found on this podium.<sup>846</sup> Across from the ledge a low bench was constructed. About a dozen clay rhytons of oval shape and pointed base, vessels and cups of different types, two bronze sheets decorated with lily decorations were found in this unit.<sup>847</sup> Shrine XXIII stood in close connection to the lustral basin (XXIV), the treasury room with ritual objects (XXV) and the room of the repositories (XXII) in the south corner of the west wing.

The room of the repositories XXII was equipped with low mud-brick walls that divided the unit in different smaller parts. This made possible a logical division of the ritual objects. The floor and walls were plastered in white and decorated with red bands. In this unit the excavators found a round stone table on large pedestal, braziers, some form of latrine (wash basin for ritual vessels?), one large and one smaller calderon.<sup>848</sup>

The lustral basin XXIV consisted of a staircase with eight steps descending into the basin area. Apart from some kind of saw and curved hammer the most remarkable find is an amphora made of polychrome marble. According to the author, the presence of this kind

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<sup>844</sup> Platon 1985, 120.

<sup>845</sup> Platon 1985, 121-122.

<sup>846</sup> Platon 1985, 125.

<sup>847</sup> Platon 1985, 125.

<sup>848</sup> Platon 1985, 126-127.

of vessel corroborates Evans' theory, arguing that lustral basins played an essential role in ritual and that they were a place where purification rites were performed.<sup>849</sup>

The last three rooms of the western wing are a vestibule which was also used as a workshop (XXVI), the treasury of the shrine (XXV), and a storeroom (XXVII). In the workshop steatite fragments and cores of red marble were found pointing towards industrial activities. Further, tiers of irregular stone slabs served to support planks for the workmen and several utensils were found alongside the walls.<sup>850</sup> In the storeroom 15 pithoi were found along the walls and under the floor the room contained collecting vessels.<sup>851</sup> The treasury room XXV was equipped with a door and was situated directly behind the central shrine. Along the walls, eight cists were built, which contained numerous smaller objects.<sup>852</sup> Larger vessels were probably positioned in front of the cists in the center of the room or above the covers of the cists.

On the south wall, the archive room, unit XVI, was divided into a partition of three mud-brick niches that were furnished with wooden shelves running over the entire height of the wall on which wooden boxes with clay tablets were stored.<sup>853</sup>

#### **4.2.5.4. The Hypostyle Hall at the North Wing**

The hypostyle hall at Zakros has traditionally been interpreted as a dining hall because of its close connection to the suite of rooms (L-LIV) which most probably formed a kitchen area.

The dining hall (XXXII) situated to the north of corridor XXXI was in size one of the biggest rooms at Zakros, measuring 9 by 12 meters. Six wooden pillars positioned on

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<sup>849</sup> Platon 1985, 127-128 ; See also Gesell 1985, 137 – 139 on room XXIV and other connected units.

<sup>850</sup> Platon 1985, 130-131.

<sup>851</sup> Platon 1985, 131.

<sup>852</sup> Platon 1985, 135-148; Gesell 1985, 139; also Hitchcock 2000, 177.

<sup>853</sup> Only thirteen tablets survived because of a vehement fire in this unit, see Platon 1985, 151; also Hitchcock 2000, 177.

large irregular stones supported its roof.<sup>854</sup> The hypothesis of the kitchen and service area (L-LIV) is based on the large quantities of animal bones found in this space indicating the preparation of food. Additionally a hearth was found in the northeast corner together with a pot used for cooking.<sup>855</sup> Apart from animal bones finds in these rooms included amphoras, jars, braziers, tripod hearths, grills, bowls, and cups with one or two handles.<sup>856</sup> If unit XXXII was indeed another kitchen area, than the room above this area on the upper floor would have been the actual dining area for the palatial family and guests as has also been suggested by Graham.<sup>857</sup> However, there is no reason to believe that this area was only used as dining area. Based on the multifunctionality of rooms, the hypostyle hall could have functioned as a perfect venue for gatherings.

#### **4.2.5.5. Activities in the South Wing**

The south wing XLII-XLVIII was mainly used for industrial processes with a few areas for storage. At the center of the façade at the central court one had to pass a large limestone threshold before ending up in a small corridor giving access to all the other units of the complex.

XLIII, the sitting room for the craftsmen, was equipped with benches alongside of the north wall and in the southeast corner. It had a concrete pavement with a carpet-like square of tiles on either side of the column supporting the ceiling. The room directly to the north of the sitting room was a storage area used to store large vessels, used for industrial activities as well as to store victuals and utensils for the preparation and processing of food.<sup>858</sup> XLVI a –b form another storeroom divided in two parts.<sup>859</sup> XLVII was the actual workshop area and the excavator refers to a “perfume laboratory”<sup>860</sup>. At ground level were again situated several workshop areas such as: one for the

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<sup>854</sup> Platon 1985, 204.

<sup>855</sup> Platon 1985, 204.

<sup>856</sup> Platon 1985, 204-208.

<sup>857</sup> Platon 1985, 208.

<sup>858</sup> Platon 1985, 211.

<sup>859</sup> Platon 1985, 212.

<sup>860</sup> Platon 1985, 213.

manufacturing of crystal, ivory and faience objects; one for the production of bronze vessels, others for a process wherein grinders and grinding stones were used and a last one for metal working.<sup>861</sup>

#### 4.2.5.6. Entrance-system at Zakros<sup>862</sup>

The major entrance to the Palace is situated at the northeast side of the east wing (LXIX). A paved road that existed of a central raised walkway, which was constructed out of poros slabs and equipped with gutters for the channeling of water at the sides led to the northeast entrance. This type of road was also found at other Minoan Palace sites. This entrance formed the primary entrance towards the Palace and formed a direct connection between the inner east court inside the Palace and the road leading to the harbor.<sup>863</sup> It has to be noted that the Palace lay on a lower level than the harbor and therefore this road descended towards the Palace. The floor of this entrance was paved with irregular slabs except for the central causeway that was constructed in regular pavement just like the raised walkways at the other Minoan Palaces. Platon made a very interesting observation, arguing that this raised pavement gave the impression of “a carpet” covering the central part of the ramp.<sup>864</sup> A huge threshold of dark limestone (2.3 by 1.1 meters), which indicates a clear boundary between the interior and the exterior world, boarded the entrance.<sup>865</sup> A double door could probably close off this entrance.<sup>866</sup>

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<sup>861</sup> For a detailed discussion of the finds and context for every unit in particular, see Platon 1985, 212-222. A thorough analysis of every unit in this dissertation would lead to far.

<sup>862</sup> Adams 2007, 363 and 366, fig. 4.

<sup>863</sup> Platon (1985, 89): “It has not been possible to trace the entire length of this road, which, with its central causeway of poros stone slabs, and its gutters next to it, resembles roads connected with other Palaces. Its general direction indicates that it could have started at the northeastern end of the bay, and presumably it went around the northern hill, upon one of its lower slopes. This road led to the main entrance (...) and the passage leading from it was therefore constructed in stepped, slanting platforms.”

<sup>864</sup> Platon (1985, 91): “This median strip must have given the impression of a carpet covering the central part of the ramp.”

<sup>865</sup> Platon 1985, 91.

<sup>866</sup> Platon 1985, 91-92.

North of the interior court, to the west of this entrance, there are some successive terraces (LXV). According to Platon these could have been planted with flowers “providing an attractive décor for the little square at which the Royal Road terminated”<sup>867</sup>. Interesting finds are many fragments of stone vases and a sardonyx seal carrying the symbol of an ox’s skull over an altar-like structure.<sup>868</sup>

There was no entrance on the west side resulting in a solid outer façade at Zakros.

Another entrance was situated in the southwest and led directly to the central court (XLIX’). This entrance is called the south entrance at Zakros, apart from the northeast entrance the only certain entry point to the Palace. This entrance gave direct access to the central court and had a funnelling impact because of its lengthy and narrow corridor (between 0.80–1.70 m wide). According to the excavator three different approaches converged together at the south wing into one entrance. The floor of this entrance existed of beaten or stamped earth.<sup>869</sup> The exact trace of the different roads is not known but they probably connected roads coming from the east, west, and south. Finally, the south entrance at Zakros gave direct access to the central court.

Unit XXXVIII could have been a direct access point to the Palace in Neopalatial times. If true, Zakros would have had a southeast entrance that gave direct access to the central court.

The existence of an entrance at the north wing at Zakros has not been proven, but when compared to Malia and Knossos it may be expected that also at Zakros there would have been an entrance (for example LV) at the northwestern side of the north wing. At the east end of the northern portico (XXXIV), a long passage of 1.0 m wide in the form of a ramp led up to the apartments built on the northern hill, which is an interesting observation. During the last phase of the Palace this entrance was blocked.<sup>870</sup> It is not clear to what extent this passageway formed indeed a real entrance. Another possible entrance at the north side could have been situated in the northeastern corner of the kitchen and dining

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<sup>867</sup> Platon 1985, 92.

<sup>868</sup> Platon 1985, 92.

<sup>869</sup> Platon 1985, 92.

<sup>870</sup> Platon 1985, 209.

quarters (XXXII), where there was a passage (0.8 m) ascending to the northern hill where the apartments were situated.<sup>871</sup> The possible southwest entrance at Zakros gave direct access to the workshop area in the west wing of the Palace (XVII-XXI). This workshop was probably used for dyeing fabrics.<sup>872</sup> It seems that this area was completely isolated from the rest of the Palace.

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<sup>871</sup> Platon 1985, 204.

<sup>872</sup> Platon 1985, 103.

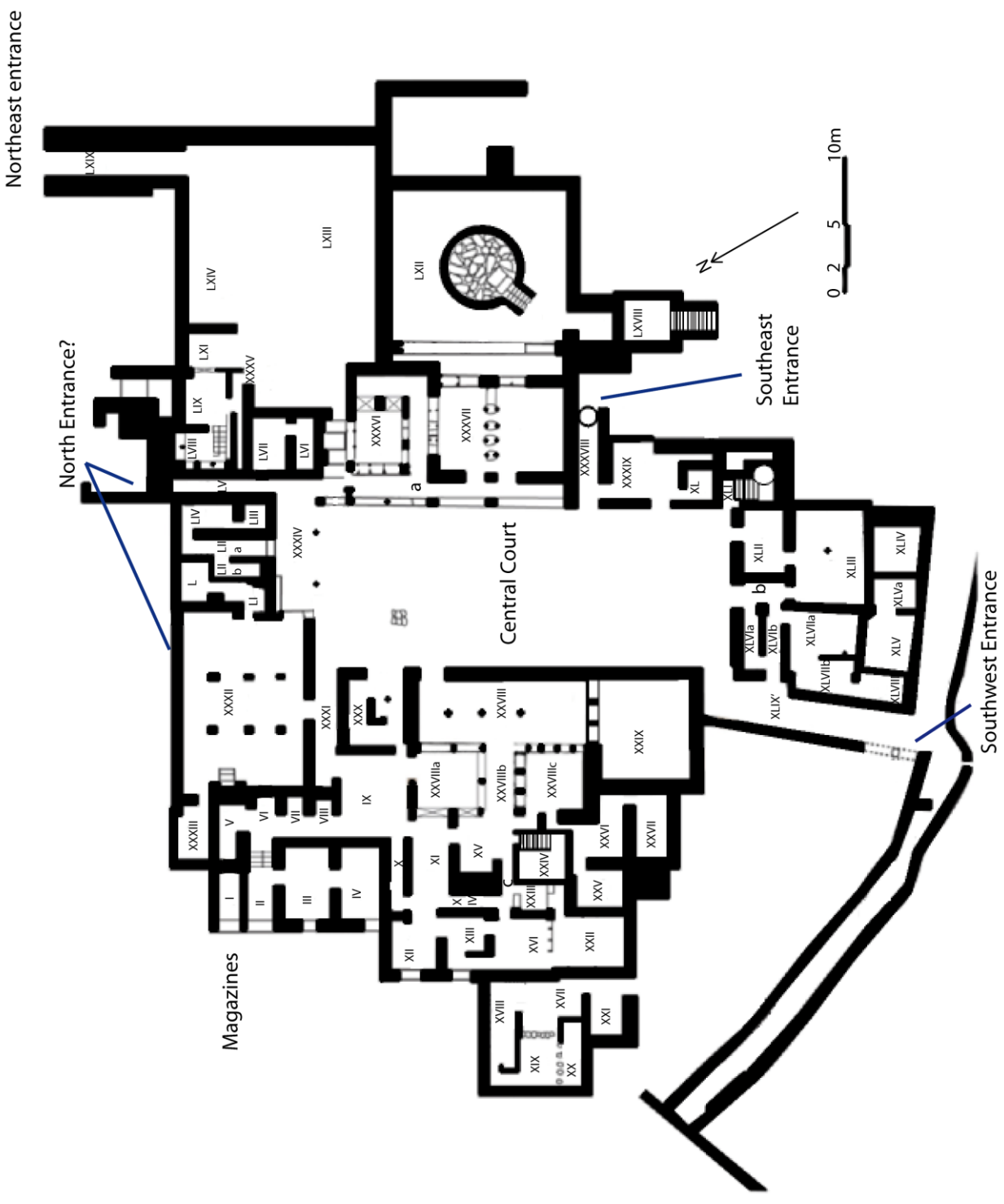


Figure 28 General Plan of Neopalatial Zakros

#### 4.2.6 Access Maps and Patterns of Movement and Circulation at the Minoan Palaces.

A first look at the Palaces shows that each of them is fairly permeable from the outside. Several entrances gave out to the surrounding network of streets and squares, which proves that these buildings were well integrated within the urban fabric. As the present study is primarily concerned with the interaction potential with respect to visitors and those that inhabited/controlled circulation throughout the building, first and foremost the main entrances through which visitors entered the building in the case of large social events should be identified. The large differences in elaboration between the entrances and the close interplay between the central-and the west courts, suggests that only few will have functioned as the primary “public” entrances to the Palace.

At Knossos, the best candidates to fulfill such a function are the west porch that connected by means of the Corridor of the Procession the central court with the outside, and the north entrance that gave into the north pillared hall (fig.32).<sup>873</sup>

Also Phaistos seems to have two possible entrances, i.e. the west entrance corridor (7) and the western propylon (66-69) (fig. 35). However, it has been argued in the previous chapter that the west propylon functioned in fact not as an entrance, but rather as a monumental place of appearance. Arguments in favor of such interpretation are **(1)** the connections between the propylon and the inner parts of the Palace which tend to be far too small to facilitate circulation for a large number of people throughout the building in the case of a performative event; **(2)** the direct access point from the propylon to the peristyle court (74) and neighboring Domestic quarter suggests that the propylon did not serve as a public entrance, but rather as a monumental place of appearance for the Minoan elite that entered this area from the Domestic quarter.<sup>874</sup> The west entrance corridor (7) had much more potential for being the main public entrance because of its straight connection with the central court. In terms of control, a double door offered the

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<sup>873</sup> Discussion of the entrances at Knossos, see section 4.2.2.5; North Entrance: Evans 1930, 158–167; West Entrance: Evans 1928, 673 and 678-679 and 719-723.

<sup>874</sup> See section 4.2.4.4; Pernier and Banti 1951, 305-326; Hitchcock 2000, 69-71; Beyer 1987, 213-225; ‘Place of appearance’, see Preziosi 1983, 127; Graham (1956, 153) on the other hand is strongly convinced that this complex formed the major formal entrance to the Palace.



possibility to block the entrance to the Palace.<sup>875</sup>

Malia has two potential entrances for Minoan visitors, i.e. the southern entrance that formed a straight and direct connection between the central court and the exterior, and the north entrance, which forms the second major entrance for the Malian people (fig. 37). The formal characteristics of both entrances are very diverse and in order to identify which of the entrances functioned as the main public entrance in the case of performative events we should first investigate more closely their positioning and elaboration.<sup>876</sup> The southern entrance had a paved floor of “aspropeta” laid down in eleven horizontal bands, and contained a large schist threshold of 1,75m wide and a porter’s lodge for the guard.<sup>877</sup> This entrance was carefully elaborated and formed a straight and direct connection between the central court and the exterior. The north entrance forms the second major point of entry to the Malian Palace. During the course of the Neopalatial period a large threshold of 2.8 m wide marks the entrance and a double door could close it.<sup>878</sup> The second vestibule behind this double door was also equipped with a threshold of 1.8 m wide. A raised walkway penetrates the building through the north entrance and both the vestibules and the entire route towards the central court were paved with sederopetra.<sup>879</sup> Taken together, both the south and north entrance are the most monumental access points to the Palace and probably those used during performative events.

Zakros only had two major entrances: one is situated in the northeast side of the east wing and another one in the south wing (fig. 41).<sup>880</sup> The approach to the central court at the northeast entrance had a descending “carpet like” paved walkway and the entrance itself had a huge threshold of dark limestone (2.3 by 1.1 meters) and could be closed by a double door.<sup>881</sup> The fact that the northeast entrance is a descending walkway towards the northeast court (in contrast with the north entrance at Knossos which is ascending) proves that the builders did not want to postpone the moment of arrival and visibility to this court.

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<sup>875</sup> Discussion of the entrances at Phaistos, see section 4.2.4.6; Pernier and Banti 1951, 41-46, fig. 15-17; Preziosi 1983, 128; Hitchcock 2000, 85.

<sup>876</sup> Discussion of the entrances at Malia, see section 4.2.3.9.

<sup>877</sup> Pelon 1980, 75; Van Effenterre 1980, 61–63; Gesell 1985, 105.

<sup>878</sup> Pelon 1980, 67-72.

<sup>879</sup> Pelon 1980, 71-72; Pelon 1982, 60-61.

<sup>880</sup> Discussion of the entrances at Zakros, see section 4.2.5.6.

<sup>881</sup> Platon 1985, 89 and 91-92.

At the south entrance three different approaches converged together into one entrance. The exact trace of the different roads is not known but they probably connect roads coming from the east, west and south. Interesting is the funneling effect created by the merging of three approaches into one small entrance corridor. The strong integration of the south entrance with the surrounding network of streets makes this entrance a primary access point to the Palace of Zakros. Apart from the funneling effect due to the narrowness and length of the corridor (passage c.0.80–1.70 m wide) this entrance gave access to the central court in a straight line, a situation completely different from Knossos.<sup>882</sup> It is not directly clear which of both entrances functioned as the major public entrance during performative events, as both entrances play an important role in the circulation network inside and also for people visiting the town. However, it is clear that the northeast entrance with its raised walkway shows most energy investment by the builders.

In order to create a good picture of the access patterns and possible circulation routes for the Minoan visitor, different access maps were modeled: a general access map that simulates the circulation pattern by comprising all entrances to the Palace, and this sometimes accompanied by access maps that show the circulation pattern starting from the assumed main “public” entrances, but only when it adds extra insights to the discussion. Like we stated earlier, we are primarily concerned with the interaction potential with respect to visitors, which can be easily measured using the justified access map that structures all spaces of the building according to increasing depth levels. The interaction potential builds on the hypothesis that inhabitants will only admit strangers to the shallow spaces closest to the exterior. The number of physical boundaries that have to be crossed reflects how accessible or inaccessible a space is for outsiders. As a consequence, the spaces closest situated to the assumed primary entrances are considered to be most easily accessible to strangers.

At Knossos, the access map of the Palace has 12 distinct depth levels, when all entrances are treated equally (fig. 29). However, if the north, respectively the west entrance is

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<sup>882</sup> Platon 1985, 92.

considered as the only main public entrance during particular events, then the depth levels increase to 14 and 15, which means that the building becomes deeper, with all spaces distributed over an increasing number of depth levels (fig. 30, 31). Based on the general circulation pattern (with all entrances in the analysis) at Knossos, most of the spaces with a high interaction potential once the Minoan visitors accessed the building exist out of a network of corridors and vestibules guiding the visitor throughout the complex. During performative events, the main and most dominant spaces that facilitated circulation were the west entrance system with the porter's lodge, the Corridor of the Procession and the south corridor that gave out onto the central court. To the north, those spaces that had the highest interaction potential to strangers were the north entrance, followed by the northern pillar hall and the northern corridor that gave in its turn onto the central court. All these spaces lie between a depth of 1 and 4 in the configuration, and from all these spaces, the central court has the highest control value, which proves that the central court plays a vital role in the structuring of movement and interaction, as it forms the most integrated space from which further circulation was managed.<sup>883</sup>

What strikes us is the fact that both the west- and north entrance system are defined by a series of corridors and/or vestibules that connect the central court almost directly with the exterior world, and with the regions that lie deeper in the complex. Whatever happened in the deeper parts was not directly seen by those who entered the Palace through the major public entrance(s) because movement was tightly controlled. Also the Palaces of Phaistos, Malia and Zakros have similar characteristics, however, some minor variations can be identified as well.

When all entrances are treated equally, the Palace of Phaistos has 12 different depth levels, which is the same number as Knossos (fig. 33).<sup>884</sup> When the access map was remodeled from the west entrance corridor (7) the number of depth levels stays the same (fig. 34). At Phaistos, the most accessible spaces exist of a network of corridors and vestibules that guide the visitor throughout the complex. The main and most dominant spaces facilitating circulation throughout the building were the west entrance corridor (7)

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<sup>883</sup> For a general description of the central court at Knossos, its function and meaning see sections 4.2.2.4. and 5.2.2.3. this dissertation.

<sup>884</sup> Access- and depthmap analysis for Phaistos with circulation patterns and quantitative results, see Letesson 2009, 168-175.

which was equipped with two sets of double doors and a porter's lodge, which gave access to the central court; staircase 39 giving access to the upper floor and the peristyle court (74) with the adjacent Domestic quarter (50-51; 77-86); the central corridor 41 in the north wing which also gave access to the upper floor with the peristyle court and the Domestic quarter; and the western and eastern porticoes that bordered the central court, from where the Minoan hall complex in the east wing and the bench sanctuaries (23, 24) in the west wing could be reached. The straight corridor (7) in the western façade at Phaistos being the only entrance for the select publikum shows that circulation between the outside and the inside could have been strongly controlled. Such a straight connection to the central court was unique and only found at Malia (i.e. the south entrance). The western corridor at Phaistos has, just as the public entrances at the other Palaces, a strong symbolic value, as the visitor entered the building and made a symbolic transformation from "stranger" to "visitor/guest". Since the central court is surrounded with transition spaces granting access towards the upper floor and the parts deeper in the complex, one could argue that the controllers conceptually intended to place these transitions there for a reason, i.e. to shape and structure social interaction.

The Palace of Malia has 13 different depth levels (fig. 36).<sup>885</sup> At Malia, it seems that the south, respectively the north entrance, was equally important, however, the physicality of both entrances asks for some nuances regarding to use of them in the case of large public events. First, there are some strong differences in terms of visibility between the south and north entrance. At Malia, the north entrance leads into the north court by means of a chicane and from this north court a variety of spaces, including the northwest court, could be accessed. Visibility from the causeway into the north court would be rendered difficult by the sharp angle turning south at the north entrance. The south entrance, however, connected the central court with the exterior world in a straight line and would have given (when the doors were opened) at least a partial view into the central court from the outside. For these reasons and because of the closer position of the north entrance to the western esplanade and the integration of this entrance within the circulation network of raised walkways that ran throughout the town, the north entrance was most probably the primary public entrance. It postponed the visibility and moment of arrival at the central

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<sup>885</sup> Access- and depthmap analysis for Malia with circulation patterns and quantitative results, see Letesson 2009, 19-128; Letesson 2005.

court. However, both entrances received much attention, were highly elaborated and had a monumental appearance to the Minoan visitor and therefore it stays difficult to surely identify which was the primary one. Neither of both possibilities should be excluded.

At Malia, the main axis throughout the building was formed by the entrance corridors of the south and north entrance and the close interplay between the north court, the northwest court, and the central court, which were connected to each other by a vestibule and corridor. The three courts – the north court, the northwest court and the central court - are the most dominant, integrated and controlling nodes within the building.<sup>886</sup> From these spaces there is a maximum choice of access throughout the complex, which means that these spaces mainly control and facilitate circulation throughout the building. Of all the three spaces, the central court forms the most central and dominant space in the building from whereout circulation was channeled. However, this does not mean that the north- and northwest court were not equally as important. The three courts created a tremendous choice of access, which could be intimidating for the visitors. By the investment in a minimum amount of physical boundaries this unique axis gave those who controlled access to the building a maximum control of human movement and interaction. Those who entered the Palace through the major public entrance(s) ended up immediately at the central court or were guided to the central court after through passing the north/northwest court and a small vestibule with corridor. The three internal open-air courtyards are the largest spaces in the building, shallow spaces directly situated behind a major entrance, and are the most integrated spaces. They form together with the corridor and vestibule in between them the main axis throughout the building and all these characteristics make the courts, especially the central court, the most dominant node within the system. The main axis assured that very few spaces of the Palace had to be passed and accessed directly by the Minoan visitors. Such a configuration suggests that access and circulation was carefully controlled. One entered the Palace and gained immediate access to the main courts inside the building but the inner parts were not seen without permission of those who controlled the building. The circulation pattern at Malia shows a strong resemblance with the Palace of Zakros, but is fundamentally different from Knossos and Phaistos. Malia and Zakros have a unique system of approach and

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<sup>886</sup> Pelon (1980, 78-87) for a discussion of the north- and northwest court and section 4.2.3.6 this dissertation; On the central court, see Pelon 1980, 128-135 and section 4.2.3.8.

circulation where a series of courts, connected by corridors and/or vestibules constitute the main axis between the public entrances and the actual heart of the building, i.e. the central court. At Knossos and Phaistos, there are no other internal courts apart from the central court playing a fundamental part in this main axis.

The general access map of the Palace of Zakros had only 10 different depth levels, which is very little and gives an overall picture of strong permeability (fig. 38).<sup>887</sup> However, the physicality of the built space and the ubiquity of doors inside the building ask for nuances. There is a striking difference in the number of depth levels between the access maps of the south and the northeast entrance. The number of depth levels in the access map modeled by the south entrance shows 10 distinctive depth levels, whereas for the northeast entrance the number of depth levels increase to 14 (fig. 39, 40). This could be a characteristic which suggests that the northeast entrance was the primary entrance that allowed maximum control of circulation, however, one should prefer to leave both possibilities entirely open.

The spaces most closely situated to the presumed primary entrances and with the lowest depth levels are the northeast- and south entrances, the northeast court, the central court and the corridor that connects both courts. Such a configuration reveals a unique system for channelling human movement and circulation, which is very similar to the one discussed at Malia. Those who entered the Palace through the major public entrance(s) either immediately arrived at the central court or arrived at the central court through passing the northeast court and a small corridor. Both the northeast (almost a perfect square) and the central court (a rectangle) are among the largest spaces in the building and are directly situated behind a major entrance. These shallow spaces are therefore the main venues to accommodate the majority of the visitors who were allowed to access the property. The builders of Zakros conceptually thought over this main axis, which is the true heart of the building and so they had the possibility to structure human circulation and interaction with maximal efficiency. This made the Palace rather inaccessible since access to the other units was a very exclusive matter. It has been argued that the central court of the Palace of Zakros should have been visible from parts of the town situated on

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<sup>887</sup> Access- and depthmap analysis for Zakros with circulation patterns and quantitative results, see Letesson 2009, 257-263.

a higher level than the actual Palace.<sup>888</sup> The fact that the town overlooks the Palace, with direct views to the central court, made Adams conclude that this configuration does not suggest exclusivity in the Neopalatial period.<sup>889</sup> However, such observations are very questionable, maybe even unjustified. It is true that the central court of Zakros is indeed visible nowadays from several parts of the town, since the latter was built on higher points of the hill looking down onto the Palace. However, one should not confuse the picture of Zakros nowadays with the appearance of the town in the past. Although the height of the building is not known, a comparison with the other Minoan Palaces suggests that the building probably was at least two stories high, which could easily close off all visibility from the town. There is no reason to believe that the central court of the Palace was visible from the slightly higher situating and sometimes immediately adjoining town houses. The only features a Minoan could have observed were the monumental outer façades of the building giving Zakros the same exclusive character as the other Palaces. In this way, the palatial elite could perfectly control who could view and enter into the Palace. If the ability to see and participate in performative activities within the Palace is linked with personal status and power, than the Palace of Zakros had indeed the same exclusive character as the other Palaces.

The central court was at each of the Palaces the most controlling space in the entire configuration and has more or less the same properties, i.e. the same rectangular shape, large floor area, the most central place in terms of circulation, closely situated to the exterior and strongly elaborated, which are several arguments to illustrate that also the central court forms the ideal place for the reception of the majority of the people who were allowed to enter the Palace. The central court of Knossos measured 53 by 28 meters and thus comprises an area of 1484 square meters. With a normal spacing of 3.4 to 3.6 persons pro square meter, about ca. 5435 persons could assemble in the central court<sup>890</sup>, or roughly a quarter of the population of Neopalatial Knossos.<sup>891</sup> Of course, this number does not reflect a reality, since there would be no place for other activities such as the

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<sup>888</sup> Adams 2007, 370.

<sup>889</sup> Adams (2007, 370): "If the ability to witness both 'ceremonial' and 'mundane' activities is linked to knowledge and therefore power, Knossos most effectively set an intimidating tone, Zakros the least."

<sup>890</sup> Gesell 1987, 126.

<sup>891</sup> Whitelaw 2001, 27.

execution of a certain rituals, for example around the Tripartite Shrine situated at the western inner façade.<sup>892</sup>

Also Phaistos shows a strong elaboration. The large investment of energy in the elaboration of the northern façade bordering the central court, which is oriented towards Mount Dicte where the sacred caves of Kamares and the Dictaeon Cave are situated (some even argued that the northern façade is a architectural copy of Mount Dicte), are strong indications that this elaboration was meaningful and that when specific ritual performances were executed at the central court, these were focused at this façade. Other important spaces in close connection with the central court are units 23 and 24, which are bench sanctuaries.<sup>893</sup>

Compared to the other Palaces, the western inner façade at Malia had a very open character, which is very different from the situation at the other Palaces. The openness of the building suggests a very particular way of executing rituals. The loggia, the stairs with the kernos (unit XVII), the bothros, the limestone ball and stone platforms in the central court give at least the impression that some specific kind of ritual behavior was performed inside the central court.<sup>894</sup> Although the specific layout of the central court suggests specific ritual performances, the absence of such features within the north and northwest courts indicates that these were no foci for performative events or social occasions but primarily functioned as transit zones. The central court, however, with its number of fixed features, was surely a setting for the execution of ritual performances.

In the first part of the discussion, it came forward that the central court was a semi-public space and access to it was only granted “under condition”, something that is illustrated by its controlled access, an evolution clearly recognized at each of the Minoan Palaces in the Neopalatial period.<sup>895</sup> Additionally, as the nature of the performative events executed in and around the Minoan Palaces is already an elitarian activity as will be thoroughly discussed later in this dissertation (Chapter 5.2.2.) one should rather describe access to

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<sup>892</sup> Panagiotopoulos 2006, 35.

<sup>893</sup> On the central court, northern facade and the bench sanctuaries at Phaistos, see section 4.2.4.5.1; Preziosi 1983, 131-132; Graham 1970, 233; Gesell 1985,128; Pernier and Banti 1951,152; Hitchcock 2000,183-184.

<sup>894</sup> On the central court of Malia see section 4.2.3.8; On the Loggia, see section 4.2.3.5.

<sup>895</sup> Palyvou 2004, 209.



the central court as exclusive and reserved for a minority of the Minoan community.<sup>896</sup> Because access to the central court was tightly controlled from the outside, one could argue that the Minoans restricted access to this place of assembly, which made the social interaction inside the central court already a rather “private” matter. The large floor area, the strong elaboration of the surrounding facades, the possibility to close off and restrain circulation to the deeper parts of the building by means of its centrality and closeness to the exterior would make the central court an ideal space for the reception of visitors. At the same time, the channeling and guidance of visitors to the central court gave the hosts of the performative event the possibility to control and structure social interaction.

Apart from the courtyards there are several other areas inside the Palace that could be used as venues for exclusive occasions, reserved for a far smaller amount of people. Most of these spaces are immediately adjacent to the central court or situated somewhat deeper in the building. In past and recent literature, some of these types of venues are referred to as the Domestic quarters of the building. In order to reach them one had to overcome several physical boundaries such as doors, transitory spaces and maybe even guards.

At Knossos, the Domestic quarter with the King’s and Queen’s Megaron (fig. 32, n. 88-103) was situated in the east wing. It should be seen as one of the main exclusive places for assembly in the building, only accessible by the Grand Staircase (88-88a). Both the Minoan halls of the King’s and Queen’s Megaron were suitable for social occasions, however, the floor area available for social gatherings as compared to the central court is much smaller, which means that generally speaking these spaces could accommodate far less people as the central courts.<sup>897</sup> At Knossos, the decorative program of the architectural suite and the numerous pier-and-door partitions are indications that an important element in the layout was the purposeful control of movement, visibility and interaction between the users of this complex in general by the means of physical boundaries.<sup>898</sup> This control of access, movement and visibility does not only come forward from the internal layout, but is also demonstrated by the single entrance point

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<sup>896</sup> Driessen 2004, 79.

<sup>897</sup> Discussion of the King’s and Queen’s Megaron, see sections 4.2.2.2 and 5.2.2. this volume.

<sup>898</sup> Evans argued that at the Domestic Quarter at Knossos the doors were always secured from the inner/more private part, which suggests the conscious intention to control accessibility, see Evans 1930, 319: fig. 213.

from the central court (the Grand Staircase) that canalized the circulation to this area. Similar observations can be made for the other Minoan Palaces as well. Graham identified the Residential quarters in Malia and Phaistos, whereas Platon described them for Zakros.<sup>899</sup> With the publication of Graham, the habitational purpose of these architectural suites became widely accepted<sup>900</sup> and the grandeur of these sets of rooms was underlined, as he noted that “the general quality of the principal rooms both in regard to size and decoration distinguishes them from ordinary rooms in the Palace”<sup>901</sup>. To me, it is questionable that such a situation of increased privacy is intentionally sought for residential purposes. The strong investment in elaboration and the strongly segmented space speaks in favor of the view that although the area of the Domestic quarter could indeed be used for habitational purposes, it could also be used to receive guests of a certain status, as it forms the most monumentally elaborated part in direct relation to the central court.<sup>902</sup> They were multifunctional architectural suites and in the case of performative events they could be used as main areas for social display.

At Phaistos (fig. 35), there were two Minoan Hall complexes, i.e. in the east wing (n. 63-64) and the north wing (n. 50-51, 77-86) of the building. There is much discussion whether or not the complex in the east wing was a sanctuary complex or a residential quarter.<sup>903</sup> In this dissertation neither one interpretation has to be excluded or preferred since room function can change within particular contexts and therefore this complex may have been used for different purposes. Standing in the central court, one enters this complex through a dog-leg corridor. The strong elaboration of the built space and the

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<sup>899</sup> See Graham 1959; Platon 1971, 174-180.

<sup>900</sup> See also Driessen 1982; Driessen (1982, 57) mainly agrees with Graham’s reconstruction of the residential units in the Minoan Palaces, however, the fact that several Palaces (i.e. Phaistos and Zakros) contain more than one Minoan Hall complex makes him suggest that the most remote one were probably intended for the royal family, whereas the less secluded should be looked upon as areas for formal occasions.

<sup>901</sup> Graham 1959, 51.

<sup>902</sup> See Evans (1930, 346-348) in which he states that the Domestic quarter also had a “religious side”; Hitchcock (2000, 157-175) questioned the strict classification of the Minoan Hall complex as done by Graham (1959) and Driessen (1982). Instead, Hitchcock (2000, 190) notes that these quarters “could have been given over to a variety of functions depending on the needs of the occupants”.

<sup>903</sup> Discussion of the East Minoan Hall complex at Phaistos, see section 4.2.4.3; Pernier and Banti 1951, 171-178 and 466-467; Hitchcock 2000, 172-173; Gesell 1985, 128-129.

numerous doors and partitions in between the several units show that its builders have the opportunity to create one large open area of interacting spaces when all doors were open or screen off different units from each other by closing different sets of doors, and thus separate the activities within these units from each other. This means that they could secure and restrain movement and visibility, but most importantly social interaction. Further, one should note that even if all doors were open inside this complex, the more one segments interior space, the more a feeling of “lack of space” was created, which created a strong atmosphere of intimacy among the people. Being part of the select circle of people that was allowed to gather here was a major achievement. In general the exclusive character of this area pleads for the assembly of a much smaller group of people. The closed off character of this east wing complex and the way in which it opens up towards the peristyle court (64) that bordered it in the east suggests a special function for the east hall.<sup>904</sup> Further, if one accepts that there was an entrance to the peristyle court (64) then this quarter could be accessed by this back entrance, which could mean that the hosting elite could access this area without showing themselves to the people that entered the building through the public entrance, which in turn enforced the social distance between them.<sup>905</sup>

The north Domestic quarter at Phaistos (n. 50-51, 77-86) and its annexes were only accessed from the central court by staircase 39 and corridor 41 that respectively gave out unto a vestibule (75) and a peristyle court (74).<sup>906</sup> Somewhere in the back of the peristyle court there should have been a stairway that gave access to the Minoan halls of the Domestic quarter. The remodeled access map shows that these spaces were very closed off, since to enter this place one either had to pass staircase 39 or corridor 41 and stairs (42-43), again the major transition spaces were situated around the central court. The area of the vestibule and the peristyle (n. 75-74-93) was therefore an ideal venue for private occasions.

Pernier and Banti describe rooms 71, 74 in the following way:

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<sup>904</sup> Shaw 1993: fig. 21-23.

<sup>905</sup> Pernier and Banti 1951, 186-187.

<sup>906</sup> On the north Domestic quarter, the peristyle court and annexes, see section 4.2.4.2.

“È caratteristica di questo quartiere di parata l’essere ad un angolo del palazzo e, quindi, appartato e separato, di modo che le eventuali feste non disturbavano nè le occupazioni ed il lavoro giornaliero, nè la vita private dei signori del luogo.”<sup>907</sup>

Such architectural environments enforced the feeling of social distance between people in within these areas and those in the central court tremendously. Further, the strong compartmentalization of the built space of the Minoan hall complexes gave the possibility to structure even this privileged circle of people according to differences in status and power.

At Malia (fig. 37), quarter III consisted out of a Minoan hall with numerous pier-and-door partitions and porticoes on the north and the east side that gave out onto the large open courtyard area that in Minoan times could have been a garden.<sup>908</sup> The Minoan hall complex (III) was one of the most remote areas of Malia since it could only be reached through a series of corridors and vestibules (quarter IV) that could only be reached through the northwestern court. Quarter III could only be accessed when all these spaces were crossed. The large number of doors in this quarter shows the will to structure and partitionize the built space to the extreme. The lustral basin and the small pillar crypt seem to be the most inaccessible parts of this quarter, which makes sense as they are, together with complex VII, the most sacred parts of the west wing.

At Zakros (fig. 41), the “Royal quarter” existed out of two adjacent Minoan halls and the hall of the cistern in the east wing (XXXVI and XXXVII with LXII).<sup>909</sup> At Zakros no noteworthy finds are found that prove the residential character of this quarter. As has been stated above, we do not want to stick to the simple one-sided function of the Domestic quarters and rather focus on their multifunctional character.

To summarize the discussion regarding the Domestic quarters, it becomes clear that the size, shape and number of fixed and semi-fixed elements in these units shows that in particular circumstances these units could have functioned as important venues for

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<sup>907</sup> Pernier and Banti 1951, 237.

<sup>908</sup> Discussion of Quarter III at Malia, see section 4.2.3.2; also Pelon 1980, 100-123.

<sup>909</sup> Discussion of the Residential quarter at Zakros, see section 4.2.5.2 this volume.

occasions. They are mostly, but not exclusively, immediately adjacent to the central court, have smaller floor areas, are rectangular or square of shape and have been minutely elaborated. Further, they are situated at higher depth levels, which means that numerous physical boundaries restrained access and visibility to these architectural suites with their different internal partitions. The clear intention to restrain access to this quarter becomes clear if we consider the numerous doors that create the very closed off character of this architectural suite. Whatever happened here was carefully screened off from spectators in the central. The numerous pier-and-door partitions created an environment which gave the possibility to structure social interaction among the people within them according to differences in status and authority.

Apart from the central court and Domestic quarters, several other units at each of the Minoan Palaces could have served as places for more secluded occasions.

At Knossos (fig. 32), another noteworthy area is situated in the west wing of the Palace and is called the “Throne Room complex”.<sup>910</sup> The rooms are again small in size. Based on the numerous fixed and semi-fixed features of this suite, there is strong reason to believe that the activities carried out within this suite of rooms was connected to the execution of ritual performances.<sup>911</sup> Other units which are interesting to be mentioned are the two pillar crypts, situated next to each other behind the “Tripartite Shrine”.<sup>912</sup> The pillar crypts and cluster of rooms around it, i.e. the “Room of the Stone Seat” and the storage area suggest that this cluster of rooms could be seen as some kind of sanctuary.

At Phaistos (fig. 35) several other units apart from the central court and the Minoan Hall complexes can be characterized as ideal settings for assemblies.<sup>913</sup> Immediately adjacent to the central court are the bench sanctuaries (units 23 and 24) situated in the north part of the west wing. The small size of these areas and the internal elaboration with fixed features such as benches and altars are good indications that whatever kind of activities happened here, these were intended for a far smaller amount of people. When people

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<sup>910</sup> Mirié 1979; Niemeier 1986; Reusch 1958.

<sup>911</sup> Discussion of the relative chronology, the fresco dates and function of the Throne Room complex at Knossos, see section 4.2.2.3. and 5.2.2.

<sup>912</sup> Discussion of the Tripartite Shrine at Knossos, see section 4.2.2.3. and 5.2.2. this volume.

<sup>913</sup> The so-called “guest apartments” (cluster of rooms 15 to 21) are not included in the analyses because they probably were not used as a gathering area during performative events, see section 4.2.4.4; Pernier and Banti 1951, 118-130: fig. 66-74; Gesell 1985, 128; Graham 1962, 40.

stood at the central court, admired its beautiful elaborated facades and ended up in front of these bench sanctuaries, they did not have the possibility to see what happened inside these units. Therefore, it is suggestive that they did not actively participate in the ritual activities within these spaces.

Another cluster of rooms that is worth mentioning are units 25 and corridor 26 with its surrounding magazines.<sup>914</sup> It has been argued earlier that because of its wide dimensions (4.3 x 20.15m) the central corridor 26 could have had a functionality beyond being a simple corridor. One could argue that taking into consideration the entire cluster, room 25 served as a foyer where the people gathered before entering the large banquet hall (26) with the magazines behind it.<sup>915</sup> Therefore room 25 was the transit zone through which the people passed from the open central court to the more secluded banquet hall in the back.

At Malia (fig. 37), quarter VI and VII have been traditionally considered as the second major locus in the west wing.<sup>916</sup> The most important feature of quarter VI is the Loggia, oriented to the central court and having an importance in the execution of certain ritual activities at the central court. Units VII 3-4 formed a pillar crypt and were equipped with a bench and the pillar crypt itself containing two central columns. Again, these spaces are situated directly adjacent to the central court and their closed off character and smaller floor area suggest a more subtle and personal ambience for social interaction. A last venue for more exclusive occasions would be the hypostyle hall of Malia, which is situated in the north wing of the Palace.<sup>917</sup> This “Banquet hall” existed of two main units, i.e. IX1 and IX2. Unit IX2 was the actual hypostyle hall. The suggestion of doors in the openings reinforces the possibility of restraining access to this area in order to create a remote area for social interaction. The upper paved floor was reached by means of a double stairway with a threshold in front of it. The entrance to unit IX1 also had a large threshold in front of it which was a clear boundary signal for the visitor.

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<sup>914</sup> Discussion of the magazine complex at Phaistos, see section 4.2.4.4.

<sup>915</sup> Beyer proposed that at Phaistos the large room with highly decorated façade faced towards the central court served as a “Vorraum” and that the corridor that connected the different magazines actually was a large “Bankettsaal”, see Beyer 1987.

<sup>916</sup> Discussion of Quarter VI and VII at Malia, see section 4.2.3.3.

<sup>917</sup> Description of the hypostyle hall at Malia, see section 4.2.3.6.

At Zakros (fig. 38), the north pillar hall (XXXII) is a good candidate for secluded occasions.<sup>918</sup> Access to this hall was restrained by the most northern door of the tripartite division that bordered the central court. Once the Minoan visitor entered the corridor that lay behind it, he still had to overcome one more door that blocked direct circulation inside this hall. That this hall fits well as a venue for occasions is strengthened by the presence of a kitchen quarter at the east side. Although closely situated to the central court, whatever happened in this part of the building was rather screened off from suggesting that access to the events or ceremonies was a rather exclusive matter.

In the west wing of Zakros, several units could have been used for more private and exclusive occasions.<sup>919</sup> XXVIII is one of these, situated directly to the east of the shrine compartments and accessed from the central court through a door with a large monolithic threshold and a step in front of it.<sup>920</sup> The polytheron offered the possibility to close off one part of the hall from the other, creating a continuum or block view and movement. It seems that this hall was treated with a large investment in elaboration:

“The magnificence of the room must have been enhanced by the lively colors of the columns and the decorations of walls and floors. Unfortunately there are only scanty remains of the badly burned wall paintings. However, the stucco frames that divided the floors into decorative panelling were well preserved, through the substance that filled the spaces between the panels has disappeared completely.”<sup>921</sup>

Unit XXIX has traditionally been interpreted as the Banquet hall of the Palace and was decorated in the same fashion as the hall of the ceremonies.<sup>922</sup> The general room size, the rectangular shape and the strong elaboration of this complex are good indications that this set of rooms could serve as a venue for more exclusive gatherings.

The cluster of rooms comprising the vestibule hall IX and the central shrine complex is worth mentioning here as well. The vestibule hall forms the major transition space in

<sup>918</sup> Discussion of the north pilared hall at Zakros, see section 4.2.5.4; Also Platon 1985, 204-208.

<sup>919</sup> Discussion of the west wing at Zakros, see section 4.2.5.3.

<sup>920</sup> Platon 1985, 155; Platon 1985, 157.

<sup>921</sup> Platon 1985, 156.

<sup>922</sup> Platon 1985, 170-172.

order to reach the area of the central shrine.<sup>923</sup> By passing this unit (IX) one arrives in the central shrine complex at Zakros that apart from the actual shrine held (XXIII) several other spaces such as a lustral basin. The shrine was a small sanctuary chamber with a ledge (podium) at the back of the shrine and built within a niche in the south wall. Across from the ledge a low bench was constructed and based on its size and sturdiness it could only be used by one worshipper to sit on, which illustrates the exclusive character of the activities inside this space. The shrine XXIII was directly connected with the lustral basin (XXIV), the treasury room with ritual objects (XXV) and the room of the repositories (XXII) in the south corner of the west wing.<sup>924</sup> As they are situated in secluded areas of the Palace, these spaces were the most inaccessible spaces inside the complex. Their small ground floor area indicates that whatever happened in these spaces was even more exclusive than what happened in the Minoan halls or the halls of the ceremonies, the banquet hall or the north pillar hall, and that these activities were only reserved for the very few, maybe even one or two persons.

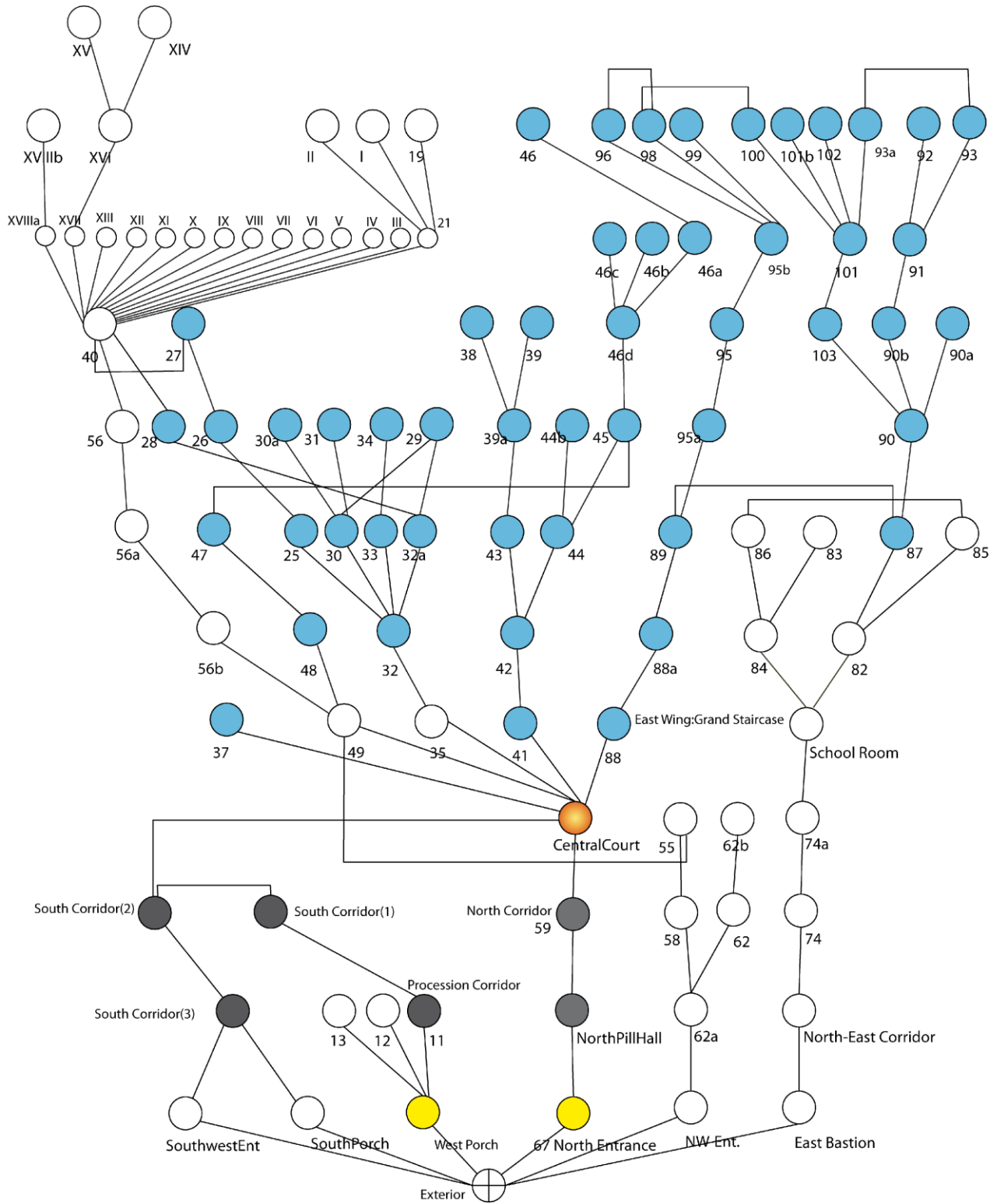
To conclude, the analysis of the circulation patterns suggests that those who were responsible for the actual construction of the Minoan Palaces aimed to structure the built space in such a way that it became an active mediator in structuring social relations during social occasions. However, the builders worked with interesting contrasts, with the central court being the largest place for assembly inside the building, and several other spaces installed in close proximity to the central court, which were able to accommodate a far less number of people and were most probably reserved for the highest elite. The easy manner, in which access to these rooms could be strictly controlled, resulted in a feeling of distance, a physical distance that reflected social distance inside these communities. The elite was very close and one could almost touch them, see them, and hear them talk. At the same time, they were very far, as only very few who were given access to the Palace would be able to stand, dine, interact and/or participate in the more exclusive activities they were involved in.

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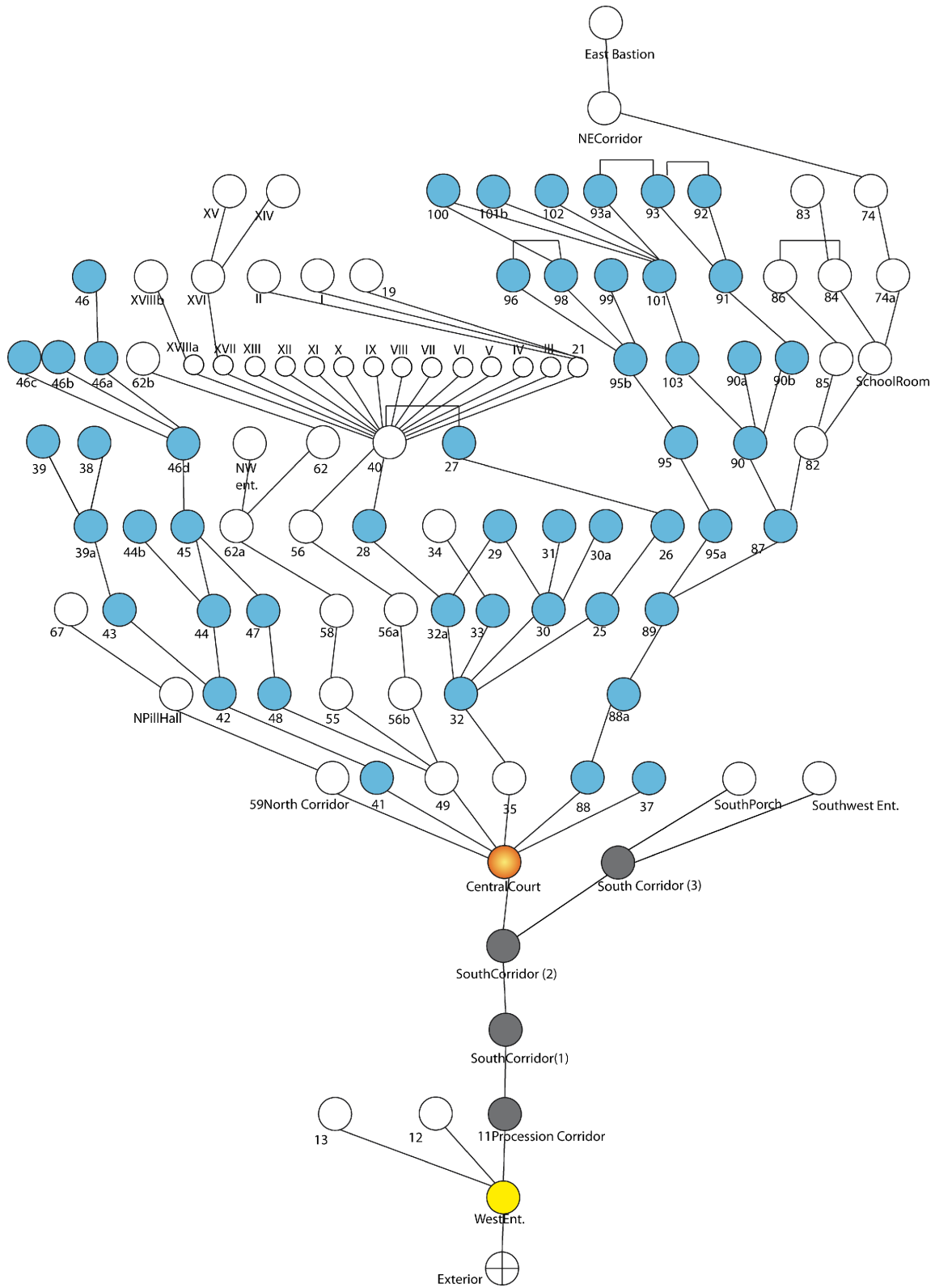
<sup>923</sup> Platon 1985, 103.

<sup>924</sup> Platon 1985, 120-127.



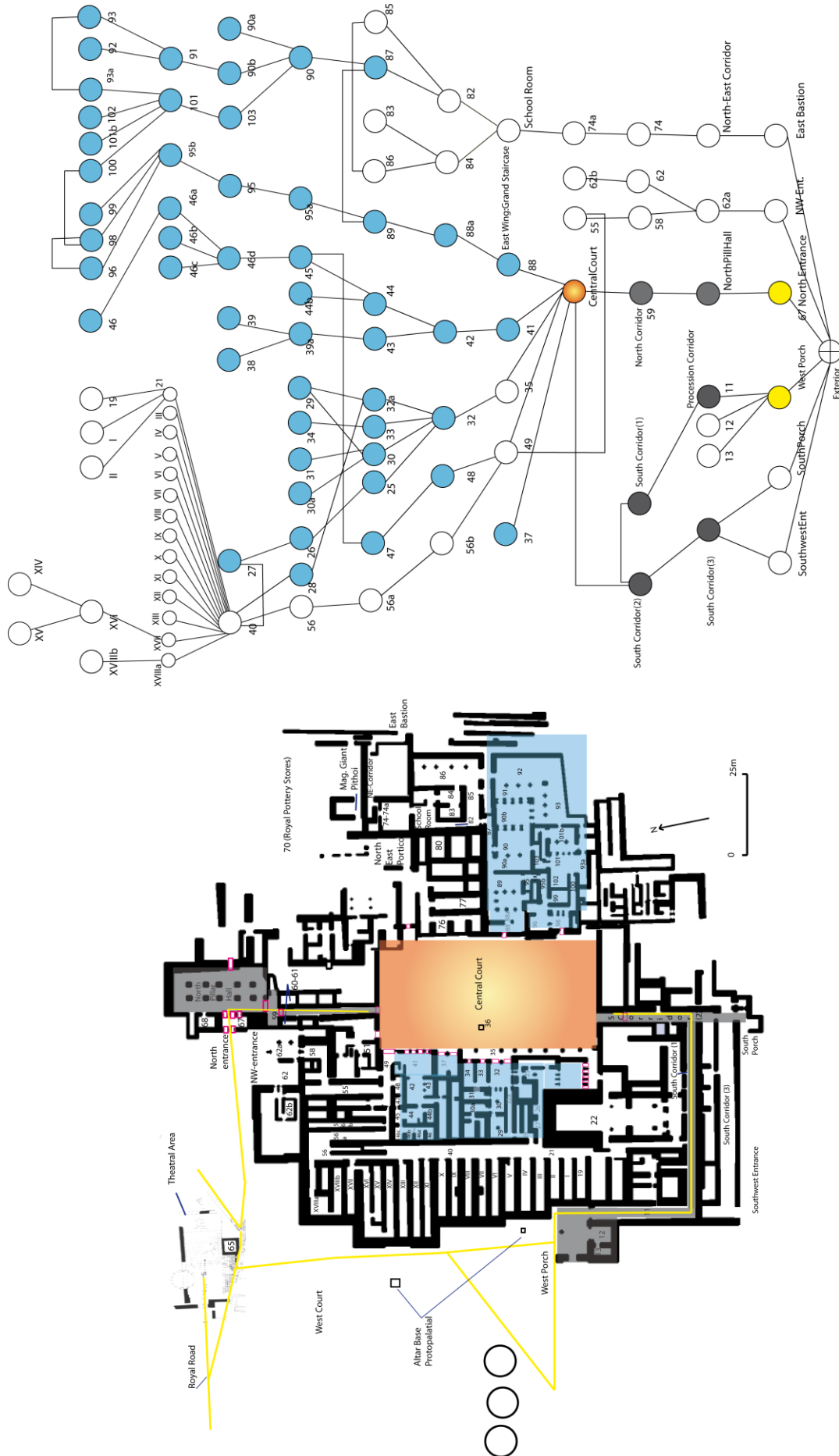


**Figure 29: General Circulation map of the Palace of Knossos with all entrances considered: in Yellow and Grey the main public entrances and suggested route taken by visitors; in Orange the central court as the dominant space in the complex (inclusive occasions); in Blue: units for exclusive occasions (own drawing).**

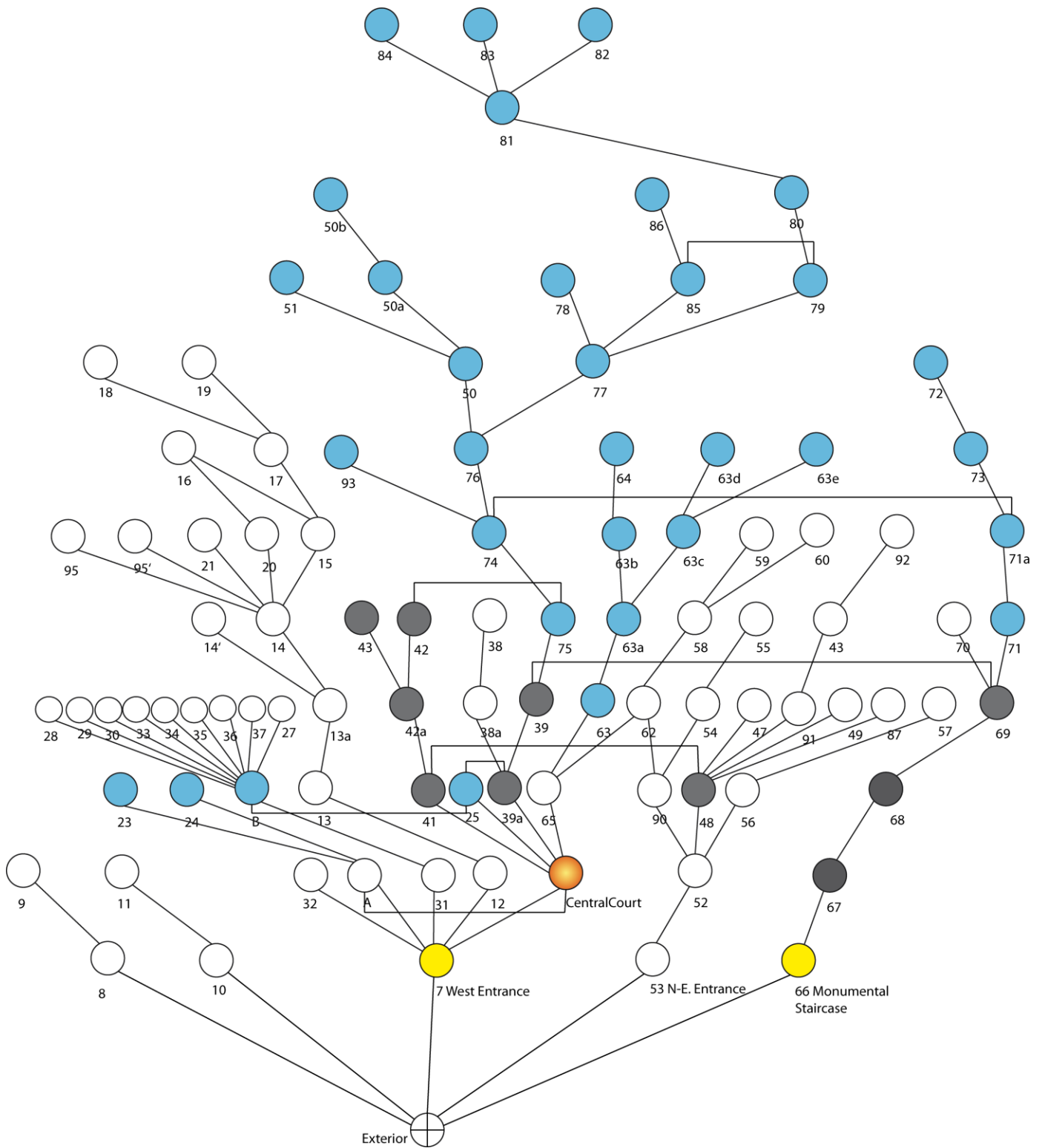


**Figure 30: Circulation map of the Palace of Knossos starting at the West Entrance: in Yellow and Grey the main public entrance and suggested route taken by visitors; in Orange the central court as the dominant space in the complex (inclusive occasions); in Blue: units for exclusive occasions (own drawing).**

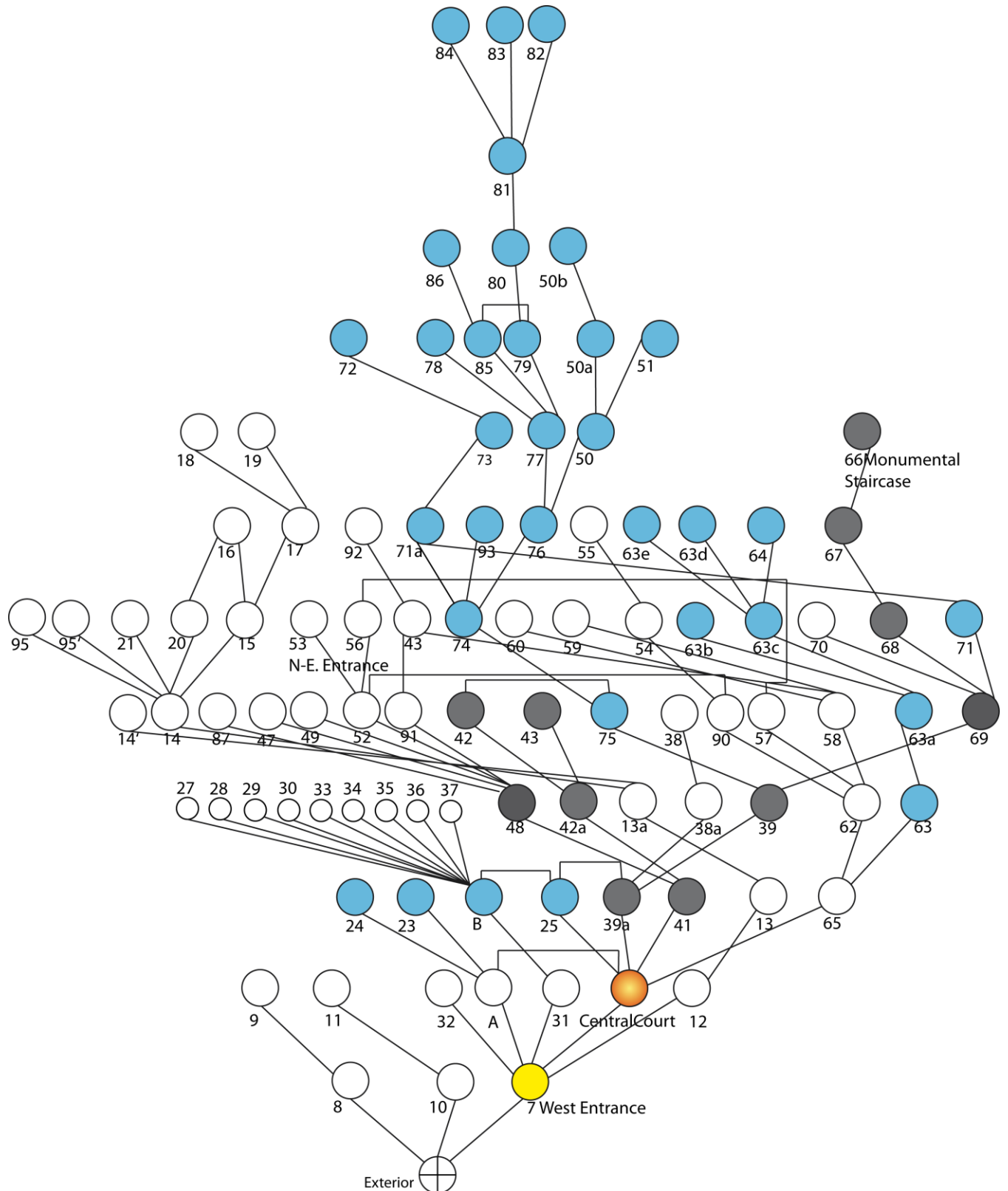




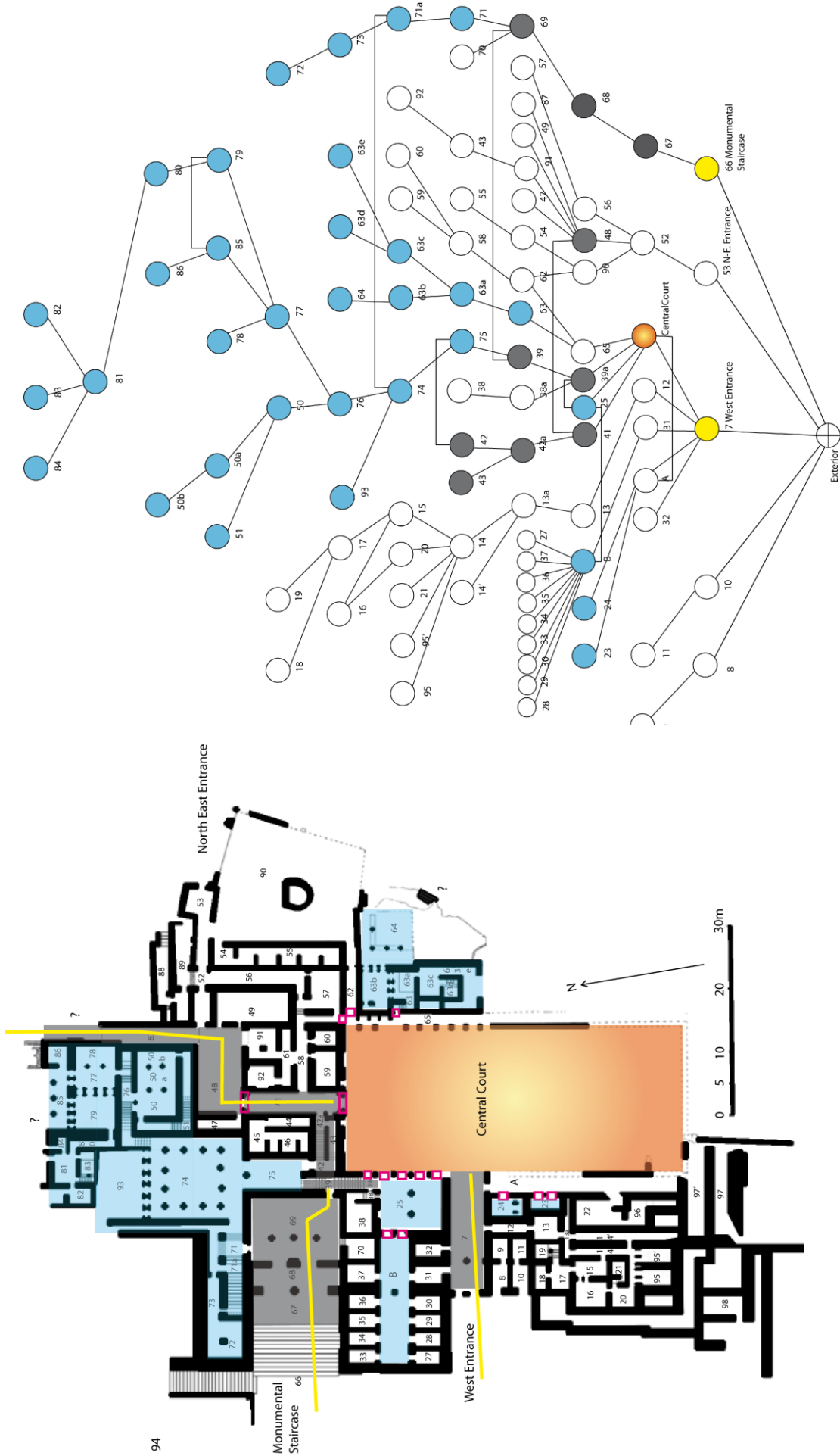
**Figure 32: LEFT: Map of Knossos: The concept of centrality explained. Orange the central court (inclusive occasions); Yellow and Grey the route taken by visitors; Pink different sorts of boundaries (doors and/or guards); Blue: areas reserved for exclusive occasions. RIGHT: Circulation map of the Palace of Knossos with the positioning of the respective units in corresponding colours (own drawing).**



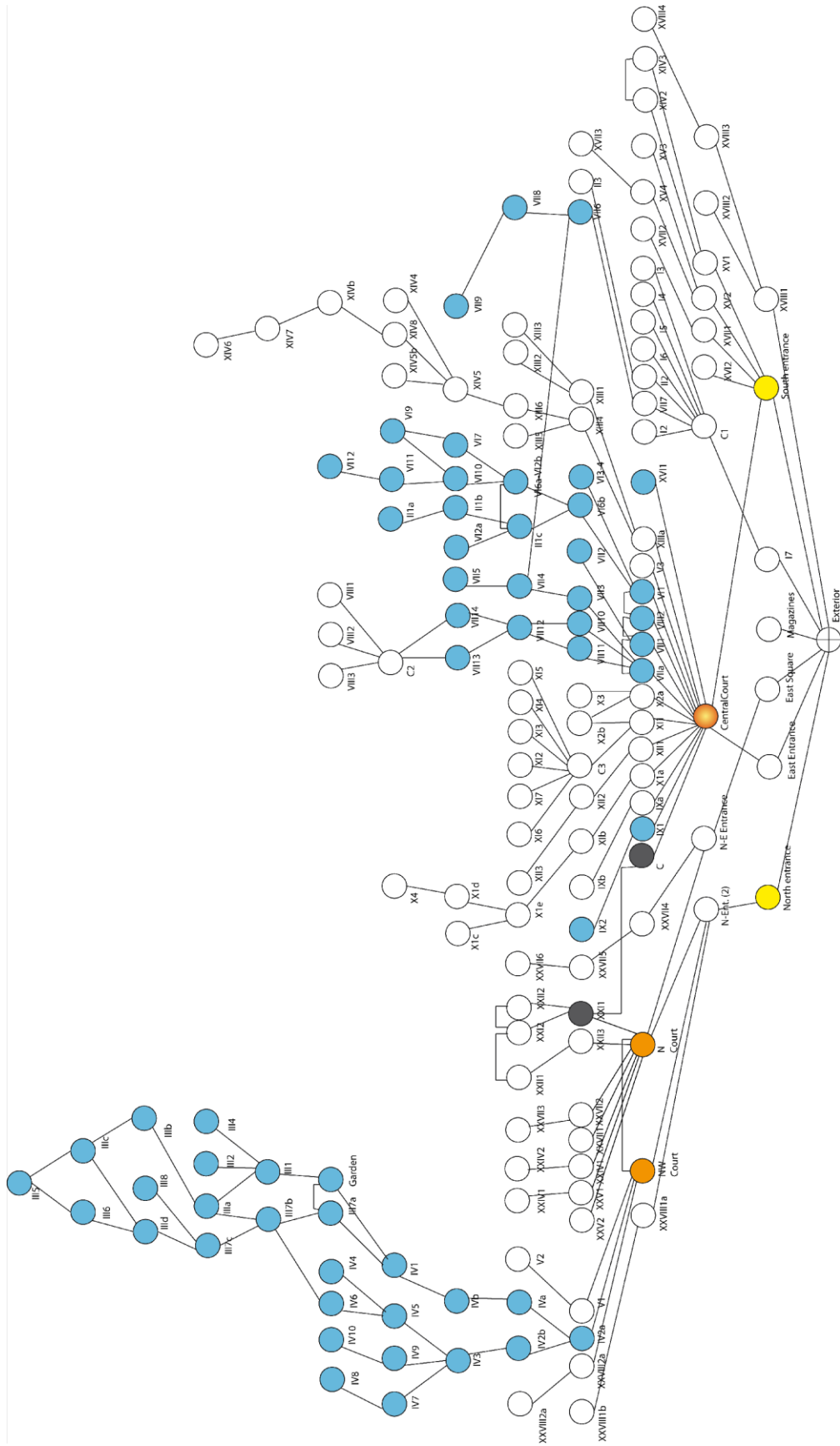
**Figure 33: General Circulation map of the Palace of Phaistos with all entrances considered: in Yellow and Grey the main public entrances and suggested route taken by visitors; in Orange the central court as the dominant space in the complex (inclusive occasions); in Blue: units for exclusive occasions (own drawing).**



**Figure 34: Circulation map of the Palace of Phaistos from the West Entrance Corridor (7): in Yellow and Grey the main public entrances and suggested route taken by visitors; in Orange the central court as the dominant space in the complex (inclusive occasions); in Blue: units for exclusive occasions (own drawing).**



**Figure 35: LEFT: Map of Phaistos: The concept of centrality explained. Orange the central court (inclusive occasions); Yellow and Grey the route taken by visitors; Pink different sorts of boundaries (doors and/or guards); Blue: areas reserved for exclusive occasions. RIGHT: Circulation map of the Palace of Phaistos with the positioning of the respective units in corresponding colours (own drawing).**



**Figure 36: General Circulation map of the Palace of Malia with all entrances considered: in Yellow and Grey the main public entrances and suggested route taken by visitors; in Orange the central court, the North and NW Courts as the dominant spaces in the complex (inclusive occasions); in Blue: units for exclusive occasions (own drawing).**



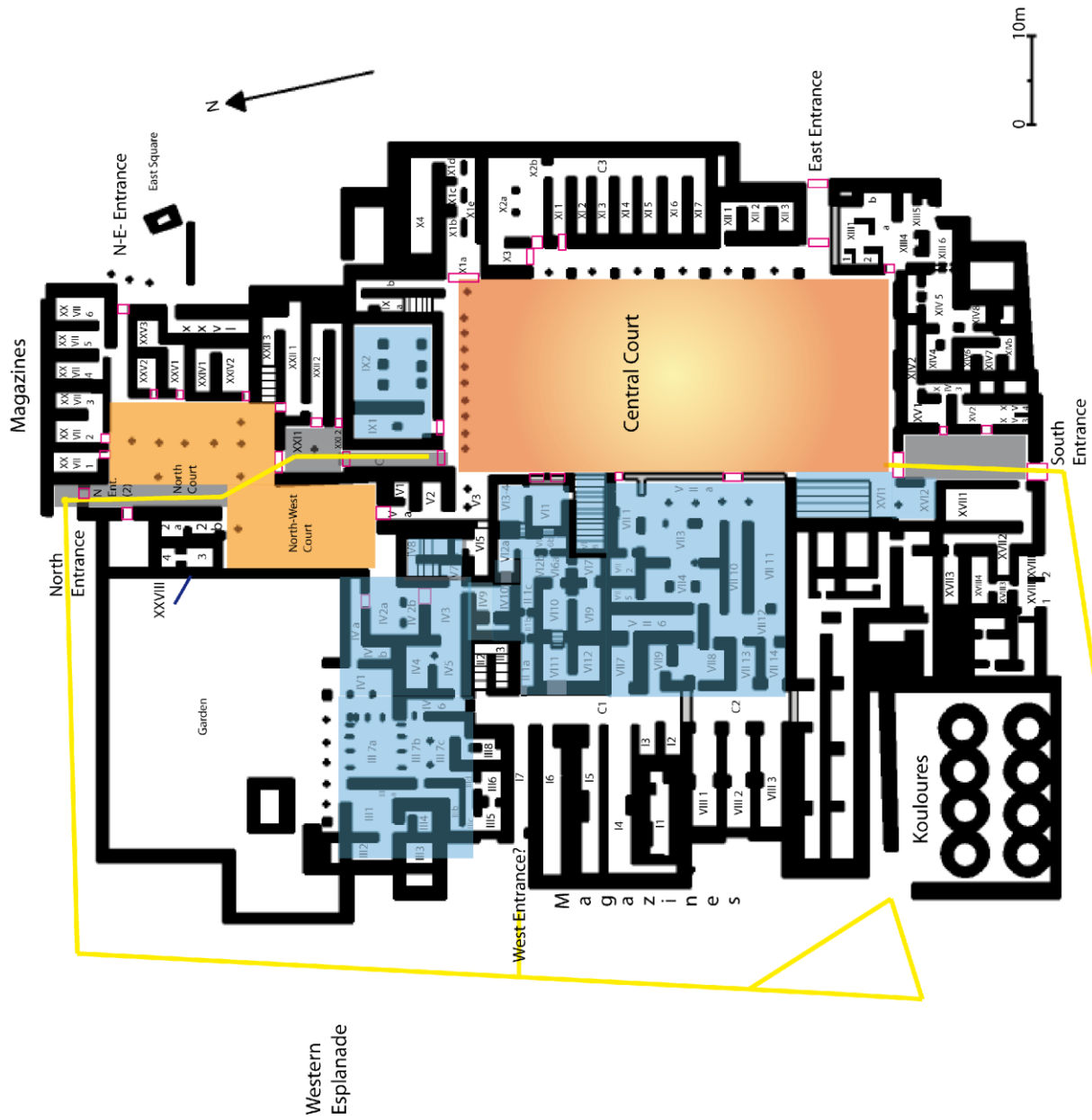
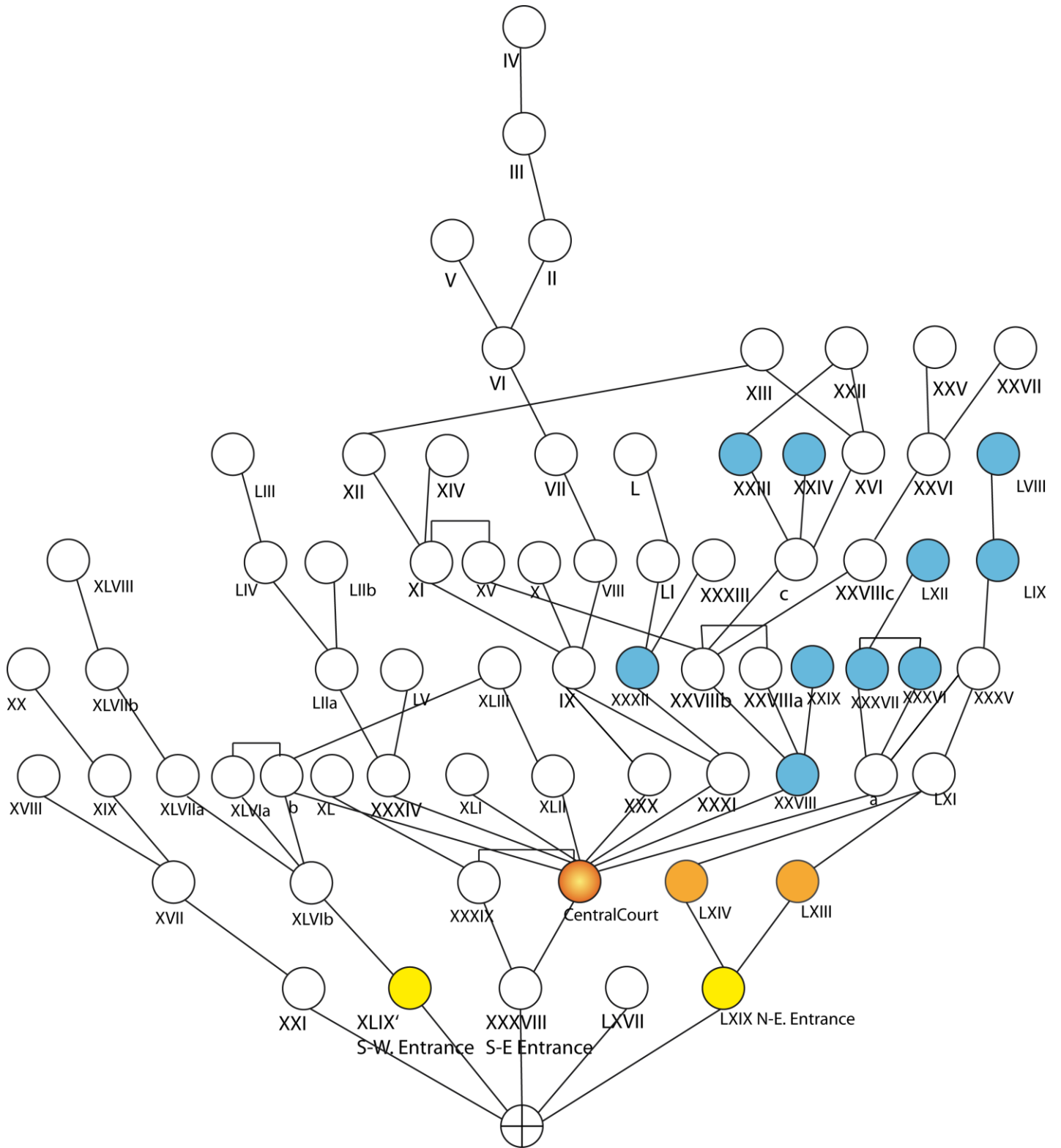
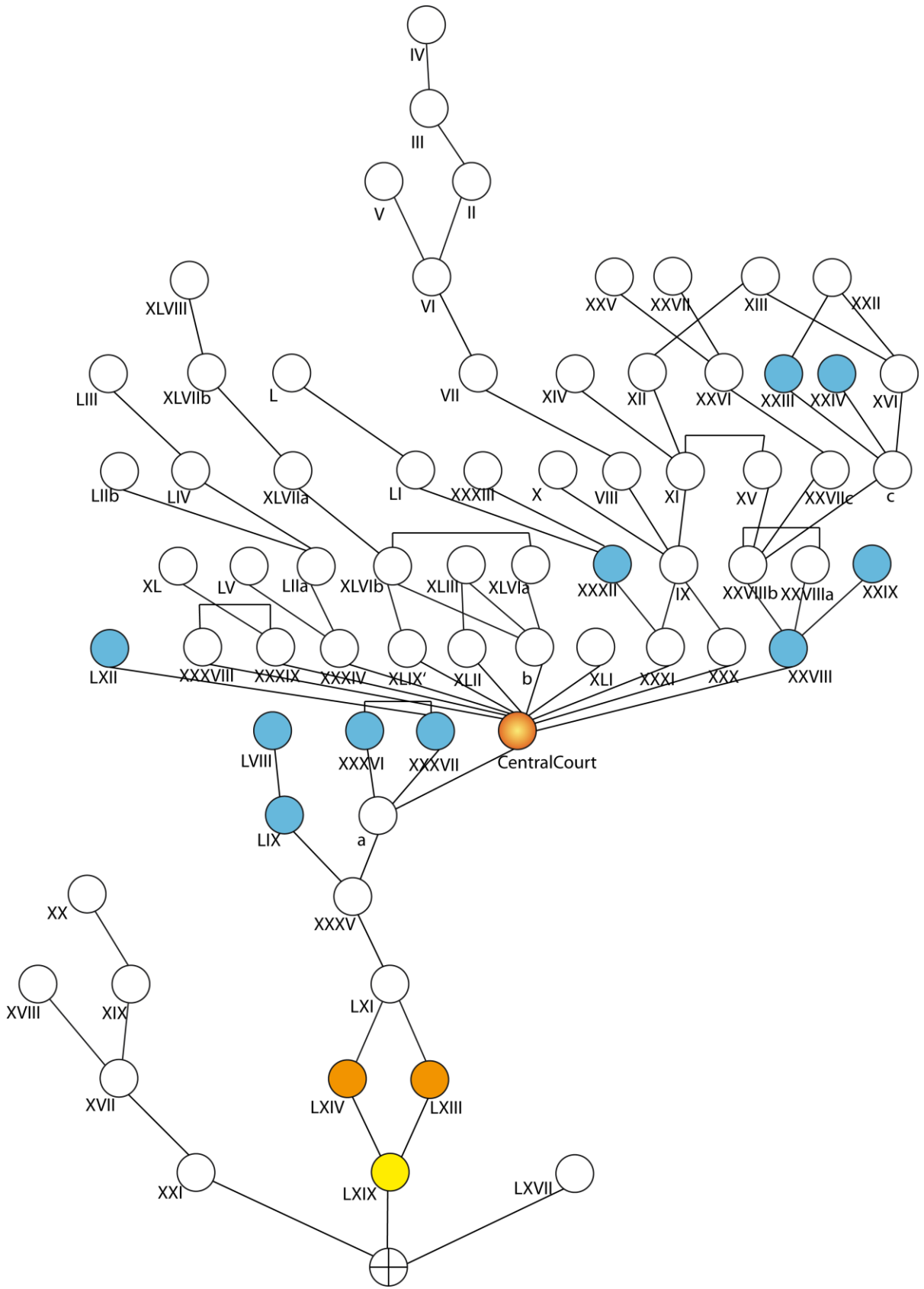


Figure 37: Map of Malia: The concept of centrality explained. Orange the central court (inclusive occasions); Light orange the North and NW courts. Yellow and Grey the main public entrances and the route taken by visitors; Pink different sorts of boundaries (doors and/or guards); Blue: areas are reserved for exclusive occasions. (own drawing)



**Figure 38: General Circulation map of the Palace of Zakros with all entrances considered:in Yellow the main public entrances as the points of departure for visitors; in Orange the central court and the NE Court (LXIV-LXIII) as the dominant spaces in the complex (central court = inclusive occasions); in Blue: units for exclusive occasions (own drawing).**



**Figure 39: Circulation map of the Palace of Zakros from the North Entrance: in Yellow the main public entrance as point of departure for visitors; in Orange the central court and the NE Court (LXIV-LXIII) as the dominant spaces in the complex (central court = inclusive occasions); in Blue: units for exclusive occasions (own drawing).**



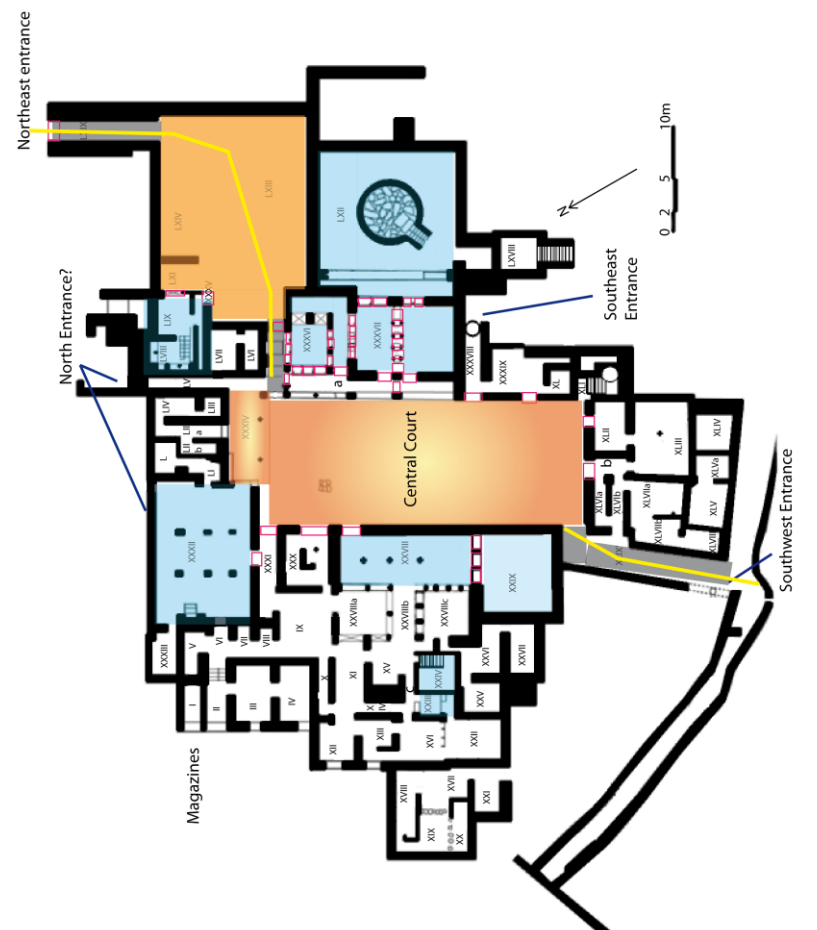
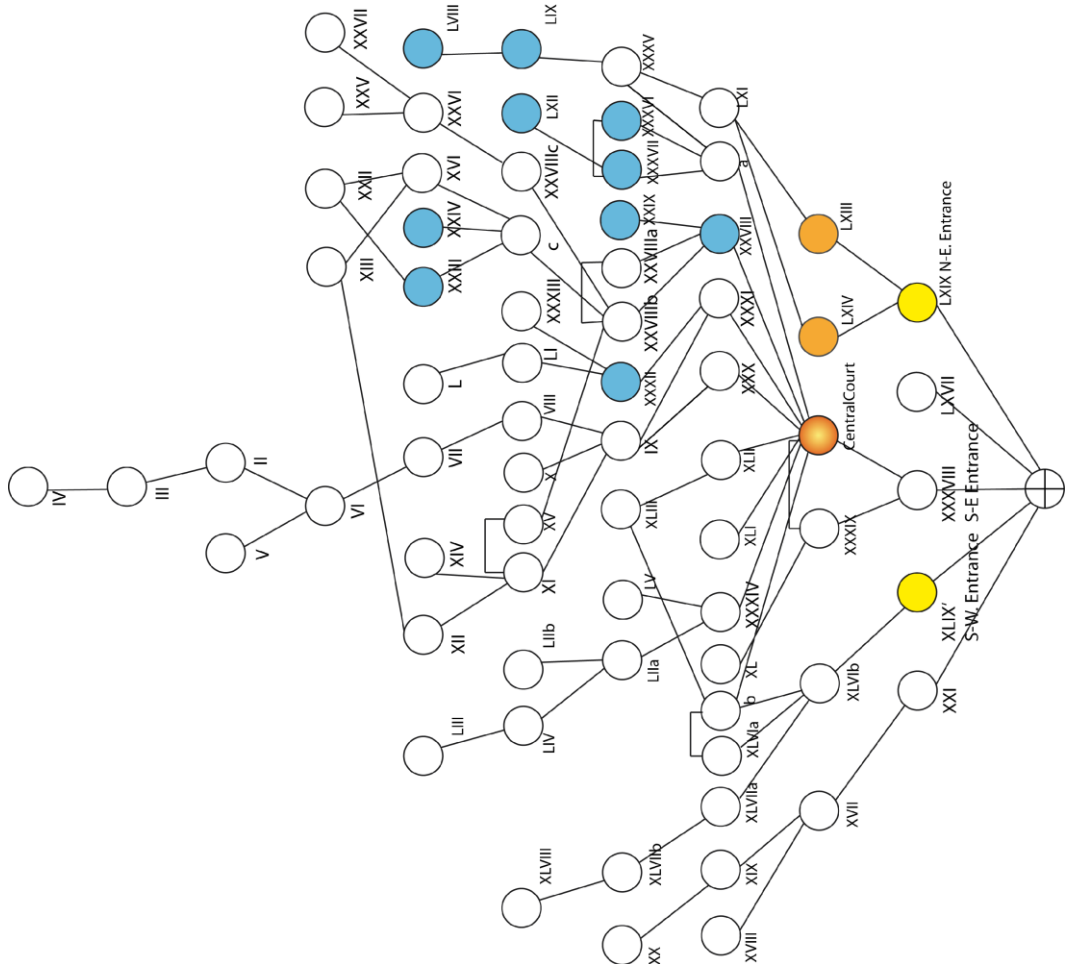


Figure 41: Map of Zakros: The concept of centrality explained. Orange the central court (inclusive occasions); Light orange the NE court. Yellow the main public entrances and the suggested route taken by visitors; Pink different sorts of boundaries (doors and/or guards); Blue: areas are reserved for exclusive occasions. RIGHT: Circulation map of the Palace of Zakros with the positioning of the respective units in corresponding colours (own drawing).

#### 4.2.7. The Minoan Palaces: An Alternative to the Traditional Inside-Outside Dialectic Model.

##### 4.2.7.1. The Traditional Inside-Outside Dialectic

In a recent article, Letesson argued the following: “the central court had a strong potential as a *privileged* theatre of encounter and co-presence. These courts undoubtedly formed, within the Palaces, the framework of a strong spatial solidarity and were a powerful pole of convergence. Thus, the main space of the Palaces – in terms of size, syntax, and symbolic outcome - was a gathering place and this seems corroborated by the little iconographic evidence we have.”<sup>925</sup> Although the central court was a gathering place, the discussion in the previous chapter thoroughly illustrated that access to the central court was controlled and privileged. Palyvou argued that the central court was a semi-public space, which was only accessed “under condition”.<sup>926</sup> Driessen describes this phenomenon as “a transition from one world, open to the view of the public, to another, hermetically closed off”.<sup>927</sup> The monumentality of the west façade stressed the clear physical distinction between the west and central courts and carried an important symbolic message. It functioned as a mental boundary between the realms of those who were allowed to enter the Palace and access the central court and those who were not.<sup>928</sup>

Within a context of social interaction, Driessen and Palyvou argued that the central court became a unifying tool for the expression of group cohesion<sup>929</sup> and it seems to be a *communis opinio* that social differences became even non-existent between those who accessed the central court. Bearing in mind the outcome of the previous discussion, the complexity of the built space of the Minoan Palaces with several internal venues for occasions suggests an environment which could be used for a social dynamic that goes beyond the simple inside-outside dialectic or a "dual layered mode of social interaction" as traditionally proposed. Such a structured built space creates an environment for "multi-

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<sup>925</sup> Letesson 2008, 211.

<sup>926</sup> Palyvou 2004, 209.

<sup>927</sup> Driessen 2004, 79; Also Panagiotopoulos 2006, 32-33.

<sup>928</sup> Panagiotopoulos 2006, 32-33; Cadogan 1976, 52; Van Effenterre 1987, 86, Hitchcock 2000, 66; Driessen 2004, 80.

<sup>929</sup> Driessen 2002, 9; Palyvou 2002, 172; Recently Panagiotopoulos 2006.

layered social interaction", which is much more representative for the socio-political complexity of the Late Bronze Age Minoan communities. Different venues for occasions could be used within the same performative event, simultaneously, to structure people in a much more complex manner as the simple inside-outside dichotomy. The fact that the raised walkways stopped at the central court does not mean that this court was the final destination for all Minoan visitors. The right to proceed further to the deeper parts of the building and participate in performative acts within these screened off areas could have been a major act of social display within the Minoan community which does not necessarily leave any material traces in the archaeological record (see part 5 this dissertation).

#### **4.2.7.2. Towards an Alternative Model: A Multi-Layered Mode Of Social Interaction.**

In this chapter it was illustrated by an evaluation of the circulation patterns and the physicality of the built space that the Minoan Palaces all shared the concept of *centrality* in which the primary entrance system is defined by a series of corridors, and/or vestibules with one or more courtyards that connect the central court of the Palace almost directly with the exterior world on the one hand, and with the regions that lie deeper in the complex on the other. The builders created a unique system of approach and circulation that was typified by the following configuration: entrances followed by a combination of corridors and/or vestibules that formed the main system of approach in order to channel the visitors to the central court by means of a minimum amount of physical boundaries such as doors, guards, and/or curtains. The spaciousness of the central court, its close situation to the exterior and its specific elaboration with fixed feature elements, are strong indications that the central court was the main place of assembly for the majority of the people, which were allowed to access the Palace. The central courts of the Minoan Palaces are closed off and restricted from the outside. Simultaneously, the central court provided access to a number of adjacent areas that can be described as internal venues for occasions such as Minoan halls and pillar crypts, sometimes in close connection with lustral basins. Letesson argued that such an environment "is undoubtedly a consequence of the fact that different categories of people had to use the same space in well-defined

relations”<sup>930</sup> and “the impact of the architectural elaboration and heterogeneity of poles of convergence reached such proportions that it may eventually have transformed their original essence of communality into an ever increasing tendency towards categorization and segmentation”.<sup>931</sup> Although Letesson mentions the importance of a strongly compartmentalized built space, the major challenge in Part 5 is to build around the hypothesis how different these separate venues could have been actively and possibly simultaneously used and perceived by Minoans during performative events. If not, one creates the danger to fall back into the simple “inside-outside” dichotomy. The distribution of internal gathering areas and the circulation pattern at the Palace of the Palaces suggest that one of the major concerns of the controllers was not only to control the movement of people throughout the complex, but also to create an architectural setting that permitted them to structure people according to differing social statuses; representative of the social climate of the time. The closer the social status of the visitor was to that of the controllers or inhabitants, the easier and sooner he or she was invited into the deeper and more secluded parts of the Palace. The strong partitioning of the built space (for example the Minoan hall complexes with several pier-and-door partitions) created the possibility to the hosts to structure social interaction according to social difference even within this privileged circle of people. Proximity and distance played therefore an essential role in the spatial concept and the social lives of the Minoans and this way of thinking can be seen at all of the Palaces. Physical and social distance seems to be closely related in Minoan society. The inhabitants/controllers situated clear boundaries between the front and back regions of the complex by the means of corridors and stairways, conform to the need to provide spatially distinct locations for receiving visitors of differing statuses.

One must admit that within the Neopalatial period the *centrality* concept becomes rather blurry within other forms of Neopalatial architecture (i.e. Villas and other houses), which suggests that the specific architectural complexity of the Minoan Palaces is a reflection of its unique “public” function and purpose within Minoan society. Driessen argued that the architectural type of the Minoan Palaces really stands out of all other types of architecture

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<sup>930</sup> Letesson 2008, 212.

<sup>931</sup> Letesson 2008, 212.



on Crete. They have a large number of architectural features such as Minoan Halls, Lustral Basins, Pillar Crypts, porticoes, stoas and balconies, ashlar masonry, orthostats, and wall and floor decoration with plaster, frescoes and reliefs.<sup>932</sup> The presence-absence of these features in other forms of Neopalatial architecture has led McEnroe create a three-fold division between “Palaces”, “Villas”, and “Houses”.<sup>933</sup> The Minoan Palaces have as main feature the central court and were perceived through the concept of centrality, whereas the Minoan Villas and other houses normally lack this feature. In terms of architectural elaboration the Minoan villas share most resemblances with the Minoan Palaces, whereas the other houses share the least. However, such typological divisions seem to be very arbitrary, especially if one considers the strong diversity among the “Minoan Villas” in terms of size and architectural elaboration.<sup>934</sup> “Minoan Villas” and other types of Neopalatial domestic architecture share a very specific architectural pattern which differs from the Minoan Palaces. Within these buildings the concept of centrality is replaced by a network of transition spaces – doors, corridors, and vestibules - which controlled circulation, access and social interaction not only within the building itself but also between the exterior and the interior.

As an example of Neopalatial domestic architecture, we would like to explore the “Minoan Villa” C at Tyliisos (fig.42).<sup>935</sup> At this building, the main and only entrance had a proper vestibule and porter’s lodge, and to secure circulation to all the rooms the building had a remarkable preserved system of corridors (4, 12, 18, 19, 21) and three stairways (23, 8-9, 28) to the upper floor. According to Graham and Hazzidakis the house could be divided in four distinctive clusters of rooms. It comprised a set of storage rooms (11, 16, 17), a pillar crypt with cult room (5-7), a central group of rooms (13-15) with unknown function, and a domestic quarter (20-27) that existed out of a Minoan hall (25-27) and a bathroom/lustral basin (20).<sup>936</sup> A first look at the access map shows that all circulation throughout the building is dominated by the system of corridors and stairways to the upper floor (fig. 44). The ubiquity of doors within the building not only emphasises the dominance of the corridors but also the importance of maximum control of movement

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<sup>932</sup> Driessen 1989-1990, 8-11.

<sup>933</sup> McEnroe 1982.

<sup>934</sup> For a detailed discussion, see Van Effenterre and Van Effenterre 1997.

<sup>935</sup> Hazzidakis 1934, 33-47; Graham 1987, 61-62.

<sup>936</sup> Hazzidakis 1934, 46-47; Graham 1987, 62.

and visibility throughout the building. The series of corridors and physical boundaries secured access and circulation to the Minoan hall (25-27) and the bathroom/Lustral basin (20) area, which were the most elaborated parts of the ground floor. At Tylissos, the numerous corridors, doors and stairways and the specific clustering of units within the building over different depth levels created an environment to structure social interaction between its users. At particular occasions the spatiality of the building could provide a hierarchy of movement and social interaction according to the identity of the visitors and their personal affiliation with the host.

What comes forward in this discussion of Minoan architecture is the recognition of the existence of very structured built environments in Minoan society. It gives the impression that in the Neopalatial period people aimed at having maximum control of circulation and visibility throughout the compound by a minimum investment in physical boundaries. Doors were widely dispersed throughout the building and several transitory spaces separate different activity areas, which means that in the Neopalatial period Minoans did not perceive the building's internal structure as a permeable continuum, but as a strongly compartmentalised environment in which the focus lies on screening off particular activities and exclusivity. Such closed off systems could be used to structure people according to differences in status, power, and authority.

Having established an understanding of the unique spatiality of the Minoan Palaces within the entire corpus of Minoan architecture and the distribution of the different venues for occasions throughout the different compounds, Part 5 will focus on the role of the Minoan Palaces as integrating devices for Minoan community life by the application of phenomenology and performative theory. We will highlight more thoroughly that an understanding of the reciprocal relationships between built space, performance and social structure is essentially important, as both the architectural setting itself and the performances conducted at the Minoan Palaces were main devices in the production and reproduction of asymmetrical power relations within Minoan communities. This approach will circle around the hypothesis that social interaction at the Minoan Palaces was much more complexly organized as traditionally assumed.

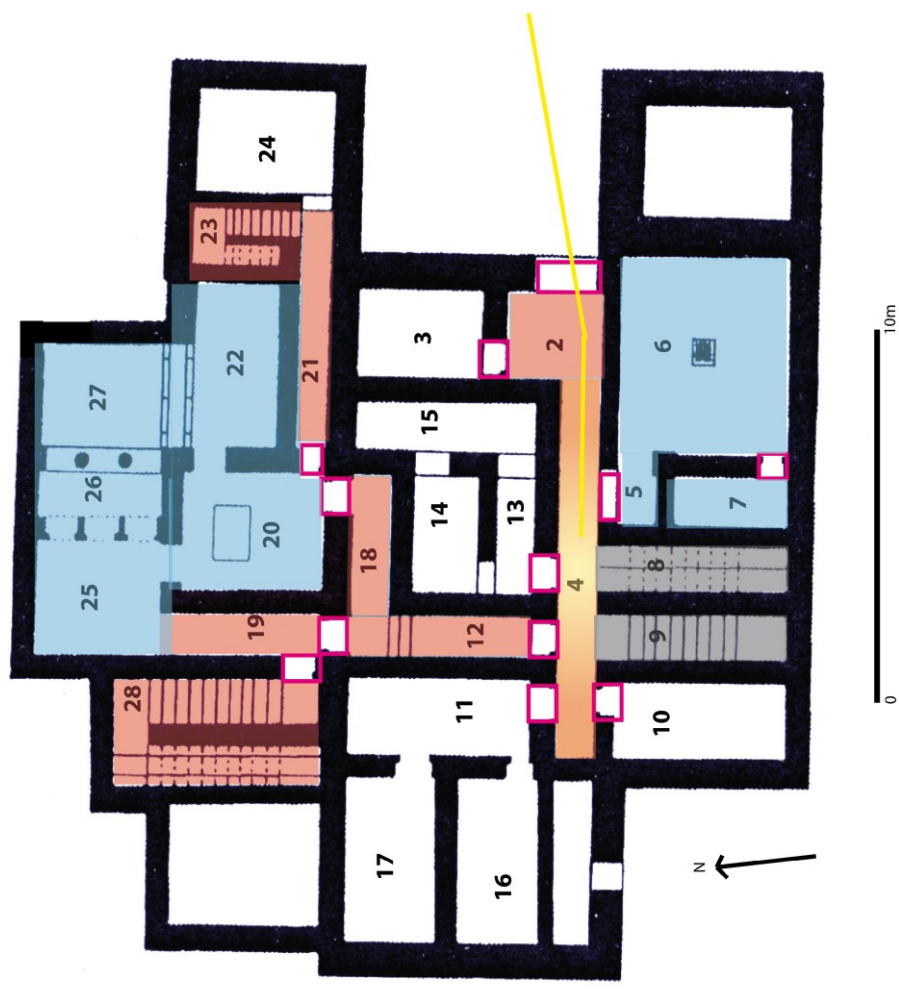
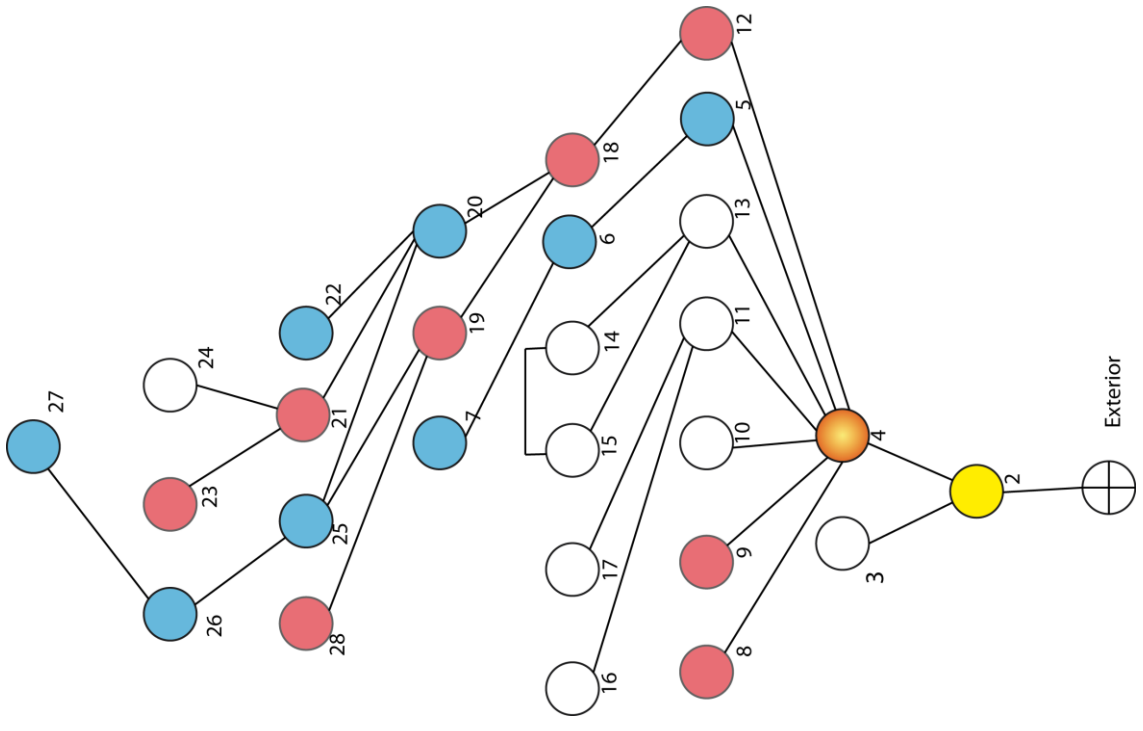


Figure 42: LEFT: Map of Tyliisos C: Orange the central corridor and most integrated space within the building; in Red all transition spaces (corridors and stairways); in Pink different sorts of physical boundaries; Blue: areas which are reserved for exclusive occasions. RIGHT: Circulation map of Tyliisos C with the positioning of the respective units in corresponding colours (own drawing).

# Part 5

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Ritual Performance, Art, and Architecture: Reflections on the Mediating Role of the Late Bronze Age Minoan (1700-1450 BC) Palaces in Minoan Community Life.

## Abstract

The 5<sup>th</sup> part opens with a short discussion of the pictorial evidences from Minoan Crete to illustrate the strong correlation between the Minoan Palaces and public performances. Having legitimized the importance of the Minoan Palaces as the main performative spaces within the Minoan community, it will be our main focus to reconstruct how these buildings were experienced and actively used by Minoans during large-scale performative events. By a case study of the Palace of Knossos it will be illustrated that not only the spatial elaboration and design of the building, but also the performances conducted in and around these settings were major tools in the transfer of norms and values and the structuring of social relationships in Minoan communities.

Carefully scheduled interactions took place at the Palace's proper. It will be argued that the very nature of the Palace's design orchestrated the visitors' experience as an anchored ritual ambulation that mirrored the socio-political structures within the Minoan community. In a conclusive chapter, the data from Knossos will be generalized with regard to the other Minoan Palaces in order to create a general understanding of how the unique architectural complexity and the performances conducted within these settings functioned together as the main integrating devices for Minoan community life.

## Chapter 5.1. Performances and (Minoan) Palatial contexts

### 5.1.1. On the Functionality of Monumental Frescoes and Processions

#### 5.1.1.1. Crete

It has been mentioned several times that performance must have played an important role in the socio-political climate of all phases of Minoan history, with the Proto- and Neopalatial periods providing the most identifiable examples. Before we focus on the architectural correlates of performance and especially the active role of the Minoan Palaces in these large social events, it is necessary to legitimate the straight correlation between the Palaces and large-scale performative activities involving all social tiers of the respective communities.

The best way to achieve this is by exploring pictorial evidence from palatial contexts. In different palatial cultures, whether Minoan, Mycenaean or Egyptian, numerous examples of pictorial evidence illustrate that performative events indeed occurred in palatial contexts. From these paintings some scholars made inferences concerning the ritual and cultural practices of the Aegean cultures in which they were found, such as the reconstruction and appearance of house structures and reconstructions on people's clothing and hairstyles.<sup>937</sup> Apart from studies that dealt with the iconography itself, numerous scholars contextualized mural paintings within their architectural contexts and focused on the identification of pictorial programmes and defining room functions from mural iconography.<sup>938</sup> The Palace of Knossos contains the largest number of frescoes as well as the most diverse iconographical repertoire on the island and is since the very beginning of the discipline the most important case study to discuss the function of mural iconography.

Scholars pointed out already that mural paintings can affect the experience of the viewer, could serve as “sign-posts” or “attention-focussing” devices, and often played ceremonial

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<sup>937</sup> Palyvou 2005; Davis 1986.

<sup>938</sup> Hägg 1985; Immerwahr 2000; Cameron 1987; Marinatos 1984; Kontorli-Papadopoulou 1996; Blakolmer 2000; 2010.

or ritual functions.<sup>939</sup> However, depending on the context in which these spaces were used, mural paintings also played other functions, such as the expression of social prestige, status, and authority. During the Middle and Late Bronze Age on Crete, Minoan frescoes were not only developed as an expression of elite consumption, power and status, but were also major ideological and symbolic tools since these depictions were active agents that allow to effect human emotions. Their specific position within a clearly defined architectural space and the large energy investment in their creation, i.e. the diverse color palette, the detail of human and natural features and the artistic knowledge and resources that were needed to create these pieces of art on the walls of Middle Minoan and Late Minoan buildings, are illustrative for the highly technologically innovative nature of Minoan society.<sup>940</sup> The design of the fresco on the wall was a very powerful innovation in Minoan Crete. Frescoes were there to be looked at, were destined to be perceived by viewers and were especially considered meaningful in Minoan society. Depending on the size of the fresco, it offered the possibility to psychologically affect the feelings of the viewer. Especially as far as (almost) life-size fresco art is concerned, artists created pictorial realities with the possibility to incorporate the Minoan observer into the scene and thus rendering him or her as embodied part of the iconographic narrative. Therefore, in particular contexts, both architecture and life-size iconography had the force to be more than a simple “guiding” tool. They “instructed” and “learned” people how to act and behave in particular contexts.<sup>941</sup> As such, depending on the positioning of the frescoes in their architectural context, such life-size frescoes may have dictated in a very sophisticated manner the normative behavior that was expected of the Minoans within the specific architectural space. Such a function is clearly noticeable in the procession frescoes in different palatial contexts on Minoan Crete and the Greek mainland.<sup>942</sup>

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<sup>939</sup> Blakolmer 2000, 397; Preziosi 1983, 210; Cameron 1970, 165; 1978, 580; Renfrew 1985, 18-19; Hägg 1985, 210; Palyvou 2005, 160-161; Palyvou (2000, 413): “Mural treatment, of which wall painting is only one means, is an integral part of architecture. It is enhanced, and at the same time restricted, by architectural space, and it is experienced not in its own right (regardless of the context), but as part of the experience of being within a building.”

<sup>940</sup> See the numerous contributions in the edited volume by Sherratt 2000.

<sup>941</sup> Marinatos 1984, 49-51.

<sup>942</sup> For other religious structures outside the strictly Minoan/Mycenaean context, see Aslanidou 2005.

A good example is the Procession fresco at the west entrance at Knossos, which should be considered as the main public entrance to the Palace (fig. 43, 44, 45).<sup>943</sup> When visitors entered the Palace through this entrance, they passed through the “Corridor of the Procession” with a life-sized fresco of a procession depicted on both the east and western wall of the corridor.<sup>944</sup> The progress of the Corridor of the Procession at Knossos is indirect: after approx. 20m (only 17m is preserved because of erosion) it turns eastward, running over a series of basements before turning north into the south-north corridor which leads to the central court.<sup>945</sup> According to Evans this entrance was the “principal ceremonial route of approach” to the central court in the Palace.<sup>946</sup> The whole length of the corridor up until the central court was probably decorated with this procession scene and more than 100 persons were depicted on the walls of this corridor. Evans divided the Procession fresco in three different constitutive parts.<sup>947</sup> The first group (A) existed out of six males which are processing behind a female person wearing the typical Minoan skirt. Group B depicts several males wearing kilts advancing toward a central female person in both directions. Group C depicts male figures processing into the Palace. Evans’ reconstruction of this fresco evolved around the central female figure, which he identified as a Goddess, approached from both sides by worshippers all carrying some form of tribute.<sup>948</sup> Peterson disputed this interpretation and indicated that the placement of a Goddess as a central figure would be very atypical and unseen in Minoan fresco painting. In stead, one would rather expect such a figure to be placed at the very end of such a scene, being the final destination point for the people processing throughout the corridor.<sup>949</sup> For Peterson, the central figure should be looked upon as being a priestess -

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<sup>943</sup> See Chapter 4.2.2.5 and 5.2.2 this volume for an architectural description, the fresco dates and social function of this entrance; Neopalatial date: Evans 1928, 734 –736; Final Palace (LMII) date: Peterson 1981, 39–40; Immerwahr 1990, 88–90 and 174–175; Hood 2000, 203–4.

<sup>944</sup> In reality the procession was reconstructed based on the pair of feet that they found. The rest of the fresco was not preserved at all.

<sup>945</sup> Hitchcock 2000, 75.

<sup>946</sup> Evans 1928, 685; Peterson 1981, 29.

<sup>947</sup> Evans 1928, 719-724.

<sup>948</sup> Evans’ reconstructions are still followed by Cameron (1987) and Boulotis (1987). For Boulotis (1987, 147-153) this scene informs us about the importance of Knossos as a place for the adoration of the female Great Goddess, a Queen and/or main priestess.

<sup>949</sup> Peterson 1981, 122-123.



not a Goddess - participating in the procession. Recently, Günkel-Maschek came to a rather similar observation and suggested a different interpretation of the procession fresco. She argued that not the central female figure leading the procession, but the small group of four males standing on an elevated level (fig. 45) in the opposite direction forms the dominant element within the entire scene, an interpretation we follow and come back to in the next chapter.<sup>950</sup>

The majority of the figures are portrayed life-sized, appear to have been depicted on ground level and are proceeding towards the interior of the Palace, which means that most emphasis lies on going into the Palace rather than going out of it.<sup>951</sup> Being part of this communal act of processing created a collective identity among the procession's participants. What is missing, however, is the final destination for the procession fresco in the Corridor of the Procession. It will be pointed out in chapter 5.2.2 that the final destination was not equal for everyone, something that could explain the absence of a clearly defined end zone in the fresco. The strong individuality in the depiction of figures (sex, objects, dresses, etc.) suggests a function to Minoan processions and depictions of processions that goes beyond simple ritual. Processions functioned as major socio-political tools within Minoan communities and were main social-political devices.<sup>952</sup> The end-zone of the procession depended on the personal status and affiliation of the participant with the hosts of the event. They were the main mechanisms that defined if one had to participate in rituals within the central court, or was allowed to continue to the deeper parts of the building and involve in secluded ceremonial/ritual activities which involved the very few.

Similar observations can be made for the group of figures processing on the walls of the Grand Staircase. A few men are portrayed while ascending the stairway, moving either toward the central court or to the upper floors of the Domestic quarter where they could

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<sup>950</sup> Günkel-Maschek 2011, 125-136; Also Boulotis (1987, 148) suggested that the entire scenery probably displayed separate sequences.

<sup>951</sup> Adams 2007, 374.

<sup>952</sup> See Chapter 5.2.2. for the socio-political function of processions executed at the Minoan Palaces.

participate in ritual.<sup>953</sup> Quite plausible, their main purpose was to guide and lead the people towards other places inside the building and both dictate some kind of normative behavior. An interesting observation is that both frescoes have been executed on the walls of what can be called ‘circulation spaces’ (the first a corridor, the second a stairway). The Corridor of the Procession mediated between the outside of the Palace and the central court and the Grand Staircase formed the transition between the Residential quarter and the central court on the one hand and the different floors of the Residential quarter on the other.

The discussion above made clear that life-sized procession iconography had a function far more beyond the perpetuation of ritual or the function of “sign-posts” to guide peoples’ movement throughout the building.<sup>954</sup> The life-sized depiction of a procession would have created a sophisticated environment that made it possible to incorporate the visitors in the environment of the scene, inform them about their social status within Minoan society and educate and dictate at the same time a normative code of behavior to the Minoan visitors in their journey throughout the Minoan center.<sup>955</sup> Participants were instructed visually how they were supposed to proceed up to the major place of interest, what their place was within Minoan society, how they had to act and what they had to bring to the Palace as offering.<sup>956</sup>

Aside from the monumental frescoes and procession iconography discussed in this chapter, several other rooms within the Knossian Palace were decorated with frescoes in the Neopalatial and later Final Palace Period, displaying a large variety of motives and iconographical themes (plants, animals, spiral friezes, human figures, etc). Interestingly, most of the fresco paintings are found in architectural spaces situated rather deep within the configuration, often associated with strong ceremonial importance (pillar crypts, lustral basins, Minoan halls, etc.) to which access and participation in ritual was rather exclusive and reserved for the eyes of the very few. According to Blakolmer this

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<sup>953</sup> Chapter 4.2.2.2; Hitchcock 2000, 167.

<sup>954</sup> Hägg 1985, 210.

<sup>955</sup> Also Panagiotopoulos 2013.

<sup>956</sup> For a more detailed reading on the functionality of the Procession fresco within a context of social interaction, see Chapter 5.2.2.

phenomenon starts to appear at the very end of the Protopalatial period and got well established in the Neopalatial period. Blakolmer argues that the iconographical repertoire at Knossos was first of all connected to the ceremonial and ritual use of the building. However, it was also one of the chief media through which the grandeur and social prestige of the controlling group was expressed. Mural paintings became one of the main expressions of a 'Palatial Ideology'<sup>957</sup> and so mural paintings at the Minoan palaces, with Knossos as the clearest example, were the most important communication devices between the different users of the building.<sup>958</sup> It is within the Neopalatial Palace of Knossos that such a strong correlation between segregated spaces and monumental fresco iconography can be underlined. However, there are exceptions to the rule. Knossos also has several monumental frescoes situated in spaces rather closely situated to the public, which suggests that the case study of Knossos turns out to be far more complex. Elsewhere we have argued that the architectural layout of the this building structure was very suitable to host large scale communal events that involved all layers of the socio-political fabric. Further, it was emphasized that the layout dictated different levels of accessibility. The more barriers one was allowed to cross and the deeper one was permitted to enter into to building, the higher the social position within the community. High social status allowed people to witness or participate in social occasions reserved for the very few, screened off from the eyes of the many. At Knossos, those architectural suites situated deep within the configuration - the Throne Room Complex, the Central Palace Sanctuary, and the Residential Quarter - are highlighted further in the next chapter of this dissertation because of their closed off and exclusive character, due to their position in the entire configuration but also by virtue of their level of architectural elaboration (see chapters 4 and 5 for further discussions to their functionality, building history and fresco dates). Such spaces were rather difficult to access or at least could be easily guarded in the case of a large ceremonial/ritual event and suggest that they played important roles in downplaying social distance between and categorization of different sorts of people. Access to the activities performed within these architectural suites was subject to condition, which makes sense considering our discussion of the circulation

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<sup>957</sup> Blakolmer 2010, 152.

<sup>958</sup> Blakolmer 2010, 155.

patterns of the Palaces in the previous chapter. In the case of large scale events, people probably had to follow a strongly structured passage and according to their personal status and affiliation with the hosts their journey ended at the west or central courts or in one of the most exclusive spaces deeper inside the configuration.

### 5.1.1.2. The Greek Mainland

With reference to the Mainland, we will focus primarily on the Palaces of Pylos and Tiryns during the late palatial period of the 13<sup>th</sup> century B.C., as they are, for the purposes of this chapter, the best case studies. Both past and recent studies stressed the importance of the Mycenaean Palaces as venues for processions.<sup>959</sup> As the focus lies on pictorial evidences, the architectural complexity of the Mycenaean Palaces will be discussed very shortly.

Without going into detail, there exist some significant differences in the internal layout of the Minoan and Mycenaean Palaces. Particularly striking is the complete absence in the Mycenaean compounds of an equivalent to the Minoan central court. An extremely large and central open space is, instead, divided into a series of interlinked smaller courts that guide the visitor to a well-defined interior focal point, the “Megaron” which forms immediately the strongest, most elaborate, and most inaccessible part of the Mycenaean Palace.<sup>960</sup> The overall layout of the Mycenaean Palaces was dominated by a *linear axiality* where none of the interior spaces acted as a true node influencing circulation and access throughout the complex. As early as 1930, Müller underlined the necessity to analyse the Mycenaean Palaces through the eyes of the visitor and argued that at Tiryns the builders aimed to stage a main route within the Palace connecting the main entrance with the central Megaron by a very specific architectural design and esthetical innovations.<sup>961</sup> At Tiryns the path towards the Megaron exists out of several turns, long corridors, courts and propylaea that had to be taken before one arrived in front of the

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<sup>959</sup> Maran 2006; Wright 2004a; Wright 2006; Hägg 2001; Thaler 2006; McCallum 1987; Lang 1969; Peterson 1981; Vermeule 1964.

<sup>960</sup> Cavanagh 2001, 119-133; Maran 2006; Thaler 2006.

<sup>961</sup> Müller (1930, 167 and 193-8) discussed in Maran 2006, 77-78.

Megaron. A large propylon divides the three small courts closest to the outside from a larger court. This court is also divided by a large propylon from the small court in front of the Megaron. A similar configuration can be attested at the Palace of Pylos. Due to their smaller size and architecturally restricted access, the courts of the Mycenaean Palaces were, perhaps, intended to create social differences among the participants by the privileged access to those courts closest to the Megaron. Only very few would have completed the route and would have arrived at the Megaron's proper.<sup>962</sup> This linear arrangement shows that access, and therefore social interaction, was extremely controlled and structured in these buildings.

Several arguments can be made to state that ritual performances conducted at the Mycenaean Palaces turned out to be very exclusive in nature and could indeed take the form of processions. In the case of processions, people were guided throughout the building by a number of visual and architectural cues, which could inform the visitor about adequate or expected behavior.<sup>963</sup> Not only the succession of open air courts, corridors and/or popylaea, but also specific wall paintings at these spaces would guide visitors throughout the complex.

A typical example comes from Pylos, where McCallum reconstructs a single human figure in the outer porch of the propylon, which may have served as a signpost to guide and channel visitors towards certain routes.<sup>964</sup> Pictorial evidence, which indicates that processions indeed happened in Mycenaean times, has been found at Thebes<sup>965</sup>, Mycenae<sup>966</sup>, Tyrins<sup>967</sup>, and Pylos<sup>968</sup>. In fact, the only extant mainland fresco that contains processional figures comes from Pylos and these fragments have been interpreted by Lang and McCallum as forming part of the decorative program of the entrance rooms to the central Megaron, consisting of a procession leading a bull into the antechamber of the megaron, presumably for sacrifice, and continuing into the Megaron proper. Such

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<sup>962</sup> Maran 2006, 78; Thaler 2006; Bendall (2003, 2004) on the distribution of ceramics as indicators of social difference at Pylos.

<sup>963</sup> Maran 2006, 82; Thaler 2006, 100.

<sup>964</sup> McCallum 1987, 70-71; Thaler 2006, 103.

<sup>965</sup> Thebes procession scenes see Peterson 1981, 46-58; Published by Reusch 1956.

<sup>966</sup> Mycenae procession scenes see Peterson 1981, 58-68; Also Reusch 1953.

<sup>967</sup> Tiryns procession scenes see Peterson 1981, 69-77.

<sup>968</sup> Pylos procession scenes see Peterson 1981, 77-86; Published by Lang 1969.

frescoes informed people about the expected or appropriate behavior. The almost life-sized figures carry a wide range of objects, from simple baskets, to bowls and a lamp stand, as a form of tribute (fig. 46).<sup>969</sup> It is a scene wherein the figures are clearly differentiated from each other by their types of clothes and all walk behind each other in a straight line in direction of the Megaron.<sup>970</sup> McCallum has argued that the decorative program at Pylos with the procession, bull sacrifice and lyre player shows three activities that were specifically chosen to represent the main components of an important festival, with banqueting probably happening within the Megaron itself.<sup>971</sup> Rehak<sup>972</sup>, Wright<sup>973</sup> and more recently Bendall<sup>974</sup> suggested that the Megaron at Pylos was a locus for drinking ceremonies. What is important for us is that the Pylos fragments demonstrate the endured importance of processions in religious ceremonies. To be able to participate in these ceremonies within the Megaron was probably a very meaningful act that was constitutive to the creation and establishment of social relationships and distinct identities that involved the most privileged members of the Mycenaean community.

Together with the guardian animals flanking the actual Throne<sup>975</sup>, the festival iconography communicated a message of political strength and stability and was therefore positioned appropriately within this context.<sup>976</sup> Although one can only guess how a Mycenaean visitor would react looking at a person flanked by lions and griffins in the Megaron, Kilian's observation that such images express the "propagandist aims" of the Mycenaean rulers only speaks in favor of such an interpretation.<sup>977</sup>

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<sup>969</sup> Wright 2004a, 161-162.

<sup>970</sup> Immerwahr 1990, 114-118.

<sup>971</sup> McCallum 1987, 108-109.

<sup>972</sup> Rehak 1995, 95-118.

<sup>973</sup> Wright 1995, 287-309.

<sup>974</sup> Bendall 2004.

<sup>975</sup> Large scale frescoes seem to flank the Throne at the Megaron just as seen at Knossos. At least one griffin and one lion appear to flank the Throne in the megaron of Pylos, see McCallum 1987, 97-8; Also Stavrianopoulou and Maran (2007, 287 - 288) with references for a discussion on Pylos vs. Knossos.

<sup>976</sup> McCallum 1987, 108-111; These kind of festivals would parallel major religious festivals known in Classical Greece, in which the major activities were also an impressive gift-bearing procession, animal sacrifice and banquet, see Parke (1977, 18-25) for religious festivals in Attica in the 4th and 5th c. B.C.; Simon (1983, 105-108) on the continuity of festivals from the Neolithic and Bronze Age into the Classical Period.

<sup>977</sup> Kilian 1988, 294.

If the Megaron was indeed the central political heart of the Palace where the ruler sat enthroned then we have enough reason to believe that the procession frescoes were used with the other iconography as part of a meaningful program intended to express status and authority. Only the very few who completed the route throughout the Palace could observe the high quality mural paintings and step into interaction with others within the Megaron complex.

### **5.1.1.3. Conclusions**

As regards the procession frescoes in the Bronze Age Aegean, Vermeule observed the following: “The popularity of processional frescoes in the Bronze Age Aegean suggests that they illustrated a real performance which was enacted, perhaps yearly or on high festival days, at every major center.”<sup>978</sup> They memorialized real parades moving through the Palaces. Palyvou refers to this as the “Projection technique” by which she suggests that actions and rituals possibly taking place within the architectural unit are projected on the walls like a photograph, capturing a momentous event.<sup>979</sup>

Based on the iconographical evidence discussed in this section and in close parallel to what has been discussed for the Mycenaean Palaces, there are strong elements to assume that the procession fresco at Knossos is a legitimate reference to reconstruct a social reality. Apart from this, frescoes play an important element in the socio-political culture of the palatial elite and are therefore depicted on the walls of particular places for a secondary reason. Depictions of performances per se are almost never the only goal of these programs, since living persons actively performed the procession and other activities, whether in the more secluded parts of the Palace or at the courts, as will be illustrated below. Therefore, the frescoes at Knossos are part of a socio-political agenda of its users, or more precisely, of those who controlled access to it.

The decorative program at Knossos with the bull frescoes at the west and north entrances

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<sup>978</sup> Vermeule 1964, 193; Extra evidence for Vermeulen’s hypothesis of comes from a linear B tablet Tn 316, found at Pylos. The tablet lists a series of offerings and animate beings to be brought and or lead, suggesting some form of offeratory procession to the place of the deity at which some action had to be performed, see McCallum 1987, 111.

<sup>979</sup> Palyvou 2000.

and the vestibule of the Throne Room complex, and all other forms of iconography in the Throne Room Complex and the Domestic quarter, probably functioned in a way which was very similar to the iconographical program within the Megara of the Mycenaean Palaces (the expression of power, status, and authority). However, the unique placement of Minoan frescoes so close to the public exterior at Knossos suggests that the Minoan elite who had constructed and also controlled access to the building did not want to reserve the most elaborate decorative program for the most secluded and isolated spaces, but also wished to express their status and authority to the outside world by showing an iconographical wealth immediately from the moment one entered the Palace complex. However, the frescoes at Knossos played important roles beyond the simple expression of elite status and authority.<sup>980</sup>

In what follows in the next chapters we will try to focus on the embodied aspect of real processions as performative acts played out by humans as part of large performative events. These processions should be looked upon as being part of a series of activities to re-enact the socio-political structures within these communities. Processions as a communal activity could have been a major socio-political tool to express group differences.

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<sup>980</sup> The motives behind the placement of specific Knossian frescoes (procession and bull iconography) so close to the exterior will be thoroughly discussed in section 5.2.2.



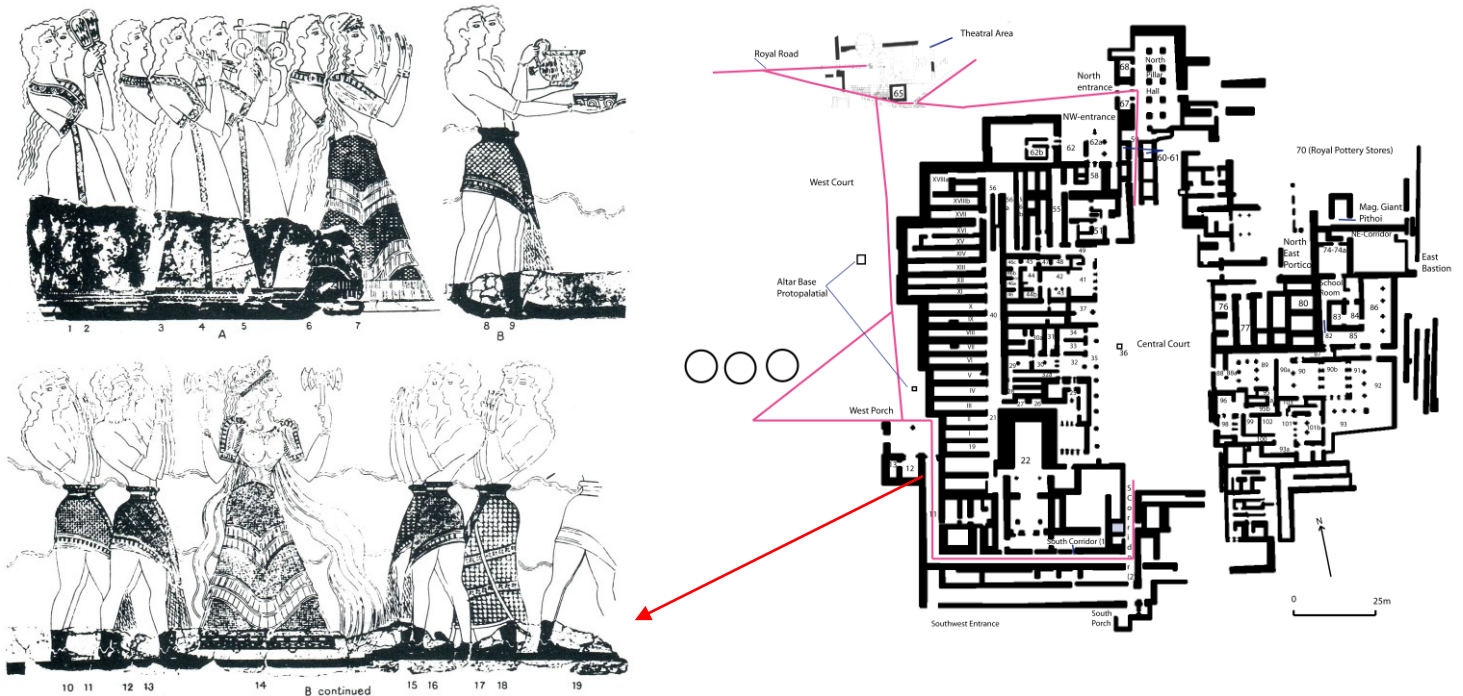


Figure 43 Plan of Knossos

Figure 44 The Procession Fresco, after Siebermorgan 2001, 78.



Figure 45 Detail of the Procession Fresco. Elevation Marked in Blue.

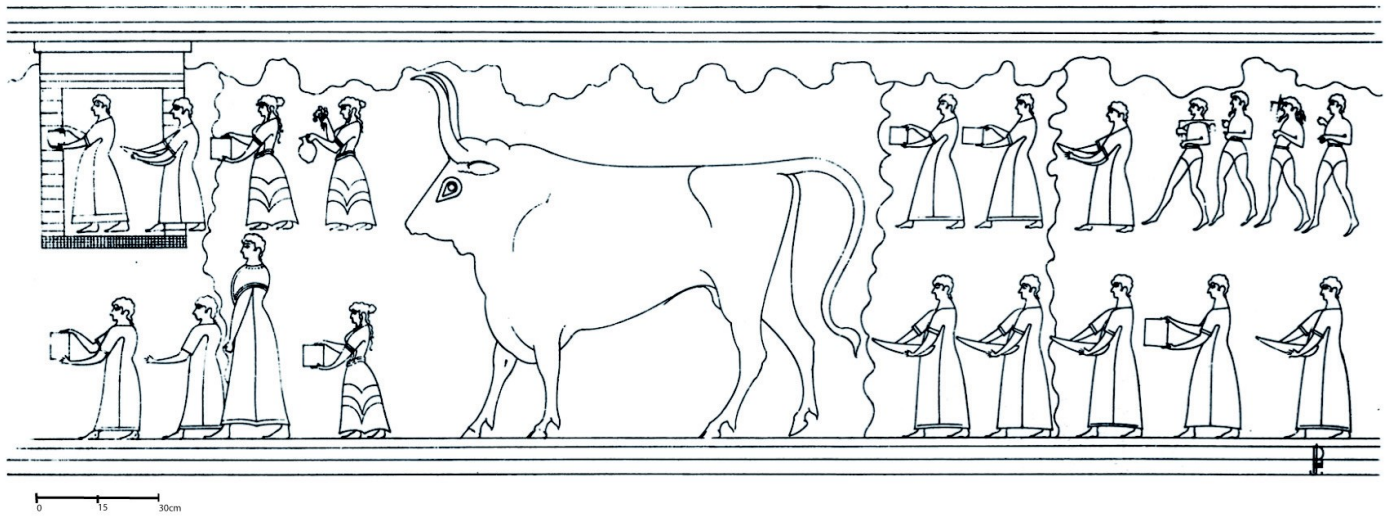
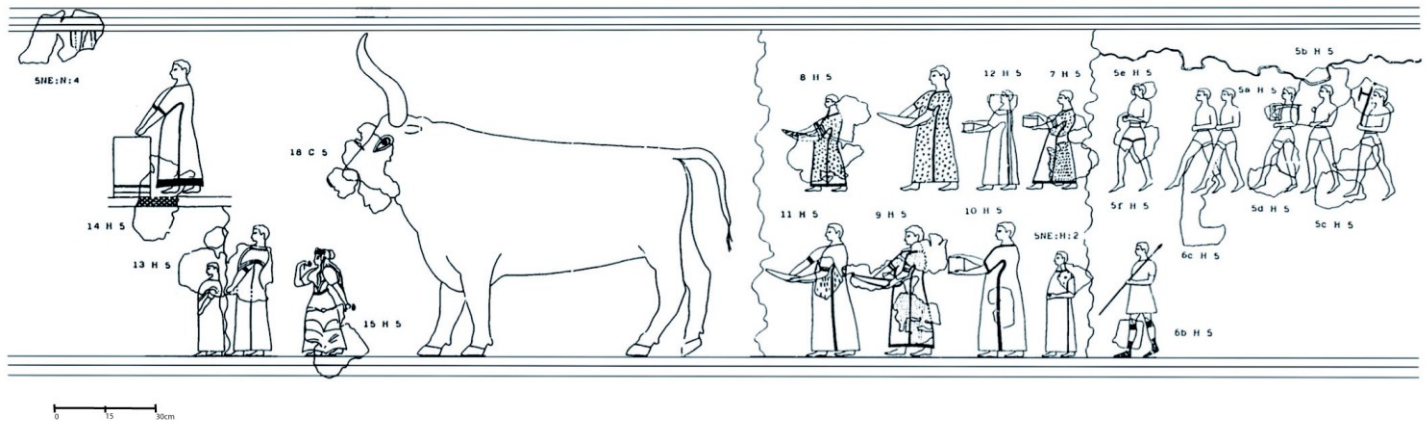


Figure 46 The Procession Fresco at Pylos. TOP: Reconstruction by Lang 1969; DOWN: Reconstruction by McCullum 1987.



### 5.1.2. Miniature Frescoes: Performative Events: Dancing and Social Occasions

The “Sacred Grove and Dance Fresco” is one of the most interesting pieces of visual art depicting performances on the walls of a building in the Late Minoan Bronze Age (fig. 47). This fresco was found together with the “Grandstand Fresco” at the Room of the Spiral Cornice at Knossos and dates to the MMII-LMI period.<sup>981</sup> It is generally accepted that the depiction on the Sacred Grove and Dance fresco represents the west court of the Palace of Knossos.<sup>982</sup> One must clarify that the Sacred Grove and Dance Fresco has undergone multiple restorations and it is possible that within the process some mistakes were made.

In the background we see a large audience that exists out of spectators of both sexes that observes the performances at the west court. The spectators are ranked in serried crowds and those of the top rank are raising their arms and are emphasizing some activity on the left of the fresco. The foreground, however, depicts women performing some kind of ceremonial dance.<sup>983</sup> It is still matter of debate whether or not these persons are actually dancing on the scene. Davis and Marinatos prefer to call these gestures “dance-like worship movements”<sup>984</sup> or “sacred mime”<sup>985</sup>. The women, who have been depicted at the very foreground of the fresco, are rendered in much greater detail compared to the other figures on the scene, which indicates that the dance-like performance plays a central role in the performative event at the west court.<sup>986</sup> The way these women are rendered resembles strongly to the way the women depicted at the Grandstand Fresco. The gestures, posture, and countenance of these women are also orientated to the left of the scene. Evans: “They have one hand raised or held out before them, as in the act of adoration, towards some sacred personage or object to the left. Unfortunately the central point of interest in this direction to which the spectators turn is wholly lost”<sup>987</sup>. What could be their focal point? Davis assumes that an external sanctuary was located

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<sup>981</sup> Vansteenhuyse 2002, 240.

<sup>982</sup> Graham 1962, 74; Preziosi 1983, 85; Davis 1987, 158; Marinatos 1987, 141; Shaw 1996, 187; Hitchcock 2000, 68; Driessen 2002, 9; Vansteenhuyse 2002, 240; Evans 1930, 67-80.

<sup>983</sup> Evans 1930, 67.

<sup>984</sup> Davis 1987, 158.

<sup>985</sup> Marinatos 1987, 141.

<sup>986</sup> Preziosi 1983, 85; Davis 1987, 158; Marinatos 1987, 141.

<sup>987</sup> Evans 1930, 67.

immediately to the left of the sacred olive trees<sup>988</sup>, whereas Marinatos reconstructs an altar instead of a sanctuary building at the ultimate left side of the fresco<sup>989</sup>. The action related to this monument must have been the focal point of the performative event. Marinatos interprets the Sacred Grove and Dance fresco as a series of collective rituals or “a harvest festival” occurring at the west court. Ceremonial processions were an active component in this ritual event of worship.<sup>990</sup> As it is restored nowadays, the Sacred Grove and Dance fresco has some noteworthy features, which are also archaeologically attested at the west court of Knossos. Several white two-rowed marble stone bands run throughout the fresco, which can be identified as the raised walkways, which are also attested archaeologically both in the vicinity of the theatral area and the paved area of the west court. Two rows of male figures are walking to the left of the fresco on these walkways and are holding their hands at their chests, which could indicate some form of adoration. Another row of men is advancing to the right and holding spears. These figures could be performing some military parade at the west court.<sup>991</sup>

The discussion of the Sacred Grove and Dance Fresco depicts several performative acts: a form of dancing performed by women in the foreground and processions performed by men walking the raised walkways. The depictions of olive trees and raised walkways are good indications that the performances have to be situated outside and at the west court of the Minoan Palace. Essentially important is that the painters included a large audience into the scene, which coincides to the public function of the west court, i.e. to create an architectural environment to accommodate as much people as possible.

Another scene, which deserves more attention, is the Grandstand Fresco (fig. 48).<sup>992</sup> As has been mentioned earlier, the Grandstand fresco is situated in the same room as the Sacred Grove and Dance fresco and both frescoes are dated to the Neopalatial period.<sup>993</sup> Much discussion exists about the actual nature of the activities depicted on this fresco. Ellen Davis argues that the Sacred Grove and Grandstand fresco show two distinct events

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<sup>988</sup> Davis 1987, 158.

<sup>989</sup> Marinatos 1987, 141.

<sup>990</sup> Marinatos 1987, 141-142.

<sup>991</sup> Marinatos 1987, 141.

<sup>992</sup> Evans 1930, 46-67.

<sup>993</sup> Cameron 1987, 325.

at the west and central court of the Palace<sup>994</sup>, whereas other scholars such as Marinatos and Shaw suggest that the Grandstand Fresco should not represent activities within the central court, but rather at a different location.<sup>995</sup> The division of the center of the fresco into three compartments gives the impression of a tripartite division that Davis interprets as the "Tripartite Sanctuary" at the Palace of Knossos that overlooks the central court.<sup>996</sup> For Shaw, however, the differences between the Tripartite division on the fresco and the Tripartite shrine at the central court of Knossos illustrate that the Minoans did not want to depict the central court at Knossos on the fresco. Shaw: "the scene shown on the fresco with the shrine, however, should not necessarily be considered as evidence that the performance was taking place within the central court at Knossos, the chief reason for this being that the columnar arrangement correctly suggested in the restoration is different from that in the fresco. Surely if the scene in the fresco had been intended to depict the central court at Knossos, such a basic mistake would have not been made in an otherwise careful composition"<sup>997</sup>. Shaw refuses to accept the interpretation by Davis and argues that the Grandstand Fresco could depict large crowds of people who were looking at bull games inside an arena outside the Palace.<sup>998</sup> Despite these disputes, one must admit that Davis' interpretation has received most support over the past years and thus her suggestions will be adhered to in this dissertation. The close but not exact resemblance with the real architectural remains at Knossos created a *communis opinio* among most scholars that the Grandstand Fresco depicts the inner western façade of the central court at Knossos with the Tripartite Shrine as the major sacred area around the central court.<sup>999</sup> On each side of this sanctuary and in the center of the composition are five women who seem to be of greater importance than the rest of the crowd, each clothed in similar attire, and turned with their faces towards each other, as if they were talking.<sup>1000</sup> Other women are depicted in their entirety and rendered in high detail and are standing on elevated platforms at the sides at some distance of the shrine. Shaw argued

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<sup>994</sup> Davis 1987, 157.

<sup>995</sup> Shaw 1996; Marinatos 1987, 140.

<sup>996</sup> Davis 1987, 160.

<sup>997</sup> Shaw 1978, 431.

<sup>998</sup> Shaw 1996, 186-187; Shaw 1978, 430-431.

<sup>999</sup> Davis 1987, 157-161; Immerwahr 1990, 65; For a detailed discussion on the Grandstand Fresco, see Panagiotopoulos 2006, 37-38.

<sup>1000</sup> Davis 1987, 159.

that these were rendered in high detail to indicate their relative high status.<sup>1001</sup> In front of the row of women a series of steps is depicted leading down to a clearly walled open space crowded with people, both men and women. This gathering of people at the center of the composition, under the central group of women is crammed into a large rectangular space, which is well defined at the top and sides. The large number of people depicted let Davis argue that more than 1000 people could have gathered simultaneously within the area of the central court.<sup>1002</sup> But how realistic are such large numbers? We argued before that several scholars convincingly showed that access to the Minoan Palaces was strongly controlled and taken into consideration the observations made in chapters 4.2.6 and 4.2.7, the number of people gathering inside the central court was probably far less.<sup>1003</sup> Palyvou emphasized by means of an architectural analysis the exclusive nature of the central courts and argues that what is depicted on the Grandstand Fresco was a gathering of people with ruling power<sup>1004</sup>, in which the central court functioned as a selective gathering place between the elite and their invites, forming the core of the building from where all circulation inside the complex was controlled. Such an interpretation strongly builds further on the point made by Shaw and draws upon the contrast between the highly detailed depicted women and the large crowd of spectators, which are rendered in low detail. However, one has to admit that the current state of research does not make it possible to interpret the Grandstand Fresco in an all-compassing manner. As Evans pointed out, we only recovered evidence from two types of spectators, i.e. the large crowd of spectators and the well-rendered women, which are set apart from the rest of the crowd, but no evidence of the performative act they were looking at. To quote Evans: “What was the character of the spectacle that thus thrilled the lookers-on? Unfortunately the whole of the lower field of the design in which this was certainly set forth [...] is in this case entirely to seek.”<sup>1005</sup>

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<sup>1001</sup> Shaw 1978, 430.

<sup>1002</sup> Davis 1987, 160-161.

<sup>1003</sup> Palyvou 2002, Driessen 2002; Driessen 2004; Chapter 4.2.6. and 4.2.7. for a discussion of the patterns of movement and social interaction at the Minoan Palaces.

<sup>1004</sup> Palyvou 2002, 176; Panagiotopoulos 2006, 37.

<sup>1005</sup> Evans 1930, 48-49; Also Immerwahr (1990, 65): “According to this topographical interpretation the “event” for which the crowds have gathered would not have been depicted in this particular painting”.

Nevertheless, it is legitimate to say based on the pictographic evidence that the Minoan Palaces were at particular times of the year important venues for public performances. These performative events included a large audience, which suggests that the majority of the community was involved and thus these events were felt significant by all members of the community. Apart from some performative acts such as dancing and processions, the exact nature or function of the performances remains vague. What we will try to do in the next chapter is to move away from the iconographical evidence and reflect upon the real socio-political significance of performances held within these settings.

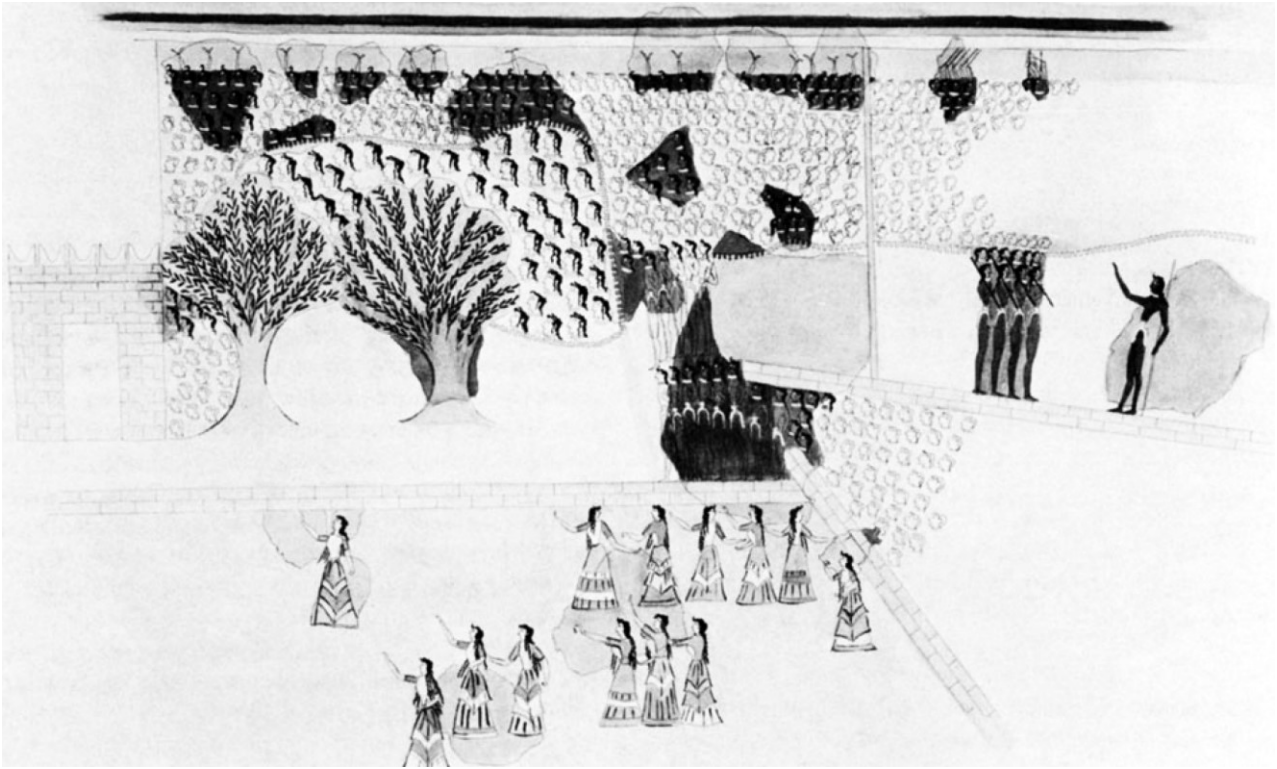


Figure 47 The Sacred Grove and Dance Fresco. After Graham 1987, fig. 7.



Figure 48 The Grandstand Fresco. After Evans 1930, plate XVI.



### 5.1.3. Conclusions

The analysis of the iconographical evidence from the Palace of Knossos and the strong resemblances with the evidence from other palatial contexts in other Palace societies legitimizes the Minoan Palaces as subjects for analysis. Moreover, the composition of the frescoes illustrates that not only the Minoan Palaces but also architecture in general played an important role in framing large-scale performative events into the right format. Apart from these general remarks there are some important intrinsic differences in the materiality and function of both types of frescoes. With regard to the (almost) life-sized Minoan frescoes their main strengths lie in their ability to embed the viewer within the environment of the actual scene. This capacity is not present in the miniature frescoes at the Palace of Knossos. Another strong difference between both types of frescoes lies within the way in which they depict a specific narrative. The miniature frescoes at Knossos show a clear linear arrangement of different related scenes that form an entire story on the walls of the room. The procession fresco, however, does not constitute such an entire narrative but in contrast depicts only one single moment in time, which suggests that the procession fresco at the west entrance at Knossos had to fulfill a very specific function when visitors passed this corridor.

The procession fresco complemented the function of the west entrance corridor. Its main function is to incorporate the viewer in the entire ritual and to amplify the individual ritual experience. Through the absorption of performers in the action of the fresco, the life-sized image had a very strong communicational value, instructing the viewer with a normative code of behavior, eventually resulting in a personification of the viewer with the actual scenery and action depicted in the fresco. The corridor of the procession constituted the first step in the entire narrative of the ritual procession throughout the Knossian building.

Having legitimized the importance of the Minoan Palaces as performative spaces within the Minoan community, the next chapters will attempt to reconstruct how these buildings were experienced and actively used by Minoans during large-scale performative events.

## Chapter 5.2. The Minoan Palaces as Performative Spaces: Bridging between Individual and Collective Identity - A Case study of the Palace of Knossos

### 5.2.1. Introduction

The architectural form of what has been indicated as Minoan Palaces is a phenomenon that can be clearly grasped from the Protopalatial period onwards, with its most elaborated form dated to the more recent Neopalatial period. As discussed in the first chapter of this dissertation, these monumental architectural complexes have long been recognized as major embodiments of social constructs such as power and authority, although there still exists some controversy about their precise nature resulting in several reconstructions – from the seat of a monarchical ruler to ceremonial centres of the Minoan community - however, the newly suggested model invites to test the interpretation of the Palaces as settings of elite performances. This approach goes beyond the past discussions of form, function, and structure, and tries to elucidate lived experience in the Minoan past.<sup>1006</sup>

The Minoan Palaces are actually there, to be experienced. Under the influence of phenomenology, lived experience is the key to an understanding of the built space that surrounds us.<sup>1007</sup> The human body functions as the focal point from which space is perceived<sup>1008</sup>, or as Merleau-Ponty pointed out space is defined as “a certain possession of the world by my body”<sup>1009</sup>. Therefore, architecture transfers meaning through active

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<sup>1006</sup> I am fully aware of the difficulties to elucidate lived experience to the Minoan built space, but this does not mean that an attempt at reconstruction is not a worthwhile exercise.

<sup>1007</sup> Turnbull 2002, 131; Dovey 1999, 39; Henri Lefebvre 1991, 38-39; Dünne and Günzel 2006, 330.

<sup>1008</sup> Tilley 1994, 14.

<sup>1009</sup> Merleau-Ponty (1962, 250), quoted in Dovey 1999, 39; Henri Lefebvre (1991, 38-39) has also noted a reciprocal relationship between space and society and the need to develop some kind of phenomenological approach to the built environment. Apart from being a traditional category, space is at once the material and functional reproduction of a given society, as it is both a social product and a means of social production and control. Lefebvre defined three main characteristics relating to space: spatial practices [pratique spatiale] of a society; representations of space [représentations de l'espace]; and representational space [espaces de représentation], which are critical in understanding the dynamics of space. To Lefebvre understanding space can only be

bodily engagement of human actors with the material world.<sup>1010</sup> Space has to be experienced and this experience needs to be centered on the body. Active movement through space has long been considered of primary importance to transform ordinary space into place.<sup>1011</sup> Human actors contribute to movement and action in space (the physical world), which in turn, are integral to place-making.<sup>1012</sup> Furthermore, places are those spaces that clearly show material investments in order to become meaningful for those who interact with them.<sup>1013</sup>

Movement, body, and active engagement with surroundings all imply that the sensory experience of people should be considered. Past approaches that attempted to apply phenomenological approaches to the Minoan built environment always emphasized one particular aspect of the human senses: “sight”.<sup>1014</sup> Although human vision was without doubt of major importance, we want to add a new dimension to this field of research through the focus on the entire process of walking, as it allows for a focus on the entire bodily experience of the intended users, i.e. inhabitants/controllers and visitors of the building. This should make it possible to study the social aspects of the Minoan Palaces in a more comprehensive and interdisciplinary manner in order to understand their active use within the socio-political processes of this society. The sensory experience departs from the premise that people have to experience the architectural landscape before an inner landscape is created in their minds. Tim Ingold argued that: “[it is] through living in it, that the landscape becomes part of us just as we are part of it”<sup>1015</sup>. The explanation of what the experienced landscape is, when we walk in a park, city, or building, is a combination of our former memories of landscapes and the momentary experience with our physical senses. Landscape is not only an outer (physical) or inner (mental) experience but a constant combination of both. The experience of the built-environment

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achieved through experiences [espace perçu] by the people who live and move in these spaces. We have to think in terms of the body, which walks, smells, tastes, and ultimately lives in space; See also Dünne and Günzel 2006, 330.

<sup>1010</sup> Turnbull 2002, 131.

<sup>1011</sup> Casey 1996; 2001.

<sup>1012</sup> Ingold 2000.

<sup>1013</sup> Rapoport 1990, 87–101.

<sup>1014</sup> Letesson and Vansteenhuyse 2006.

<sup>1015</sup> Ingold 2000, 191.

is both a sensuous experience (seeing, hearing, touching as in walking, etc.) and an imaginative experience at the same time.

Such an approach helps us to reflect upon the social dimension of the central court buildings, and more particularly how they actively participate in structuring social interaction and relationships between different groups of people within Minoan society, eventually shaping peoples' identities. It is only recently that some scholars started to focus how the physicality of the built space could be used in a discourse of social interaction.<sup>1016</sup> In Part 2 we argued that human performance in Minoan archaeology (such as dances, processions, bull-leaping, etc.) was almost solely considered as having a ritual importance. However, recent studies showed that performative events can have an impact on many other levels within communities and their importance for community building should not be forgotten. Performative events played an essential role in the integration of communities and the study of human performance is therefore particularly important for understanding the socio-political dynamics in Minoan society.<sup>1017</sup> The organisation of large social events gives communities a platform to reflect about the nature of social structures, social status, and authority.<sup>1018</sup> Performance is not only a major tool to transmit pre-existing structures, norms, and values within these communities, but also has the power to create, negotiate, and legitimate changes within communities. Performance is thus a major tool in defining and legitimizing differing social identities and relations among the participants of the social event.<sup>1019</sup>

The construction of the Palace of Knossos in the Protopalatial period was an enormous building project, during which the builders flattened most of the top of the hill in order to build a structure the enormity of which should not be underestimated. Tons of masonry blocks had to be quarried, brought up to the site and the entire building was finished to a standard, which had never been seen before with at some places three stories placed above each other. Such a building project, achieved in ancient times when building techniques and tools were far less sophisticated as they are today, should be, today and

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<sup>1016</sup> Palyvou 2002, 2004; Letesson 2005, 2008, 2009; Letesson and Vansteenhuyse 2006.

<sup>1017</sup> Inomata and Coben 2006a, 12.

<sup>1018</sup> Turner 1982.

<sup>1019</sup> Inomata 2006; Alexander 2006, 62.

therefore certainly also in the Bronze Age, the result of extensive teamwork, investments, and clear organization and supervision. Such a building project took time and was built over the course of several generations. This in itself is proof of the fact that the building was the result of a communal engagement that had never been seen before. Not only the Minoan Palaces, but also the monumental structures in contemporaneous societies across the Aegean were an incredible achievement of the time. When a Minoan stood in front of this building, he was immediately intimidated by the high, solid and widely stretched monumental west façade. Although most building structures of the time could be overseen immediately, the Palaces were different. Indeed, their monumentality must have overwhelmed the person facing it from the west court. People had to walk around, move back and forth and turn their eyes in different angles to get as much impressions of the building as possible.

Compared to Phaistos, Malia, or Zakros, the Protopalatial period at Knossos is far more complex to understand. Evidence is more limited and scattered. The remains of the Protopalatial Palace are too scarce to give an accurate picture of the general layout of the building in order to make good arguments for the research questions this dissertation is concerned with. Because of these limitations, we would like to focus next on the Neopalatial Palace of Knossos, and for several issues regarding the fresco dates, sometimes the Final Palace period is included as well.

A visit to Knossos today and a visit by a Minoan guest in Neopalatial times must have been a completely different experience. Today, the Palace is an open web of rooms and connections offering the possibility to access all rooms, admire the decoration and general physicality of the spaces, take pictures to remind us of our visit and when we are lucky even sit on the throne in the Throne Room complex. In Minoan times, the above was certainly not the case as a Minoan visitor probably saw far less of the Minoan Palace. The Palaces were not open but by contrast very closed off constructions and even if they were open, they were still only accessible for a strong minority of the community. What the members of this minority were able to see and what spaces inside the Palace they were allowed to access, depended on who they were, thus reflecting their individual status in the entire social fabric.

As being the main performative space within Minoan communities, the architecture of the Minoan Palaces possesses a silent voice and the active roles of the layers of architecture and iconography themselves in the development of socio-political difference should not be underestimated. It has been extensively illustrated in Part 4 of this dissertation that the entire setting of the Minoan Palace evolved around the concept of *centrality*, and that there was a tendency to channel human circulation inside the building and tightly monitor access to the deeper parts of the Palace. The Minoan Palaces were meaningful settings for those who interacted with others inside these buildings and had the power to "touch", which means that their architecture is implicitly imbued with meaning.

In this dissertation, we are not very much interested in how the "private" Palace worked in its daily-activities but what interests me, however, is how the "public" Palace worked as a main performative space when performative events were staged in and around the building. Therefore the main focus will be on the way in which the Palace accommodated and embraced the whole community under one roof with regard to the social differences that existed inside these communities. These underlying principles manifest themselves in the structuring of the built-space, which permits to develop probable patterns of movement and encounter among people.

By way of example, the Minoan Palace of Knossos will be read as a setting of performances and this with a particular focus on the Neopalatial phase.<sup>1020</sup> The simulation and description of the movement from the outside towards the inside will allow us to perceive the Minoan Palaces through the eyes of the Minoan visitor.<sup>1021</sup> Apart from its architectural complexity, there is another element that makes Knossos more unique as compared to other Palace sites on the island. At Knossos, the most important entrance spaces, corridors and spaces to accommodate social occasions were decorated with iconographical themes which help us to reconstruct the activities that possible

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<sup>1020</sup> We discussed earlier the large difficulties one has concerning the Knossians fresco dates and for numerous reasons pointed out in Chapter 4.2.2.1 we decided to discuss for each of the rooms in this chapter the Neopalatial and Final Palace period as closely intertwined.

<sup>1021</sup> In research undertaken by Vander Beken (2010a, 2010b) it was argued that this path was the route followed by most visitors during large social events.

occurred within these spaces but also widen our perspective in the active use and importance of the layers of architecture and iconography for communicating messages of power, authority and appropriate behavior.<sup>1022</sup> The analysis of Knossos will show that apart from human performance, the layers of architecture and iconography were complementary in transferring normative notions of power and authority to the Minoan people. They were key-important in enforcing the visitors experience when entering each of these spaces. Further, a discussion of the iconographical evidence will highlight the importance of the embodied aspect in Minoan society. The movement of a Minoan visitor from the outside to the Palace's proper was a meaningful experience and existed out of a "set sequence of different steps" that had to be interpreted, taken and experienced before he or she reached the final destination of the journey.

### 5.2.2. Knossos Through the Lens of Phenomenology and Performative Theory.

The narrative in which we discuss the Minoan Palaces will build on the process of walking and the visual impressions people had when they interacted with the building. In order to achieve this, we will try to simulate the walk of people throughout the building to understand in a more vivid way the impressions one could have when interacting with the buildings' architecture and iconography. The following discussion is structured along those elements which are most likely the major trajectories through which the Minoan visitors perceived changing environments, i.e. experiences and visual cues that were meaningful to those seeing them. The analysis will focus on: (1) The west court with its raised walkways; (2) the monumental façade facing the rest of the town from the west together with the entrance systems to the Palace with their iconographical elaboration; (3) the central court and the elaboration of its surrounding inner facades.

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<sup>1022</sup> See also Panagiotopoulos 2013.

### 5.2.2.1. The Outer West Court at Knossos

The paved west court was laid out at the juncture between the Palace and the actual town and was an integral part of the three biggest Minoan Palaces (Knossos, Phaistos, and Malia). The elaboration of the Minoan Palaces, and especially the construction of the western façade facing the west court, was monumental and their impressive outer appearance made these buildings into dominant focal points within the city. At Knossos and also at Phaistos, it is clear that the western façade was built out of several horizontal bands of masonry blocks, separated by smaller bands of building blocks, which gave this façade a solid and overwhelming character (fig. 49, 50). From the outside, the Minoan Palace must have had an enormous impact, since the large masonry blocks stood in major contrast with the rather small houses (apart from the Minoan villas) built with small stones that must have dominated the view of the entire settlements.

As opposed to the central court, we pointed out earlier that the west court has been characterised as a large open public place - ‘the principal public plaza’ - for the Minoan community and was not clearly defined by architectural boundaries.<sup>1023</sup> This interpretation asks, however, for some nuances. Although the west court was publically, there is much reason to believe that in the case of performative events, such as ceremonies and processions, circulation in these courts and their associated features was far from open, given that at these occasions it is likely that a normative code of behaviour was expected of the public. At Knossos, the overall layout and design of the west court and the western façade suggests that Minoans were very concerned with restricted movement and visibility. A number of innovations at the west court created a very structured environment to control peoples’ interactions during social events. A clear distinction did not only exist between the actual performers and the audience, but there seems also to have been a division between several groups of spectators (fig. 51). In a recent article Letesson and Vansteenhuyse investigated the importance of optimizing viewing zones in order to understand how Minoans could perceive their buildings in the

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<sup>1023</sup> Palyvou 2004, 214-215; Chapter 4.1.1. this dissertation.



most advantageous way.<sup>1024</sup> For Knossos, they investigated the optimal viewing distance from the west court up to the “Window of appearance”, which Hägg reconstructed at the western façade in close parallel to Pharaonic Egypt.<sup>1025</sup> Apparently, the optimal viewing zone from the west court of Knossos to this window was approximately 4m away from the façade, which coincided with a raised walkway running along the western façade. The audience assembling at this distance could interact in the most intimate way with the person(s) appearing at the window. The larger the distance, the blurrier the vision and the less intimate the interaction with the people at the window became.<sup>1026</sup> This suggests that the relation between personal distance to the window of appearance and proper interaction with and a clear view of the elite appearing in the window would have been important aspects for Minoans in expressing social distance between members of the community, which in turn could be a reflection of personal status.<sup>1027</sup>

Raised causeways ran throughout the settlement and guided the visitor towards one of the main entrances of the Palace. At particular times of the year, the raised walkways at the west court served as procession ways: the narrow width of these walkways, approximately between 1 and 1.4 m, restrained the movement of the participants, probably striding the one behind the other towards the Palace in the form of a procession.<sup>1028</sup> It needs to be highlighted here that a procession is more than just the simple act of walking. Since it involves a select number of people, the way the movement and order of individuals is structured into a rigid organisation invests the procession with a very meaningful and symbolical value.<sup>1029</sup> It is therefore very likely that at particular occasions the procession itself came to represent the social and political fabric of the Minoan community. If we accept the hypothesis that only a minority of the population was given at the time the prerogative to actively participate in this performative act, walking the path – the raised walkways – in the form of a procession constituted a selective activity and privilege in its own right. Active participation in the procession is therefore likely to have been a major symbolic tool in differentiating between those who

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<sup>1024</sup> Letesson and Vansteenhuyse 2006.

<sup>1025</sup> Hägg 1987, 131-132.

<sup>1026</sup> Letesson and Vansteenhuyse 2006, 105-107.

<sup>1027</sup> Letesson and Vansteenhuyse 2006, 107-108.

<sup>1028</sup> Marinatos 1987,137; Palyvou 2004, 214; Sakellarakis/Sakellaraki 1997, 129.

<sup>1029</sup> Holliday 1990, 73-74; Zika 1988, 44-45.

could merely watch the spectacle and those who actually partook in it; participation thus became a prerogative of the elite.

The elevation of the walkways at the west court intentionally corroborated the distinction between performers and audience. Further, the largest processional way at Knossos, the Royal Road, runs directly towards a large elevated stairway or the so-called 'Theatral Area' in the north of the west court (fig. 52, 53, 54).<sup>1030</sup> It is made up of eighteen stairs, running in a west-eastern direction with a total height of 2.2 m.<sup>1031</sup> The southern side also consisted of a flight of steps, although these were fewer in number (six). On the south side there a square paved bastion was built against the staircase, which was equipped with a platform (fig. 54). This paved platform could be used to monitor the performances in the actual theatre. The layout of the Theatral Area makes me suggest that it was arranged in such a way as to let people participate in the actual event on different socio-political levels. It could be argued that the Theatral Area at Knossos created an architectural environment for social hierarchy, which was translated into spatial order. If the paved bastion was indeed sectioned for the most prominent figures in Minoan society, then the two flights of steps could have functioned as stands for the elite closest to the representatives of the community. At both sides of the raised walkway, in the theatre, a select number of people from the local community could take a place at ground level to observe the procession as it approached from the town towards the theatre. In this way, the unique feature of the Theatral Area and its integration within the network of walkways offered the possibility to create a meaningful environment codifying existing boundaries between different social tiers. However, the hierarchical positioning of people according to status could also function to (re-)shape and/or re-animate the socio-political fabric of the Neopalatial period during ceremonies with an ideological nature. The Theatral area and the positioning of the people within it conveyed a clear message of authority to the rest of the community gathering in the west court. Thus, the Theatral area could function in two ways depending on the nature of the event, and was in this sense both generative of new patterns of social interaction and responsive to existing ones.

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<sup>1030</sup> Evans 1928, 578-587.

<sup>1031</sup> Graham 1962, 180; Evans 1928, 581.

The procession routes penetrate the Palace from the west court at the north and western entrance; they continue to the central court along narrow corridors and they both stop abruptly in front of it. Based on evidence from other Palaces like Malia and Phaistos it can be argued that the penetration of the building by means of a raised walkway is rather the rule than the exception.<sup>1032</sup> The creation of a path between the west and central court is undoubtedly one of the most interesting architectural achievements. No matter how often people might have gone back and forth between the west and central courts and connected them at a subjective level, it was only in visibly impressing the path on the surface of the earth that both these places were also objectively connected. The raised walkways emphasized architecturally the straight connection between both realms. The Palace of Knossos could be entered from the west court through the west porch, a single entrance situated at the very far south corner of the western façade. The physical layout of this entrance suggests that access to the Minoan Palace was something very exclusive and controlled which made the west porch a very powerful and meaningful tool within a context of social interaction, i.e. in the negotiation of access and claiming rights of authority and identity.

In front of the west porch, the raised walkways split up in two directions. A first section is connected to the so-called 'Reception Area', whereas the other penetrates the 'Corridor of the Procession', originally closed off by a double door.<sup>1033</sup> Given the modest width of these pathways, it is reasonable to assume that people had to queue in front of the entrance and entered the Palace one at a time, thus creating some sort of procession from the outside to the inside. Iconographical evidence, together with the layout of the western entrance at Knossos, provides additional evidence of this processional behaviour (fig. 55, 56, 57, 58). The east wall of the Propylon was decorated with a fresco of a charging or galloping bull, or maybe even a bull-leaping scene.<sup>1034</sup> Such a specific iconographical

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<sup>1032</sup> Palyvou 2004, 214.

<sup>1033</sup> Only 17m is archaeologically preserved. The corridor runs at first 17m south, and then probably turns to the east to eventually turn after a while to the north in order to reach the south-north corridor and end up into the central court.

<sup>1034</sup> Evans 1928, 675-677; Hallager and Hallager 1995, 547-548; Also Chapter 5.1.1.1.

theme can be found at several other major transition spaces within the building.<sup>1035</sup> According to Hallager, this type of fresco was positioned at prominent places to express power and authority, symbolically guarding access towards the Palace.<sup>1036</sup> The position flanking the entrance to the building seems to have been carefully chosen, suggesting that all visitors had to overcome symbolically the strong and powerful bull. The bull on the wall, oriented to the visitor, introduced the transition to a space that was exclusive and served at the same time as a tool for the elite to express power and authority. The bull at the west porch entrance turned this specific area into a representative space for elite display. Additionally, the entrance was flanked by a Reception Area or guardroom, which heightened the difficulty of crossing the boundary from the outside to the inside.

Once these boundaries were crossed visitors arrived in the Corridor of the Procession, decorated with a life-size fresco depicting several figures wearing different clothes and objects, processing behind each other and into the deeper parts of the Minoan Palace.<sup>1037</sup> Evans' reconstruction of this fresco evolved around the central female figure, a Goddess, which is approached from both sides by worshippers all carrying some form of tribute.<sup>1038</sup> Recently, Günkel-Maschek pointed out that the ground level of the fresco is marked by a black baseline illustrating a strong discontinuity of the natural flow of movement. The central female figure in the fresco should not be identified as a Goddess or a Queen but rather as a priestess, who guides the procession throughout the corridor and interacts as a spokesman with the group of four standing at a higher level.<sup>1039</sup> The group of four is literally elevated by a small step within the fresco and turned into the opposite

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<sup>1035</sup> Interestingly, depictions of bulls are displayed on the walls of entrances and passageways towards key-important spaces. Apart from the west porch entrance, there is clear archeological evidence of: 1) a charging bull on the southern wall of the vestibule of the Throne room, see Evans 1935, 893: fig. 872; 2) a bull fresco at the north entrance passage on the wall of the balustrade above the west bastions, see Hood (2005, 58) with a detailed discussion of the fresco dates.

<sup>1036</sup> Hallager 1995, 547-555.

<sup>1037</sup> Evans 1921, 214–15; Evans 1928, 660–685,758; Chapter 5.1.1.1; Neopalatial date: Evans 1928, 734 –736; Final Palace (LMII) date: Peterson 1981, 39–40; Immerwahr 1990, 88–90 and 174–175; Hood 2000, 203–204; Also Chapter 4.2.2.5.

<sup>1038</sup> Followed by Cameron (1987) and Boulotis (1987); see Chapter 5.1.1.1.

<sup>1039</sup> The fact that the female person is depicted on a lower level than the group of four speaks against the interpretation of a Goddess.

direction.<sup>1040</sup> They have their backs turned to the central court and face the persons coming from the west court. It has been argued that this kind of elevation is a symbolical marker or ‘station’, where people came to a standstill and brought offerings before proceeding further in the procession towards its final destination, most probably the central court, as is shown by the procession of figures depicted to the right of the group of four. The procession fresco not only depicts the act of processing itself, but also informs us of the different performances that were part of the event. Presenting goods to the group of four should be seen as the negotiation of access towards the Palace’s proper.<sup>1041</sup> The architectural elaboration of the west entrance suggests that the behaviour shown in the procession fresco is the representation of a real life situation that occurred in Minoan times. The Reception Area could serve as a space where the group of four could stand or sit while observing the activities in the west court. They filtered the passage to the central court, which was a major act in classifying participants according to their personal status and identity. When the procession, led by the priestess, continued towards the west entrance, the representatives who guarded the entrance could walk towards the raised walkway to interact directly with the people. In this view, the iconographical repertoire at Knossos provides a plausible explanation of the function and symbolic value of this entrance.<sup>1042</sup> As the main public access, the western entrance simultaneously unified and separated, which is also expressed by the iconography. The bull created a clear distinction, a stop. Once Minoan visitors had gained access to the corridor, the procession fresco initiated the continuum and guided them towards the central court, the final point of destination for at least the majority of participants who had been permitted access to

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<sup>1040</sup> Günkel-Maschek 2011, 125-136.

<sup>1041</sup> Boulotis 1987, 148.

<sup>1042</sup> D. Panagiotopoulos (2013) presented in a recent volume a new method of categorizing Minoan wall paintings in relation to their formal characteristics, their distribution and the resulting impression on the viewer. He distinguished four categories defining the relation between the pictorial representation on the walls and the activities performed by the viewer within the room: affirmative images such as procession frescoes which are directly linked to the function of the room; contrasting images such as natural paintings that create heterotopias neglecting the architectural character of the room; complementary images such as those found in the Throne Room at Knossos, in which activities within the room are complemented by pictorial motifs and, finally, images without any interaction with the viewer. In accordance to his framework, the procession fresco at the western entrance should be categorized as “affirmative images” which are directly linked to the function of the room; See Panagiotopoulos 2013, 72.

the inner parts of the Palace.<sup>1043</sup> The possible reconstruction of the “Priest-King” striding in direction of the central court at the end of the north-south corridor might have indicated the final transition to the world of the Minoan elite (fig. 59, 60).<sup>1044</sup> At the same time, the western entrance functioned as a clear architectural marker or station in the procession and as a liminal zone between separate domains. Hereafter, the Corridor turns sharply to the east and subsequently, after some meters, continues with a sharp turn towards the north eventually providing direct access to the central court.<sup>1045</sup> Driessen described the Minoan experience as follows: “ [...] entering the complex implies a transition from one world, open to the view of the public, to another, hermetically closed off. The narrowness of the pathway to follow, with a funnel effect at the entrance implies a line-up of individuals and a selection process [...]”<sup>1046</sup>. This symbolic transition from the outside to the inside at the west entrance is also marked with changes in the materials used for the construction of the raised walkway. The white poros slabs are substituted for blue-green slabs, which are covered with red stucco.<sup>1047</sup> Adams refers to “a red carpet” that was laid out in this corridor, possibly marking a transition from one world to another, which in turn might indicate a transition in social status.<sup>1048</sup> Since the west entrance corridor does not connect the west- and central court in a straight line, it becomes apparent that its builders clearly intended to constrain movement and visibility and postpone the moment of arrival in the central court. Reconsidering both the architectural and pictorial characteristics of the western entrance at Knossos, it becomes clear that the transition from the “wide” west porch into the “narrow” corridor would have created a funnelling effect coercing visitors to line up in a procession in order to catch a glimpse of the splendour behind the fence of the monumental western façade.<sup>1049</sup> Gaining access to the corridor of the procession was the first major achievement in the Minoan visitors’

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<sup>1043</sup> The Grand Staircase actually functions in the same way as the western entrance with only one difference: the staircase is an internal transition space. It constitutes the liminal zone between the central court and the so-called Domestic quarter of the building; See Chapter 4.2.6.

<sup>1044</sup> See Chapter 1.1.1. for a detailed discussion of the Priest-King fresco and its reconstruction by Evans at the very end of the north-south corridor.

<sup>1045</sup> Immerwahr 1990, 53; Hood 2005, 55.

<sup>1046</sup> Driessen 2004, 79.

<sup>1047</sup> Evans 1928, 760.

<sup>1048</sup> Adams 2007, 373.

<sup>1049</sup> Adams 2007, 373.

journey to the heart of the Minoan centre. They continued through this small, dark corridor, whose obscurity had been enhanced deliberately by a 90° turn. At the end of this dark journey, the arrival at the large open central court, bathing in sunlight, must have been an impressive contrast. Given the sudden transition from the dark into the light, visitors must have needed a moment to adapt, since at first they probably saw nothing except for a bright light, something that only further heightened the mystical experience of arrival at the central court. Afterwards, they were confronted with a blurry image of largely elaborated facades and after some moments of adaptation visitors could finally experience the entire built space of the central court in its full splendour. It sounds plausible that the Palace's design anticipated the opportunities offered by contrasts of light and dark in order to intensify and enrich the mystical experience of the Minoan visitor. The journey towards the central court 'touched' every visitor in a unique way and this journey to the central court was meant to be experienced as something magical and meaningful.

A similar program was designed for the arrival from the north entrance to the central court.<sup>1050</sup> (fig. 61, 62) However, as opposed to the west entrance, the builders did not employ a dark-light contrast to ensure a dramatic introduction to the inner structure of the Palace. A vestibule, a pillared hall and a raised walkway ascending in between two bastions in the direction of the central court, created the same "bent axis approach" that was also introduced at the west entrance. During the Neopalatial period, the passage was considerably narrowed by the construction of the east and west bastions which made it much easier to guard passage from the north pillar hall into the central court. Starting at the north entrance, the journey from the outside toward the central court was more illuminated. At first sight, this made the visitors' journey clearly predictable. However, in order to create some form of mysticism and make the route to the central court a more symbolical experience, the architects aimed to create a sophisticated approach at the north entrance. People were channelled towards the narrow and ascending walkway, which created a funnelling effect and a feeling of intimidation and postponed the

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<sup>1050</sup> See Evans 1930,158–67; Chapter 4.2.2.5.

visibility of and access to the central court.<sup>1051</sup> Thus, on arrival the sight of the central court should have been all the more astonishing. The almost direct alignment of the central court and (in part also) the northern corridor of Knossos with the peak sanctuary of Juktas is probably more than just a coincidence and probably also enhanced the Minoan experience.<sup>1052</sup> Even today, when one stands at the end of the north corridor, the first thing that strikes the eye is the Juktas sanctuary on Mount Juktas, situated in the almost elongated axis of this processional walkway. This could be proof that in the Palace's layout, one of the ruling principles was that the orientation of the central court had to be perfectly in line with the actual sanctuary on the Juktas hill. If the southern façade of Knossos would have been rather low, then the Juktas sanctuary should have been visible for the Minoan visitor, which created an overwhelming feeling, a moment of personal reflection and contemplation.

Since the very nature of these processions was probably quite elitist as has been argued above, access to the central court should rather be described as an exclusive experience and reserved for a minority of the Minoan community. Because of this, we should abstain from downgrading the central court to an ordinary place of assembly. The central court was an exclusive place for a minority of the community was one of the most elaborated parts of the Palace and thus created a meaningful environment for those who had access to and could interact with it. The strong contrast between those who were in and those who were out was not only stressed by the exclusiveness of participation in the procession and the monitored access at the west porch entrance. It was also emphasized by the monumental façade that created a clear physical barrier between both realms.

#### **5.2.2.2. The Monumental Western Façade**

We mentioned earlier that one of the key-features of the Minoan Palaces was a monumental western façade that functioned as a liminal zone or a physical barrier

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<sup>1051</sup> Adams 2007, 365.

<sup>1052</sup> Shaw 1973b; Doxtator 2009; Scully 1962, 9-40; Particularly Chapter 4.1.5. this volume.



between the actual Palace and the city.<sup>1053</sup> It functioned as a mental boundary between the realms of those who were allowed to enter the Palace and access the central court and those who were not.<sup>1054</sup> Van Effenterre puts it in the following way:

“In a word, the west side of a Minoan Palace is a front, not a façade. It is intended to be looked at from the town as a stop, or to give a dominant and privileged view onto the esplanade, and the town behind, from the upper stories of the Palace, without direct contact.”<sup>1055</sup>

Preziosi speaks of “a formal public front”<sup>1056</sup>. At Phaistos, Pernier and Banti already underlined in the 1950’s the importance of an impressive west façade and linked the importance to the activities performed at the west court:

“Anche a Festòs la facciata più imponente è quella occidentale. La ragione di questa maggiore imponentza è evidente: da questa parte erano il grande piazzale occidentale, destinato forse alle riunioni del popolo, e la via principale di accesso.”<sup>1057</sup>

Especially in the Neopalatial period, the Palaces had a very solid appearance from the outside. The construction of walls of masonry that rose two, maybe three stories high at the time must have been an incredible achievement and in fact still is today. The monumentality of the entire Palace complex must have overwhelmed the person standing in front of it. If the monumental façade carried a symbolical message, than the monumentality and uninviting character of the western façade promoted social inequality between those that could enter the Palace by the procession and those who could not. It is

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<sup>1053</sup> Hägg 1987; Palyvou 2004, 214; Letesson and Vansteenhuyse 2006; Indelicato 1982; Preziosi 1983, 87-88 and 107; Palyvou 2002, 169; Palyvou 2004, 214-215; Panagiotopoulos 2006.

<sup>1054</sup> Panagiotopoulos 2006, 32-33; Cadogan 1976, 52; Van Effenterre 1987, 86, Hitchcock 2000, 66; Driessen 2004, 80.

<sup>1055</sup> Van Effenterre 1987, 86; see also Hitchcock 2000, 66; Driessen 2004, 80.

<sup>1056</sup> Preziosi 1983, 88.

<sup>1057</sup> Pernier and Banti 1951, 458; Translation: “Also at Phaistos the western façade is the most imposing one. The reason behind this greater monumentality is obvious: this part faces the large western square, destined perhaps to the reunions of the people, and the main way of access towards the Palace.”

at the west court, and not the central court, that the majority of the community gathered, whereas access was privileged to a small percentage of the entire community.<sup>1058</sup> We argued before that it seems to be a *communis opinio* that social differences became vague from the moment people arrived at the central court.<sup>1059</sup> However, the complexity of the built space of the Minoan Palaces with several internal venues for occasions (Part 4), suggests an environment which could be used for a social dynamic that goes beyond the simple inside-outside dialectic which is much more representative for the socio-political complexity of the Late Bronze Age Minoan communities. The fact that the raised walkways stopped at the central court does not mean that the arrival at the central court was the final destination for all Minoan visitors.

### 5.2.2.3. The Central Court: The Heart of the Minoan Center

Based on the study of circulation patterns in Part 4 this dissertation, we came to the conclusion that the strong similarities in layout between the different Palaces create a common syntax of circulation and accessibility in these compounds.<sup>1060</sup> Internally within the complex, there seems to be a progressively restricted movement through a series of transition spaces, such as doorways, stairs and possibly guards simultaneously constituting a clear link and a possible blockage for circulation between the central court and the regions situated deeper in the complex. The central court forms the most dominant and integrated space in the complex because visitors had to pass the central court prior to accessing the deeper parts of the Palace (fig. 63). In a recent article, Letesson argued the following: “the central court had a strong potential as a *privileged* theatre of encounter and co-presence. These courts undoubtedly formed, within the Palaces, the framework of a strong spatial solidarity and were a powerful pole of convergence. Thus, the main space of the Palaces – in terms of size, syntax, and symbolic

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<sup>1058</sup> Panagiotopoulos 2006, 32-33; Cadogan 1976, 52; Van Effenterre 1987, 86, Hitchcock 2000, 66; Driessen 2004, 80; Palyvou 2004, 209.

<sup>1059</sup> Driessen 2002, 9; Palyvou 2002, 172.

<sup>1060</sup> See Palyvou 1987, 195-203; Preziosi 1983; Letesson 2005, 131-163; Letesson 2008.

outcome - was a gathering place and this seems corroborated by the little iconographic evidence we have.”<sup>1061</sup>

However, what features indicate the increased importance of this central court? First of all, the large energy investment in the elaboration of the inner facades surrounding the central court may point to the fact that the central court of the Palace was intentionally invested with symbolism, creating a meaningful space for those who were allowed to observe its splendour.<sup>1062</sup> The Minoan visitor noticed that the court was surrounded on all sides by monumental façades, constituting a closed off world of luxury with strong color schemes, the use of marble, columns, pillars and a great deal of innovations such as balconies with wooden balustrades and windows on the upper stories. Furthermore, soundings underneath the central court of Knossos have proved that occupation at this site dates back to the Neolithic age.<sup>1063</sup> At this time, the later central court was already in use, but not as distinctly marked by architectural boundaries as in the Minoan age. It is during the course of the EM period that the areas of the later west and central court were gradually left open.<sup>1064</sup> Over time, there is a tendency to surround the area of the central court with ancillary buildings, which gives the possibility to structure movement and social interaction at these places. This may suggest that access to the site was controlled and institutionalized during the Palatial periods, providing it with the characteristics to play an important role in producing and reproducing normative notions of power and authority. Preziosi developed the hypothesis of a potential east-west orientation and stated that the core of the Minoan Palaces was the square formed by the central court and the west wing where the religious structures were situated. For the Palace of Knossos the exact centre of this square is the middle of the Tripartite Shrine (fig. 64). Thus this point should be considered as the major ritual area of the central court.<sup>1065</sup> In this view, it becomes plausible that ritual considerations constituted the core for the further layout of the Palace.<sup>1066</sup>

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<sup>1061</sup> Letesson 2008, 211.

<sup>1062</sup> Hiesel and Matthäus 2001; Matthäus 2001, 57-73.

<sup>1063</sup> Evans 1994, 1-20.

<sup>1064</sup> Driessen 2004, 78.

<sup>1065</sup> Shaw 1978, 429-448; See also Chapter 4.2.2.3. this dissertation.

<sup>1066</sup> Preziosi 1983, 419.

Additionally, in the early plan of the excavation archeologists found in front of the Tripartite Shrine a stone base that could have functioned as an altar.<sup>1067</sup> The special elaboration of the Tripartite Shrine and the possible placement of an altar in front of this structure, could indicate that the most inclusive ritual activity were ceremonies with offerings at the altar in front of the shrine in the central court itself. If the Tripartite Shrine indeed was the major focal point of the procession, then this would provide an extra reason for closing off the central court from the outside. For the majority of the participants in the procession, it was a privilege to be part of the ritual activities that were executed in front of the Shrine in the central court. Parallell to the optimal zoning and viewing distances as suggested by Letesson and Vansteenhuyse between the window of appearance and the people at the west court<sup>1068</sup>, similar observations can be made for the function of the Tripartite Shrine at the central court. Letesson and Vansteenhuyse draw upon the pioneering work in proxemics by Edward Hall (1966), who studied the “spacing” between people during social interaction and the effects of distance on the sensory abilities of humans (sight, sound, smell, taste, etc.). Based on his observations of several cultural groups, Hall concluded that there are four distinct thresholds of interpersonal communication - intimate/personal (>0.45 – 1.2m), social (near:>1.2–2.15 m; far: >2.15–3.65 m), public (near: >3.65–7.6 m) and public (far: >7.6 m) - which have strong effects on the sensory abilities of people such as increased or decreased sight, sound, and smell.<sup>1069</sup> If the altar in front of the Tripartite Shrine is indeed the main feature at the central court, the particular placement of this feature sets up a specific interaction dynamic. Because of the large dimensions of the central court, people could gather around the altar in circles, again creating a very dynamic interplay. The most prominent figures assembled closely around the altar and the further away one’s place from the altar; the less one was actively involved. It is possible that proximity to the altar during these occasions was an indicator of relative status, which entails that those first entering the Palace were also closest to the central court thus probably the most prominent actors in the procession itself.

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<sup>1067</sup> Preziosi 1983, 95.

<sup>1068</sup> Letesson and Vansteenhuyse 2006, 107-108.

<sup>1069</sup> Hall 1966, 143-160.

Once inside the Minoan Palace, a potent classifying mechanism was set into motion, which allowed - if we at least accept the hypothesis that multiple spaces within the building were simultaneously used as venues for occasions during the same performative event - the majority of participants to assemble in the central court but restricted further advancement towards the more secluded areas, participation in more exclusive rituals and thus also direct interaction with the highest elite hosting the performative event to a small minority. The central court had therefore a strong determining function in the spatial interactions within the building. Grahame uses in his study of the Pompeian houses for this particular space the term “theatre”.<sup>1070</sup> What is very interesting in this description is that the spaces that lie deeper in the map represent everything what is backstage, a domain away from the eyes of the visitors. During particular occasions held at the Minoan Palaces, this unique spatial concept could provide a hierarchy of movement in accordance with the identity of the procession’s participants and their personal affiliation to the hosts of the event. The hosts of the performative event actually have the choice to appear to the visitors and step into interaction with them within the central court or stay invisible and interact with a specific group of people into the deeper parts of the building. Such a hypothesis only makes sense if we accept at least the possibility that the events organized at the Minoan Palaces typically centre at first on a high-capacity, shallow (closely situated to the exterior) space of the building but also require adjoining spaces for more private gatherings, giving the possibility to create clear physical and social boundaries between several groups of people.

Within the context of large-scale social occasions, the Residential quarter<sup>1071</sup>, the Throne Room complex<sup>1072</sup> and the Central Palace Sanctuary with the East and Western Pillar

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<sup>1070</sup> Grahame (1999, 67) states: “This node is thus analogous to the auditorium of the theatre, both enclosing strangers (visitors) from the outside world, while disclosing them to inhabitants [in this dissertation we prefer the term controllers]”.

<sup>1071</sup> For the architectural description of the Residential quarter and the finds, see Evans 1921, 315-359; Evans 1930, 282-390; Nordfeldt 1987 for the sacral character of the finds and the ceremonial use of the Residential quarter; Also Chapter 4.2.2.2. and 4.2.6.

<sup>1072</sup> Detailed discussion of the construction history of the Throne Room Complex, the finds and function, see Mirié 1979 with references; Niemeier 1986.

Crypts<sup>1073</sup>, may have served multiple functions and could have acted as main gathering areas for Minoan elites. The physical characteristics of these spaces are different from those of the central court. They have much smaller floor areas and are much less accessible as they are situated at a deeper level in the overall configuration and screened off by physical boundaries.<sup>1074</sup> The large difference in size between the central court and these spaces speaks for the fact that the number of people that gathered here were far fewer in number than the amount of visitors which could be accommodated in the central court. It is striking that with particular reference to Knossos, the decoration of these places is strongly elaborated, suggesting that they were important places for social display, comparable to the central court.

Regarding the Throne Room Complex, we thoroughly discussed elsewhere that this complex is strongly subdivided and has a very complex and unique iconographical vocabulary.<sup>1075</sup> In the Neopalatial period the Throne Room area existed out of an anteroom, the actual Throne Room with its lustral basin, an inner sanctuary, service section and a magazine. Numerous iconographical features in the Anteroom and the Throne Room turned this complex into a very sophisticated architectural design. The anteroom received a fresco of a charging or galloping bull in the anteroom facing the visitor which is a situation very similar to what has been discussed at the west porch entrance. Within the Throne Room, the walls and floors were painted red and were decorated with papyrus plants and palms and frescoes of griffins.<sup>1076</sup> One griffin flanked the door in the west and another pair flanked probably in the Neopalatial, surely in the Final Palace period, the Throne.<sup>1077</sup> Reusch was one of the first scholars to suggest that the Throne Room Complex was a place for the epiphany of the Goddess, an interpretation based on the griffins flanking the Throne which implies a connection to the

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<sup>1073</sup> For a discussion of the construction history, the finds and possible function of the Central Palace Sanctuary, see Panagiotaki 1999 with references; also Chapter 4.2.2.3.

<sup>1074</sup> See particularly Chapter 4.2.6 this volume for a detailed discussion.

<sup>1075</sup> Detailed discussion of the Throne Room complex see Chapters 4.2.2.3. and 4.2.6. this volume.

<sup>1076</sup> Evans 1935, 908-910; Blakolmer (2011, 65- 66) for extra references.

<sup>1077</sup> See Chapter 4.2.2.3 for a possible Neopalatial date of the Griffins; Neopalatial: Mirié 1979, plate 35; Late Neopalatial/Final Palace Period: Niemeier 1986, 67–68; Immerwahr 1990, 94 and 96–98; Crowley 1989, 273; Also Blakolmer (2011, 64) for extra references.

supernatural.<sup>1078</sup> Goodison's (2001; 2004) analysis of the Throne Room showed that orientation to sunrise was very important in the layout of this architectural suite, illuminating specific architectural features within the Throne Room complex intentionally at particular times of the year. Imagine during the winter solstice all the doors to the Throne Room complex closed and only the most southern one open at sunrise. At this moment, the sudden illumination of the Throne (and possibly the person sitting on it) would have been all the more spectacular for those witnessing the completion of the Goddess epiphany. This reconstruction was taken further by Niemeier and Marinatos who identified the iconographical program in the Throne Room as being part of a ritual for a great Goddess epiphany<sup>1079</sup>; a theory that built further on Evans' observation that the throne room with its carved seat was designed for a female person and that some kind of purification ritual or ritual anointment occurred inside the Throne Room area.<sup>1080</sup> Niemeier does not dismiss entirely that the epiphany ritual was enacted at the Throne. However, he believes that another area within the Throne room complex, i.e. the Inner Sanctuary, is a more suitable local for this.<sup>1081</sup> Goodison showed that the door to the Inner Sanctuary or the 'Illuminated Doorway' was lit at the spring and summer equinoxes.<sup>1082</sup> Evans and Niemeier argued that this feature would be the principal location for the enactment of the epiphany.<sup>1083</sup> It was through this doorway that a "Priestess Queen" appeared during the ceremony.<sup>1084</sup> Another important feature was the Lustral Basin, lit at the midsummer solstice and referred to by Goodison as the 'summer spotlight'. Goodison describes the Lustral basin as a 'sunken stage'<sup>1085</sup> and it is her belief that a beam of light was intentionally directed there to illuminate a seated or standing

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<sup>1078</sup> Reusch 1958, 345-357; Also Blakolmer (2011, 67) and Stavrianopoulou and Maran (2007, 289) with references.

<sup>1079</sup> Mirié 1979, 75; Marinatos 1993, 107-108; Marinatos 1995, 43; Niemeier 1986, 74-84; Niemeier 1987, 163-167; Hägg 1986, 46-7, 60.

<sup>1080</sup> Evans 1935, 937-942; Rehak 1995; See also Hitchcock (2000:154-172) for a detailed discussion on the diverse use of lustral basins. Depending on their find context lustral basins could be associated with purification rites, symbolic descent into the earth, and rites de passage from adolescence into adulthood.

<sup>1081</sup> Niemeier 1987, 165-167, in Goodison 2001, 83.

<sup>1082</sup> Niemeier 1987, 165 - 166; Evans 1935, 910 and 920; Also Goodison 2001, 84 - 85.

<sup>1083</sup> Niemeier 1987, 165 - 166; Evans 1935, 910 and 920; Also Goodison 2001, 84 - 85.

<sup>1084</sup> Goodison 2001, 84 -85; Niemeier 1986, 77; 1987, 165.

<sup>1085</sup> Goodison 2004, 343.

child, adult or object, creating a very dramatically experience.<sup>1086</sup> Goodison draws attention to Marinatos' theory about the Lustral basins being the architectural counterparts of the Minoan sacred caves for chthonic purposes.<sup>1087</sup> The fact that the Lustral Basin is hidden into a corner of the Throne room and this architectural suite was elaborated with stone benches and a single Throne suggests that the builders intentionally wanted to have enough space around the Lustral basin, possibly allowing a small amount of people (20-30 as estimated by Gesell in "Public Cult") to participate in or at least witness the rituals carried out inside the basin and this in close proximity to the most powerful person sitting on the Throne.<sup>1088</sup>

The arguments above give the impression that the entire ritual focused on the central position of the enthroned female priestess who enacted the epiphany and this priestess would have appeared within the Throne Room through the western door from the inner sanctuary.<sup>1089</sup> The benches placed in the anteroom and within the throne room could be used as seats while waiting the privileged moment of interaction with the enthroned person and finally participate in the ritual anointment in the throne room. Although one has no direct evidence for this, it wouldn't be impossible to think that these individuals could leave behind some personal offerings on these benches as well.

The very few who had access to the Throne Room complex were distinct from the people inside the central court because they had the right and privilege to interact and participate in exclusive and screened off rituals. However, the far-driven compartmentalization of the built space of the Throne Room complex and the linear arrangement of the units offered at the same time the possibility to create an architectural setting that further restrained movement and social interaction, with the potential to create a sense of inequality among equals. The Throne Room complex was continuously used till the Mycenaean period and during that time it received some alterations. Mirié believes that the Lustral Basin probably got out of use at the end of the Neopalatial period (LMIB) and somewhere during the Final Palace period (LMII – LM IIIA2), access to the magazines

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<sup>1086</sup> Goodison 2001, 85.

<sup>1087</sup> Goodison 2001, 85; Marinatos and Hägg 1986, 60.

<sup>1088</sup> Goodison 2001, 86.

<sup>1089</sup> Niemeier 1986, 74-77 and 84-88.



behind the Lustral Basin was blocked as well as the door that connected the service area with the inner sanctuary.<sup>1090</sup> Hägg disagrees to the hypothesis for the abandonment of the lustral basin, arguing rightly that “there is no evidence for whatsoever for either a floor or a pavement on top of the “basin” or a wall screening it off from the throne area.”<sup>1091</sup> No clear evidence exists that the lustral basin went out of use in the Final Palace period and the fact that the other alterations mentioned above are vaguely pinpointed as well (somewhere during LMII-LMIIIA) suggest that the rooms in this complex were well continued to be used in LMII, which highlights the strong continuity of the importance of the Throne Room complex and especially the lustral basin for ceremonial/cultic purposes. However, the strong (but not entire) continuity of layout does not necessarily mean continuity in ceremonial/cultic activities. The evidence is simply too small to proof this. In a later stage of the Final Palace period, the Throne Room complex received more the appearance of the Greek Mainland Megara as the central pillar in between the anteroom and Throne Room was taken away and so the transition between the anteroom and the actual Throne Room existed out of a single large door.<sup>1092</sup> To conclude, the long use history of the Throne Room complex shows that, despite some alterations, the occupants of the Knossian Palace in the Final Palace period acknowledged the importance of this architectural suite. The Throne Room complex continued to fulfill an important socio-political function as a place for elite display; however, the nature and complexity of the performances within the Throne Room could have taken slightly different forms once alterations were carried out within this area.

Similar observations can be made for the Central Palace Sanctuary, where the small, unlit and remote Pillar Crypts could have been included as one of the important loci for the execution of ritual activities. Although the exact nature and ritual use of the central palace sanctuary stays subject of discussion, the contextualization of the Central Palace Sanctuary as being part of a series of well-defined *loci* for ritual performances within the Palace of Knossos sounds plausible, eventually bringing people together in meaningful ways and shaping relationships and interactions.<sup>1093</sup>

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<sup>1090</sup> Mirié 1979, 74-75; Niemeier 1986, 93-94.

<sup>1091</sup> Hägg 1982, 79.

<sup>1092</sup> Niemeier 1986, 95.

<sup>1093</sup> Panagiotaki 1999, 273 and 275-276; See also chapter 4.2.2.3 this dissertation.

Although there still exists controversy about the exact function of the so-called Residential quarters of the Palaces, this approach invites to test them as being important places of assembly for the Minoan elite. The Residential quarters have the tendency to be the most subdivided spaces within the building, which speaks for the fact that access and non-access, exclusivity of viewing and participation in focused rituals within these spaces was well structured. It has been pointed out earlier that in most cases access to the Residential quarter is very controlled and strict, as only one door or in the case of Knossos, a large staircase, gave access to it.<sup>1094</sup> At Knossos, the residential quarter is situated at a considerable distance from the main north- and west entrances.<sup>1095</sup> Nevertheless, Adams argued that two relatively small potential entrances on the east side of the Palace would have provided fairly direct access to this unit. The “East Bastion” consists of several flights of steps from which a door gave access to a large corridor that in turn gave access towards the “Court of the stone Spout”.<sup>1096</sup> From there the northern part of the Domestic quarter was fully accessible. This could be a service entrance or an entrance for people that were obliged to use the “back door” before they could start their job inside the Palace. Of course, it is possible that members of the Minoan elite that controlled access to the Palace during these performative events also entered the Palace and this quarter through these back doors to ensure that they were not seen by the people in west- and central courts. The highest elite embodied physically the deeper units inside the Palace and these places were the monumental backdrops for the true Minoan elite. For the minority of the Minoan community who were permitted to enter the Palace, it was a true privilege to stand in the central court and thus be in their proximity. Although the true elite was out of reach and not visible to them, they were symbolically present because people knew that they gathered in the units behind the facades that bordered the central court. Maybe even a very select group was allowed to access the Domestic quarter by descending the grand staircase, which enhanced their personal status as they could actively take part in the screened off activities.

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<sup>1094</sup> See especially Chapter 4.2.6. this volume.

<sup>1095</sup> For a detailed discussion of the Knossian Domestic quarter, see Chapter 4.2.2.2.

<sup>1096</sup> Evans 1930, 233–44; Adams 2007, 372.

At Knossos, rooms became more private as one descended the Grand Staircase, moved into the King's Megaron and further arrived in the Queen's Megaron with its lustral basin. Although Evans and Graham argue that these quarters were residential, others believe that the residential quarter at Knossos and possibly also at the other Palaces had a functionality beyond the mere habitational function.<sup>1097</sup> As for an alternative interpretation of the Residential quarter, Nordfeldt (1987) argued that the archaeological finds and the architectural complexity of the Residential quarter at Knossos together with its sophisticated iconographical program rather points towards a ceremonial or ritual function of this architectural suite.<sup>1098</sup> Such an interpretation surely makes sense. Numerous pier-and-door partitions could be used to screen-off specific activities and structure peoples' movements and thus restrain human interactions. The people who were positioned behind these doors fully controlled whether or not they would step into interaction with the people on the other side or not. The spatial arrangement of the Domestic quarter was thus designed to create a specific experience within the halls by playing with open and closed doors, which led those in control experiment with very contrasting effects such as light and dark, visibility and non-visibility, and access or non-access. The Domestic quarter may therefore be recognized as a specific kind of gathering area where individuals jointly experienced a cultic or ceremonial event.<sup>1099</sup> The unique construction of the Domestic quarter with two Minoan halls, and the fact that the most remotely situated Queen's Megaron was equipped with a lustral basin emphasizes that whatever happened here was a gathering with ceremonial/religious importance. Only the very few of the selective group that was granted access to this quarter could actively participate in the ritual activity at the lustral basin.

The possible existence of the Great East Hall connected to the Residential quarter by the Grand Staircase adds to such an interpretation. The fresco of processing figures at the Grand Staircase is an interesting addition to what has been argued so far and should be seen as a social reality as what is illustrated on the fresco most probably complements the

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<sup>1097</sup> Nordfeldt 1987; Evans 1921, 315-359; Evans 1930, 282-390; Graham 1957, 47-52.

<sup>1098</sup> Nordfeldt 1987, 191-193; See also Hitchcock 1994; Hitchcock 2003; Hägg and Marinatos 1986, 57-73.

<sup>1099</sup> See Nordfeldt 1987; Hägg and Marinatos 1987.

activities performed in this area of the Palace. At Knossos it sounds possible that people walked up the stairs one by one from the Domestic quarter into the banquet hall on the upper floor, which was specifically created for the execution of ritual.<sup>1100</sup> It becomes immediately clear that this part of the east wing was one of the most elaborated parts in the Neopalatial and Final Palace Period. The Residential quarter and the Great East Hall were main places of assembly within the Palace and a very specific function can be attributed to them, i.e. hosting visiting elites at particular occasions and promoting elite participation in the executed activities within these rooms.<sup>1101</sup>

Regarding the use and distribution of the mural paintings, Blakolmer argued that there was a major shift between the Pre-, Proto-, and Neopalatial periods.<sup>1102</sup> In the Neopalatial period, mural paintings were mainly present within those spaces that serve some ceremonial function, such as Lustral basins, pillar crypts, so-called Residential areas, The Throne Room Complex, etc.<sup>1103</sup> The arguments by Blakolmer have the result that only the most elaborated spaces within the Palaces possessed mural paintings and that these spaces are in general situated in the deeper levels of the configuration, which suggests that only a few individuals would have viewed them simultaneously. The exclusive setting of these frescoes emphasizes an exclusivity of viewing, which is reflected empirically by the numerous physical boundaries that filtered and controlled access to these spaces of the building. Whatever happened here was for a few eyes only, possible being the most prominent figures of the community who could participate in the occasions that occurred here. According to Blakolmer the placement of mural paintings was closely connected with specific ceremonial activities within the building.<sup>1104</sup>

The Residential quarter at Knossos fits well within Blakolmer's observations. In the Neopalatial period, most of the rooms of the King's and Queen's Megaron were adorned

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<sup>1100</sup> Hägg 1985, 212-213; Evans 1930, 525.

<sup>1101</sup> See Platon (1985, 171) for a similar interpretation for the Banquet hall and Hall of the Ceremonies at Zakros. According to Platon, they were used to receive the visiting elites and holding ceremonies that involved the consumption of wine (shown by the large quantity of wine vessels - amphoras and tiny wine jugs - found within them); Further reading, see Chapter 4.2.5.3, 4.2.5.4, and 4.2.6. on the relationship between the Hall of the Ceremonies, the Banquet hall and the Sanctuary Area at Zakros.

<sup>1102</sup> Blakolmer 2000, 397; Blakolmer 2010, 148-150.

<sup>1103</sup> Gesell 1985, 19 - 36, Immerwahr 2000.

<sup>1104</sup> Blakolmer 2000, 397; Blakolmer 2010, 149-150.

with a spiral frieze and gypsum was used to finish the floors and walls.<sup>1105</sup> In the Final Palace period, the King's Megaron received further decoration and was adorned with a series of large "Figure of Eight" shields<sup>1106</sup>, a wooden throne<sup>1107</sup>. Also the Queen's Megaron that was also equipped with columns, a polytheron and wooden benches<sup>1108</sup> and was adorned, apart from the spiral frieze, with a papyrus fresco<sup>1109</sup> in the southwest corner of the Minoan hall and the Dolphin fresco<sup>1110</sup>, of which the suggestion that it was in fact a floor fresco instead of placed on the walls cannot be confirmed<sup>1111</sup>. Although there exists controversy about the date, the Queen's Megaron complex gets at least in the Final Palace period further adorned with the fresco of a Dancing Lady wearing a yellow jacket at the south side of the east light-well.<sup>1112</sup>

Although a ceremonial or ritual function is very plausible, it seems that the mural paintings also carried another function, acting as material evidence within a context of social interaction by which social prestige and status is expressed. The specific elaboration and remoteness of both the Domestic quarter in the east wing and the Throne Room complex in the west wing suggests that these complexes were turned into the realm of the Knossian elite, and the events located here appear to have played a decisive role in creating group unity and social differences among the Minoan elite simultaneously.

The analysis of Knossos indicated the strong reciprocal relationships between built space, performance and social structure, as both the architectural setting itself and the performances conducted within could have been used as main devices in the production and reproduction of asymmetrical power relations. In the next conclusion we would like to reflect on the sociological relevance of the Minoan Palaces using the framework of the narrative, a concept generally used in literary analysis but which has also been deemed

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<sup>1105</sup> Evans 1930, 345: fig. 229; Evans 1930, 318-390.

<sup>1106</sup> Evans 1930, 343-346.

<sup>1107</sup> Hutchinson 1963, 174; Evans 1930, 333-338.

<sup>1108</sup> Evans 1930, 366-368.

<sup>1109</sup> Evans 1930, 371-373.

<sup>1110</sup> Evans 1930, 377-379.

<sup>1111</sup> Hood 1978, 71 and 76-77; Koehl 1986.

<sup>1112</sup> We argued earlier that this Fresco dates to the transitional period LMIA-LMIB/ LMII; Evans (1930, 369-371) dates the fresco to LMIA.

very useful in establishing the necessity of the Minoan Palaces for the Late Bronze Age Minoan communities.

### 5.2.3. Knossos and The Minoan Palaces: Architectural and Ideological Narratives

Genette (1988): *“As soon as there is an action or event, even a single one, there is a story because there is a transformation, a transition from an earlier state to a later resultant state. ‘I walk’ implies (and is contrasted to) a state of departure and a state of arrival. That is a whole story [...].”*<sup>1113</sup>

Broadly speaking, a narrative may be defined as a literary construct in which a sequence of events succeeds one another to construct a meaningful entity while telling a story.<sup>1114</sup> The order in which the events are presented and the way in which they relate to each other results in an understanding of the story; how it is developed and explained by the authors’ writing. In literary science, the actual "story" usually refers to the substance, or the raw story, without considerations of style, language or medium, i.e. apart from all material externalization. The 'narrative' is how the sequence of events is presented to the reader by the author with the use of flashbacks and forwards (i.e. a specific enforced temporal through the story) and focalization (personal or spatial perspective). In this dissertation, we would like to take back Genette’s broad definition of the narrative, as it allows us to approach the compartmentalization of space within a building as constitutive to the telling of a story of socio-political complexity inside Minoan communities. As architectural space has the possibility to structure movement, visibility and interaction and also has the power to determine in which order different spaces may be accessed, the spatial configuration of a building and the elaboration of each of the spaces in it serve as constituent elements of what may be described as the architectural narrative that embodies a particular socio-political story.<sup>1115</sup> Indeed, it is reasonable to argue that there is a reason why all spaces in a building are related to each other and why different rooms have been elaborated in particular ways.<sup>1116</sup> The reason behind the configuration forms

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<sup>1113</sup> Genette 1988, 19.

<sup>1114</sup> Ricoeur 1982, 274-296.

<sup>1115</sup> That architectural space as a narrative, see Johansson 2003, 221-223; Info on a narrative-descriptive approach, see Tuan 1991.

<sup>1116</sup> Cobley 2001.

the story told by the building itself. The way space is structured in a whole is clearly thinking about the narrative of architecture, where the builders conceptualize through narratological devices such as segregation of access, decoration, etc., a story of socio-political inequality to the entire community. Minoan architecture and especially the Minoan Palaces were important devices to achieve such results.

One of the primary conditions to have a plot, or a story is that there has to be a beginning and an end, in between which the plot or story unfolds.<sup>1117</sup> The narrative aids the reader in processing the story; just like the bodily movement of people conditioned by the architecture itself functions as the narrative. Movement should be considered as the action, which takes the subject from the beginning to the end. This of course does not entail that every form of movement should have a clearly specified goal. This is simply not true. However, when people move through a building, they always keep in mind the idea of a destination, of a goal or ending that is meaningful. The spatial analysis of the Minoan Palaces indicated that each of the Palaces had one or two main public entrances, from which all circulation throughout the complex was strongly controlled and subsequently channeled to the heart of the Palace, i.e. the central court. The movement from these entrances towards the central court was a controlled narrative, in which people were literally ‘guided’ to read the space in a specific order. The public entrances were the starting point of the narrative of the Minoan Palaces. For most of the Minoan visitors, the central court was the end zone and main purpose of their visit. However, as has been shown, the central court was probably not the end zone for each of the participants’ ritual ambulation. The spatial configuration of the Minoan Palaces with the west and central courts and several other venues for assembly constitutes a specific and highly structured narrative for the building, in which the bodily movement in the form of a procession should be seen as the action, which guides the person towards the closure – i.e. the central court and the deeper zones of interaction inside the building. If the spatial configuration indeed forms the main narrative, then the spaces in the “deeper” parts of the Palaces can be better explained when considered as part of the narrative of the building – since it is only through the ‘story’ leading up to many of these spaces (their place in the “structured narrative”) that their meaning can be understood. Using the

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<sup>1117</sup> I suppose that everyone knows that I do not refer here to all stories that have “open” endings.

metaphor of language<sup>1118</sup>, one could argue that building the Minoan Palaces should in fact be seen an act of writing. The production of the built space by its builders is the result of their reflections about ‘why’ these complexes should be built in those particular ways. The movement of people in this setting can be seen as an act of reading, which should be interpreted as a person experiencing the different deeper meanings inside the different layers of the built space in order to identify himself within this context and its social implications. To my mind, the story told by the Minoan Palaces was simultaneously one of social cohesion and social difference, i.e. a straight reflection of the socio-political complexity inside these communities.

The hosts of the performative events sophisticatedly used the central court and the other internal gathering areas to create a dynamic environment for multi-layered social interaction that goes beyond the traditional inside-outside dichotomy, which is much more representative for the socio-political complexity of the Late Bronze Age Minoan communities. One of the main ritual performances performed at the Minoan Palaces were processions and due to their elitist character access to the Palaces was exclusive and reserved to a small part of Minoan society, drawing a clear boundary between those that performed and could enter the Palace and those that observed and could only guess at the splendor lying behind the monumental façade. Even fewer were allowed to see the wealth of the deepest parts of the Palaces and interact with the palatial elite that hosted the performative event. The people that had the right to participate in the performance constituted together with the hosting elite the most authoritative group inside these Minoan communities. Thus, having the privilege to be part of the procession was a major social and political advantage and was a direct translation of a person’s place in Minoan society.<sup>1119</sup> “The politics of performance” aimed at the negotiation and legitimization of existing and maybe even institutionalized asymmetrical power relations.<sup>1120</sup> Such controlled access and the manipulation of ritual by a profound compartmentalization of the built space only corroborates the hypothesis that ritual was an absolutely important element for the establishment of power for the authoritative group in these communities.

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<sup>1118</sup> Based on Moore 1986.

<sup>1119</sup> Further reading on the elite nature of feasts see Girella 2008; Nordquist 2008; Wright 2004a.

<sup>1120</sup> Dietler 2001, 68-69, and 76-94.



In such an architectural setting, people could be thoroughly divided according to differences in status, power and authority. The adjoining areas in proximity of the central court would allow more privacy as the central node itself, permitting the “subtle interplay of presence and absence upon which a particular occasion may depend”<sup>1121</sup>. The Minoan Palaces staged and embraced the whole community under one roof, without disregarding the social differences that existed inside these communities. The ritual ambulation throughout the building offered visitors the possibility to actively experience the building and to position themselves within the collective Minoan identity, simultaneously unifying the community and expressing the hierarchical differences existing between its individual members.<sup>1122</sup> The events in these different clusters of rooms were separated in space, but probably not in time, as the activities performed in these distinct locations were probably connected to one and the same social occasion, in this case a ritual event. The entire arrangement of the Minoan Palaces was conceptually created through a sense of belonging, being part of a greater whole. Considered as a whole, the role of public ceremony, ritual and performance, combined with the specific nature of the palatial setting created a unique spatial environment, suited to support the production of asymmetric power relations. For the entire Minoan community, the Minoan Palaces “housed” the major values, ideas, beliefs and ideologies of their shared and individual identity.

Performative events often studied under the concept of “feasting” is a research topic that has a strong prominence in Aegean research nowadays.<sup>1123</sup> Dietler argued that feasts were “prime instruments for political action”.<sup>1124</sup> In Minoan research, scholars emphasized the importance of “conspicuous consumption” within Minoan communities as a major tool in the negotiation of status, authority, and class.<sup>1125</sup> Borgna argued the binding function of

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<sup>1121</sup> Grahame 1997, 155.

<sup>1122</sup> Dietler 2001, 88.

<sup>1123</sup> Within Aegean scholarship different volumes are entirely dedicated to this research topic, see Wright 2004b; Hitchcock, Laffineur and Crowley 2008; Mee and Renard 2007; For a detailed bibliography on the history of research concerned “feasting”, see Hamilakis 2008.

<sup>1124</sup> Dietler 2001, 75.

<sup>1125</sup> Schoep 2004; Schoep 2006; Borgna 2003; Tomkins 2007; “Conspicuous consumption” refers to the use of material and immaterial wealth for the expression of elite status and identity, see especially Schoep 2004 and 2006 for discussion and bibliography.

Minoan feasts, which are used to express simultaneously group cohesion and social difference.<sup>1126</sup> At the Minoan Palaces a combination of material and immaterial wealth and elite participation were main elements in the negotiation of asymmetrical power relations.<sup>1127</sup> Evidence for the preparation and especially the consumption of food and beverages by large groups of people at the Minoan Palaces have led Moody to argue that the Minoan Palaces served primarily as places for ritual dining through which social differences were made visible.<sup>1128</sup> The monumental architecture of the Minoan Palaces and the strong elaboration of particular areas within are suggestive for the inference of elites in feasting activities. From these studies it became clear that performative events have been a major ideological tool to all societies – whether contemporary or prehistoric.<sup>1129</sup>

According to the specific contexts in which they occur, such large social events exist out of a combination of integrative and distinctive features, because they unify the entire community without effacing the socio-political differences that exist in the social fabric of these respective communities.<sup>1130</sup> Such events are a major social praxis and are staged according to specific conventions and rules, which are part of the particular performative event. As such, they became a major tool for symbolic communication. By the execution of large-scale performative events, the Minoan life world gets re-enacted and a reference scheme of stability and order gets created.<sup>1131</sup> One must realize that the ritual events

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<sup>1126</sup> Borgna (2003, 221, 266): Feasts were first of all held to express the “community solidarity”, but at the same time she acknowledges a shift towards “political dialogue” towards the Late Bronze Age; For similar discussions on the contrast between communality and group difference see Hamilakis 1999; 2008.

<sup>1127</sup> On the concept of “Power Relations”, see Adams 2004.

<sup>1128</sup> Moody 1987, cited by Driessen 2002, 10.

<sup>1129</sup> See Moody 1987 for an early focus on the Minoan Palaces as loci for feasting activities; Apart from studies specifically to Aegean archaeology there are several studies outside aegean archaeology as well as other disciplines of the social sciences that dealt with the topic of feasting, see Bray 2003; Dietler and Hayden 2001; Parker-Pearson 2003.

<sup>1130</sup> See various papers in Dietler and Hayden 2001; Halstead and Barrett 2003; Wright 2004b; Secondary reading on the materiality and spatiality of feasting in Minoan and Mycenaean Palace contexts see Girella 2008; Letesson 2008; Reid 2008; Nordquist 2008; Maran 2006; Thaler 2006; Panagiotopoulos 2006.

<sup>1131</sup> For similar observations see Wright 2004a, 135; Nordquist 2008, 106.

performed at the Minoan Palaces were “only temporary events”<sup>1132</sup>. However, the execution of these performative events at particular times of the year were an essential tool in transferring ideologies. They were the mechanisms that both exercised and downplayed social distance between hosts and guests during the same occasion.<sup>1133</sup>

Although at the current state of research, it is not possible to identify the different social tiers, it seems doubtful that the construction of an architectural mega structure like the Minoan Palace could be achieved without the authority of a higher elite, which collected and managed all necessary resources for the building project. As hosts of this performative event, only those few families that held true power and authority, which subsequently was translated in a strong filtering of access to and classification of visitors inside the Minoan Palace in accordance with differences in status, and power. The size and elaboration, or the architectural *ambiente* of the Minoan Palaces created a meaningful environment for structuring social interactions and relationships.<sup>1134</sup>

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<sup>1132</sup> Day and Relaki 2002, 234.

<sup>1133</sup> Dietler 2001, 88.

<sup>1134</sup> Maybe this classification even went as far as to include differences in gender; On gender divisions inside the Minoan built environment, see Driessen 2013.



**Figure 49** The West Facade at Knossos as seen from the West Court



**Figure 50** Detail of the West Facade at Knossos. Mark the Large Ashlar Blocks separated by Small Horizontal Bands.



Figure 52 the Royal Road of Knossos (Author's picture)

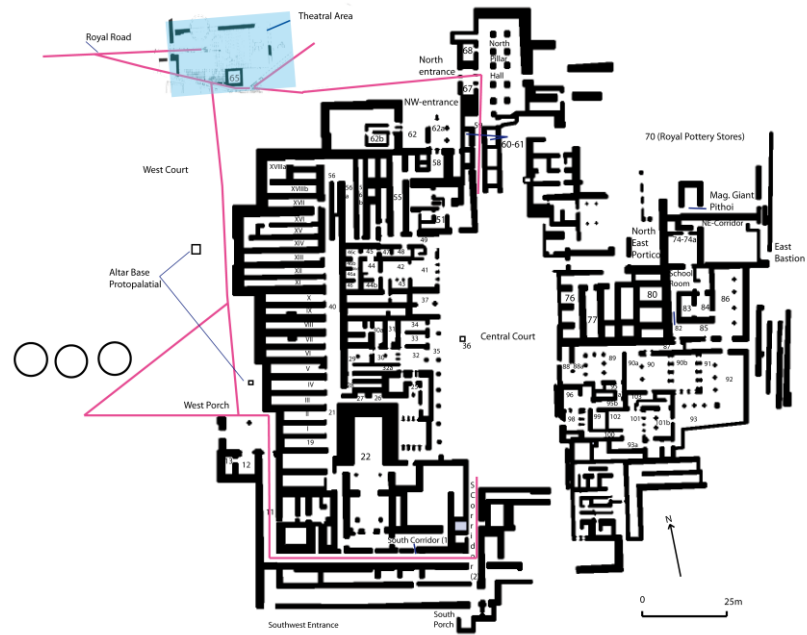


Figure 51 Plan of Knossos. Theatral Area in Blue; Walkways in pink



Figure 53 The Theatral Area of Knossos (Author's picture)

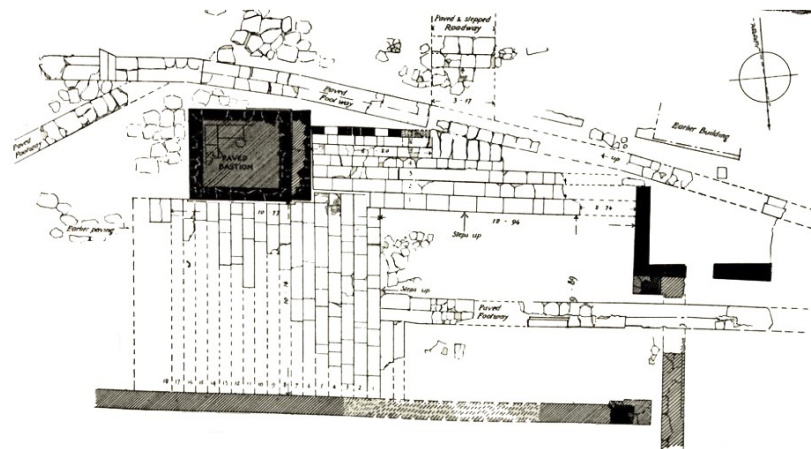


Figure 54 Sketch of the Theatral Area, after Evans 1928, 579.

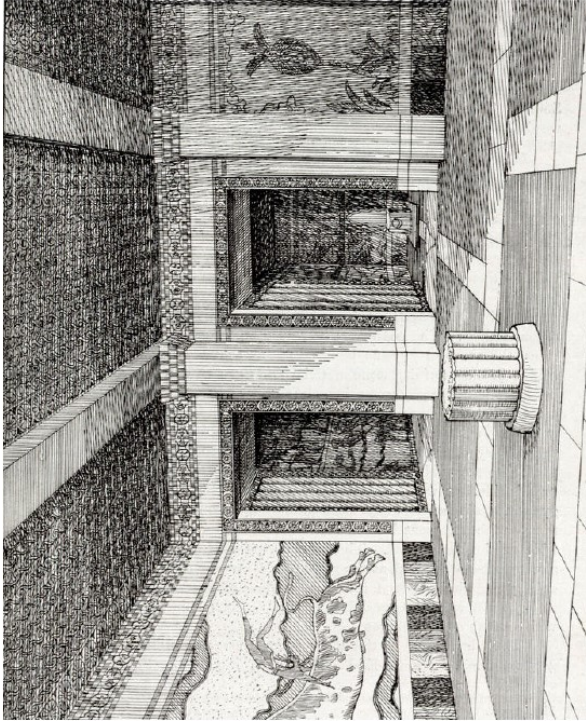


Figure 56 Reconstruction of the West Entrance, after Evans 1928, 675.



Figure 57 Detail of Procession Fresco, after Siebermorgan 2001.

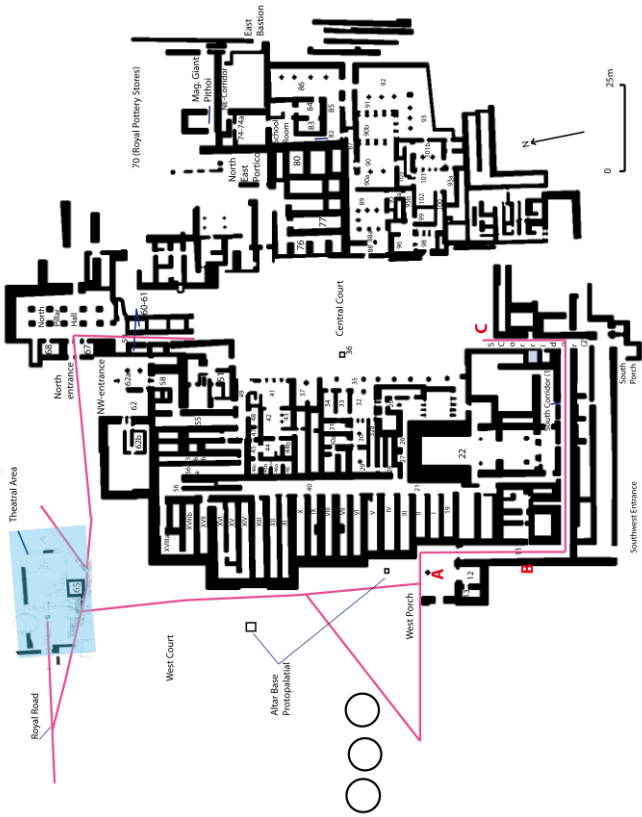


Figure 55 Plan of Knossos with western entrance marked in red. A) Bull fresco, B) Procession fresco, C) Priest-King fresco.



Figure 58 West Entrance at Knossos: Guardrooms in front; West Facade on the right.



Figure 59 Priest-King, after Evans (1928), plate XIV.



Figure 60 Reconstructions of the Priest-King, after Siebermorgen, 69.

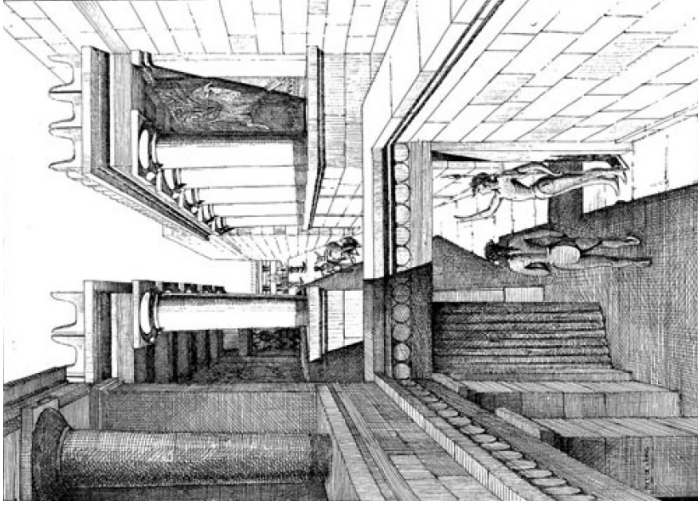


Figure 62 The North Entrance Passage, After Evans 1935, fig. 3. (drawing by Piet de Jong)

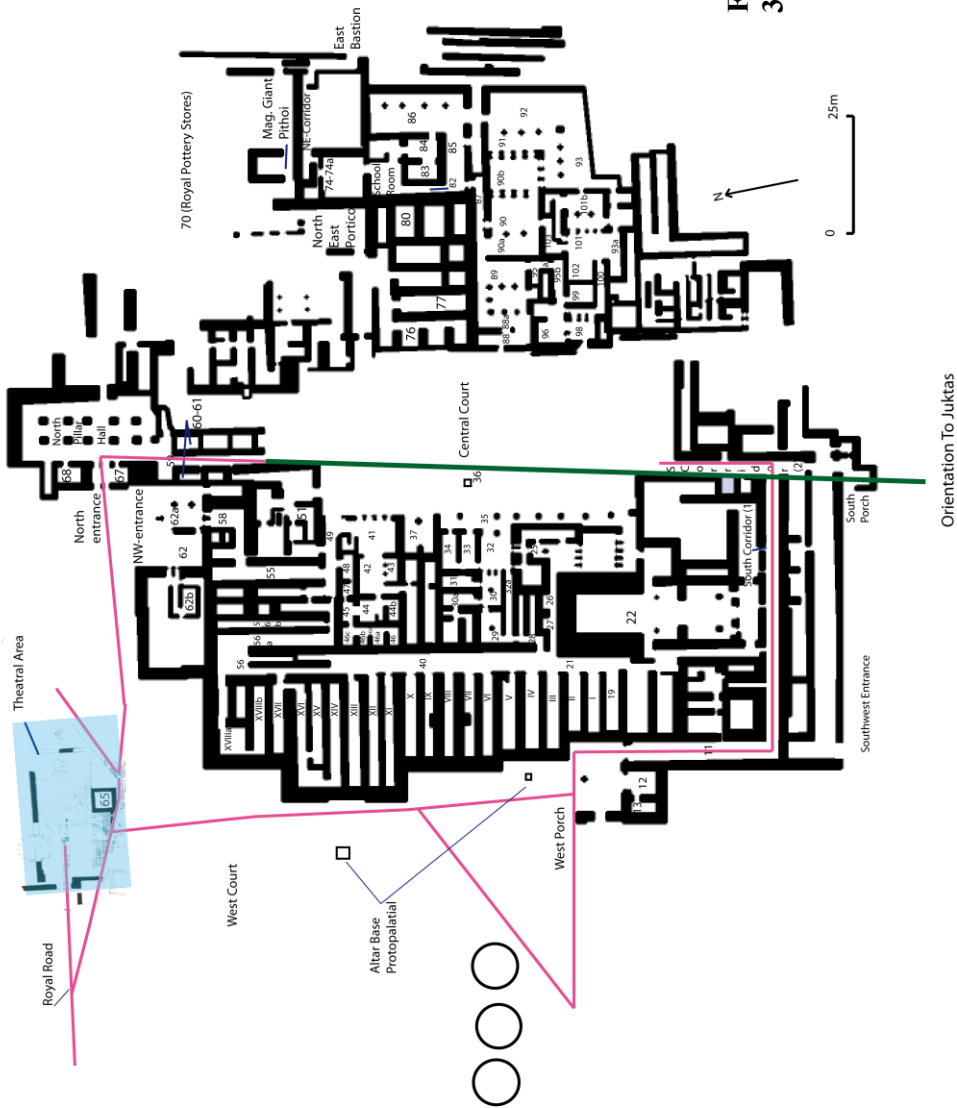


Figure 61 Plan of Knossos. Orientation North Entrance to Juktas marked by Green Line





# Part 6

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Conclusive Thoughts

## Abstract

In this last part we summarize the main findings of this dissertation and discuss some major implications for our understanding of the ways in which the built space functions as an active agent within a discourse of socio-political complexity in Minoan society.

## Chapter 6.1. Synthesis, Main findings and Relevance of Research

### 6.1.1. Synthesis and Main Findings

The objective of this dissertation was to present a methodology to deal with the reciprocal relationship between built space, performance and the emerging structure of a stratified Minoan society; a coherent framework or relational model by means of which archaeologists can analyze the close interaction between the built environment and human behavior in ancient societies, also for those who are specialized in other fields outside Aegean archaeology. The core of the methodology reflected upon the ways in which architecture, spatial programming, and performance have constitutive roles in the integration of communities. It became clear that throughout history, architecture has been used to transform the natural landscape into a meaningful environment for the personal agenda's of its builders. The built space itself became increasingly important to stage social interaction and sets the scene for orchestrating social events. The examination of performance from a theoretical perspective showed that performance is a potent mechanism for the structuring of societies and by discussing recent developments regarding the application of performative theory within archaeology; the importance of performance within Minoan society was discussed and legitimized. Human agents conceptualize the built space in order to simultaneously structure interaction and create representational spaces. The physical setting or specific *locale* of performance plays in this process a crucial part, as the built space together with human performance were meaningful media in the production and reproduction of a community's socio-political structures.

This book explained the apparent role of the built space and the endured importance of performance as integrative devices for Minoan life and in order to do so it synthesized most of the ongoing discussions in past and recent publications on Minoan architecture and society: the function of the Prepalatial Tholos and House tombs, the emergence of urbanization processes, the function of the Minoan Palaces, and the importance of

performance in the process of community making. Instead of focusing on each of these isolated topics, the Minoan evidence was discussed in an all-compassing diachronic perspective - from the Prepalatial Tholos and House tombs to the Proto-and Neopalatial Minoan Palaces. Although all these Minoan hallmarks were perceived from the very beginning as places for the execution of ritual, very few scholars have attempted to employ an integrative framework that builds on social theory to clarify *how* such physical settings, and especially their architectural complexity and the performances executed in and around them, facilitated the means to negotiate and construct differing identities and aiding the Minoan elite to make sense of their world.

One of the major strengths of the diachronic approach is that the analysis of the archaeological material highlights the birth of a series of specific architectural phenomena throughout Minoan history, which point towards a gradual process of innovation illustrated by an ongoing complexity in architectural thinking and the increased importance of representational spaces, its most sophisticated form being the Minoan Palaces.

Throughout the discussion, the following tendencies could be recognized regarding the connection between architecture, performance and social complexity in Bronze Age Minoan Crete.

It appears that as early as the Prepalatial period, Minoan people were looking towards new forms of material culture to express themselves, which are phenomena clearly visible within the cemetery contexts and partly within the urban realm. Early bronze age communities start to exploit the built space and specific forms of material culture in order to structure distinct social relationships; processes closely related to the emergence and establishment of elites within these communities. These local elites represent their supreme status, power and authority through high quality, elite objects, and elite participation in ritual performances. Another key-important feature in this stage is the construction and erection of complexly organized monumental structures such as the Tholos tombs and House tombs and later on the Minoan Palaces.

The increase in architectural complexity of the Tholos tombs and the complexly structured built spaces of the House tombs suggest that people felt the need to create an

environment giving them the possibility to reflect and structure complex social relationships among those that assembled here. The layout of these monumental structures dictated degrees of accessibility, underlining the exclusive nature and elite participation in screened off ritual activities.

Ritual performances, such as ceremonies, offerings, dancing, and processions were introduced as ritualized forms of social interaction, since they provided these local elites with a platform to (re)negotiate their position and status through the integration of the entire community in these events. As such, from the earliest time onwards, ritual performances played an important role for social display among various individuals and groups. It may be put forward that the phenomena attested at the burial sites and the increased complexity in the built space over time were responsive to the gradual changing social dynamics inside Prepalatial communities.

The Protopalatial period marks the beginning of a process of Minoan urbanization that reached its culmination point in the Neopalatial period. However, a close look at the evidence of palatial and non-palatial settlements shows that the process of urbanization occurred gradually over time and does not constitute a complete breach with the former Prepalatial period as has been traditionally envisaged. At the end of the Prepalatial period, significant architectural changes occurred within the settlements. The Prepalatial communities started to exploit the socio-political opportunities of creating outside open air spaces within the settlements as places for social display.

However, major changes have been perceived in terms of scale and elaboration of these innovations in the Protopalatial and the later Neopalatial period. Their presence takes serious proportions, whereby the urban environment is dominated by several open air spaces such as courts and raised pathways. In the Neopalatial period, the largest settlements were characterized by monumental architecture (Palaces and villas), a clear internal organization of streets, open-air squares, and habitation quarters that are all organized into a clear organized entity. Although the outside (or external) gathering spaces remained important during the entire Minoan period, it has to be noted that in the course of the Proto- and Neopalatial period a wide range of new room types appear in Minoan monumental architecture (both the Palaces and villas) which could have

functioned as important venues for specific occasions. Their appearance should be seen as an externalization of the need and the conscious will to structure social interaction and social relations by the extensive use of architecture in order to create a meaningful environment for the expression of status, power, and authority.

In the Proto- and Neopalatial period, monumental buildings kept playing a key-role, however, there seems to be a gradual shift from the funerary towards the urban environment. The balance shift in Minoan life towards the urban landscape resulted in the construction of monumental court centered buildings, which gave the possibility to assemble all layers of the social fabric within the Minoan city.

The changes within the cemetery and the settlement landscape of the Pre-, Proto-, and Neopalatial period sketched above give good evidence to indicate that over time Minoan communities started to prioritize the importance of the daily “city” landscape over the funeral landscape. At the beginning of the Protopalatial period, burial sites were possibly still an important feature to some of the Minoan communities; nonetheless, a shift in the axis of the funeral landscape and the daily landscape of the Minoans can be clearly demonstrated. The dominant weight of the funeral slightly shifted towards a dominance of the daily life. Within the growing process of urbanization, the cemeteries were not the only landmarks for the Minoans. The increasing complexity of the cityscape from the Protopalatial period onwards may indicate a complete turn towards the importance of the every day life and that by that time the socio-political and economic life had been irrefutably brought to the foreground. As a result, from the Protopalatial period onwards, Crete may be regarded as a landscape in which several phenomena across the island, such as Palace-structures, peak- and cave sanctuaries are used simultaneously for the representation of socio-political power and authority. This landscape was constructed through the meaningful use of architecture stressing the world of everyday life and in particular, places of political authority which established a network of opportunities to express power and authority on both a local and regional level. Although, in this landscape, the place of the dead was less dominant, this does not mean that it was not dealt with, only in a less prominent fashion.

But how should the dominant appearance and grandeur of the Minoan Palaces be understood within the urban fabric of the Neopalatial period? How did these buildings operate as active agents within Minoan communities?

The analysis in this book clarified thoroughly the uniqueness of the Minoan Palaces as performative spaces. The structure of the Minoan Palaces and their complex circulation pattern was the result of conscious choices made by the Minoan elite in order to sophisticatedly exploit the architectural environment to adequately downplay differing social positions within the Minoan community. The control of movement by a series of transition spaces and physical boundaries was actively used to channel visitors and structure people according to differences in status, power, and authority. The close interplay between the west court, central court and other internal gathering areas throughout the building created a dynamic environment for multi-layered social interaction, which is argued to be a much more representative image for the sociopolitical complexity of the Late Bronze Age Minoan communities.

The spaciousness of the central court, its close situation to the exterior and its specific elaboration with fixed feature elements, are strong indications that the central court was the main place of assembly for the majority of the people who were allowed to access this space. It is likely that some of these adjacent spaces, which were situated deeper in the configuration, would serve as contexts for exclusive occasions that involved a select group of people. Apart from the central court, these spaces are the most distinctly elaborated and decorated units of the Palace thus meeting the requirements of contexts of social display for the hosting elites which again speaks in favor of the hypothesis that these were used to receive guests of equal elite status and that the most exclusive occasions were held here in which only the very few were involved. A good example of the power of performance was the processional movement throughout the Minoan Palaces, which offered visitors the possibility to actively experience the building and to position themselves within the collective Minoan identity, simultaneously unifying the community and expressing the hierarchical differences existing between its individual members. For the Minoan elite who was responsible for this building project, the Minoan Palaces and the performances conducted within these settings functioned as vehicles for



the expression of normative notions of power and authority in each of their respective communities.

In conclusion, it may be put forward that the monumental building structures of the Proto- and Neopalatial Minoan Palaces acted, and this also counts for the monumental tombs of the Prepalatial period, as an architecturally abetted reflection of the specific socio-political climate of the time. They are built by and for Minoans and as their construction implies an involvement on the level of the community (numerous craftsmen and the elite who sponsored the building project) they are a reflection of its social structures. They were used to express elite identities and materialize complexly structured power relations. The Minoan elites responsible for the building projects controlled access and organized performative events, which were important tools in negotiating their status within the socio-political realm.

Together with performance, these monuments functioned as major integrating devices within Minoan communities and therefore these *locales* are socially meaningful places that actively helped to structure relationships. In that perspective, these structures can be compared with a piece of literature, which is read and interpreted by every Minoan in a very specific and personal way. Both the architecture and performative events were considered meaningful as such and worked normative and informed people about distinct identities. To be a Minoan was nothing more than being a child of its time and what is more illustrative for someone's identity as their involvement in this complex web of social relations and the material culture they were surrounded with? The performances executed in and around these settings, the places one could interact with, and the people one could see and talk to enforced and finally let to an understanding of a Minoan's place in the community, something which is a situation not unique for Minoan society, but also a situation very recognizable for us today.

Therefore, the ritual activities that occurred at the Minoan Palaces did not just describe or imitate the order of the daily world of these communities. Instead, ritual performance is the poesis of order and this order exists only because it is performed.<sup>1135</sup> The performances were constitutive to the social order of Minoan society and thus

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<sup>1135</sup> Giesen 2006, 340.

simultaneously reflect, and are experienced as, a social reality.<sup>1136</sup> They were main agents in the creation of the normative order within Minoan society and were a platform for the Minoan elite for emphasizing communal identity and internal group differences.

### 6.1.2. Sociological and Anthropological Relevance and Future Possibilities

Although this dissertation focuses on the Minoan Bronze Age, the topics discussed in this study have a strong contemporary sociological and anthropological relevance. The role of architecture, performance, and *mise-en-scène* within a discourse of social interaction and differentiation are issues very much alive nowadays and issues we are confronted with every day. I believe that the theoretical framework in part two of this dissertation is a well-suitable approach to focus on these specific questions in all kinds of societies throughout entire history, not only the Minoan one. From an archaeological point of view it would be interesting to compare the approach within this study with the situation on the Mycenaean Mainland and Cyprus. Such studies would allow us to reflect upon the intrinsic differences and similarities of the importance of large-scale performative events as integrating devices of community life within these cultures. It would enable us to understand in an all-compassing manner the way in which elites legitimized their supreme status and authority within all these distinct societies.

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<sup>1136</sup> Vander Beken 2010a; 2010.

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