



CRETA CAPTA

Late Minoan II Knossos in Mycenaean History



THEODORE M. S. NASH

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Frontispiece: Throne Room at Knossos with restored griffin frescoes. Author's photo.

Creta Capta

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Theodore Matthew Spencer Nash

Supervised by Dr. Judy K. Deuling.

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ABSTRACT

The Late Minoan (LM) II period at Knossos, c. 1470-1420 BC, represented a pivotal point in the history of the Aegean Bronze Age, but the full extent to which it shaped the following centuries has yet to be fully appreciated or studied. During this period, Mycenaeans from the mainland gained control of the palace of Knossos, an administrative centre hitherto unparalleled in their world. From the necessity of maintaining political control over an often hostile island, these Mycenaean dynasts were thrust into new roles, rulers of a palatial administration for the first time. Thus LM II Knossos can be viewed in its neglected aspect as a period of *Mycenaean* history, and the foundational phenomenon of the florescent Late Helladic III period – the birth of the Mycenaean palaces – can be placed within its proper historical context. The first Mycenaean experiment in palatial administration at LM II Knossos provided the model followed shortly after by the mainland polities, who in following this path to power dominated the Aegean for the next 200 years.

NOTE

Any written work on the Aegean Bronze Age must choose between strict consistency in transliteration and good sense; I have opted for the latter. Thus Mycenae and Crete, but Knossos and Kephala. Modern Greek is transliterated with etymological aspiration and scriptural, not phonetic, correspondences: Hagia, not Ayia, Triada. Beyond locations, Greek words have not been transliterated. Editorial conventions and abbreviations follow the guidelines of the *American Journal of Archaeology*, though with British English.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

Crete	Dates BC	Mainland	Dates BC
Early Minoan I	3000 – 2650	Early Helladic I	3100 – 2650
Early Minoan II	2650 – 2200	Early Helladic II	2650 – 2200
Early Minoan III	2200 – 2100	Early Helladic III	2250 – 2100
Middle Minoan I	2100 – 1875	Middle Helladic I	2100 – 1875
Middle Minoan II	1875 – 1750	Middle Helladic II	1875 – 1750
Middle Minoan III	1750 – 1700	Middle Helladic III	1750 – 1700
Late Minoan IA	1700 – 1625	Late Helladic I	1700 – 1635
Late Minoan IB	1625 – 1470	Late Helladic IIA	1635 – 1480
Late Minoan II	1470 – 1420	Late Helladic IIB	1480 – 1430
Late Minoan IIIA1	1420 – 1390	Late Helladic IIIA1	1430 – 1390
Late Minoan IIIA2	1390 – 1330	Late Helladic IIIA2	1390 – 1330
Late Minoan IIIB	1330 – 1200	Late Helladic IIIB	1330 – 1200
Late Minoan IIIC	1200 – 1075	Late Helladic IIIC	1200 – 1075.

These periods are based on pottery styles, and only occasionally correspond with societal change. The Minoan Neopalatial period corresponds to MM III – LM IB; the Mycenaean Prepalatial to MH III – LH II; and the Mycenaean Palatial to LH III.

INTRODUCTION

Late Minoan II represents the period immediately following the so-called Minoan Collapse. It is a short period, accounting for perhaps 50 years in the mid-15th century BC.¹ Across Crete, it is poorly and sporadically attested to the extent that it was once thought only to represent a regional style at Knossos, not a true chronological phase.² The debate carried into the late 1970s, and was resolved only by the excavation of a LM II deposit clearly stratified beneath a LM IIIA1 level at Kommos.³ However, it continues to be lumped regularly with LM IIIA at Knossos rather than assessed independently.⁴ While the unique nature and significance of the period has been analysed to a greater extent in the past twenty years, its full significance has yet to be explored in depth.⁵

Evans already posited that the dawn of LM II represented a significant change at Knossos and the advent of a new, aggressive dynasty, demonstrated most vividly by the introduction of Linear B.⁶ Unfortunately, the picture is not quite as clear as Evans thought, and the chronology of the Linear B tablets found at Knossos now represents “one of the most controversial points in Mycenology.”⁷ However, the

¹ As indicated by radiocarbon dates taken from LM IB destructions and the destruction late in LM II of the Unexplored Mansion at Knossos (Manning 2009, 220-1), and necessitated by the Egyptian parallels explored in Chapter I.1. While the low chronology places it slightly later, from c.1425 – 1390 BC (Warren and Hankey 1989, Table 3.1, 169), it is in agreement with the short-lived nature of the period.

² Popham 1975, 372-3.

³ Niemeier 1979 was the last serious objection; Watrous 1981 responded definitively with the evidence from Kommos, now fully published in Watrous 1992.

⁴ Manning 1999, 208. See, for example, the three most recent general overviews: Rehak and Younger 2001, Preston 2008 and Hallager 2010.

⁵ Preston 1999 especially singles out this period.

⁶ Evans 1935, 884.

⁷ Driessen 2008, 70.

work of Jan Driessen in dating the tablets from the Room of the Chariot Tablets (RCT) to LM II has re-affirmed the link between the changes in LM II and the appearance of Linear B at Knossos.⁸ Some confusion has, however, emerged as to whether these tablets are to be dated to LM II or LM IIIA1.⁹ But Driessen was unambiguous: the tablets were fired by an LM II destruction, but only stratified during LM IIIA1 reconstruction.¹⁰ The dating is thus entirely clear, and his interpretation has won wide acceptance.¹¹ On this evidence, it can no longer be doubted seriously that the rulers of LM II Knossos spoke the Greek language.¹² While it is facile to equate language with culture or ethnicity, the arguments here adduced present the case for a strong link between the development of Linear B administration and a Mycenaean presence on Crete. LM II Knossos is thus taken to be Mycenaean, though as will be discussed in Chapter II, this characterisation is far from straightforward.

The argument that Minoans (meaning simply here the pre-Hellenic peoples of Crete) might have adopted Linear B out of convenience, or to make a political statement, contradicts the evidence of the script's development.¹³ Moreover, the textual evidence from the RCT presents a strikingly Hellenic picture: the vast majority of personal names recorded are Greek.¹⁴ Similarly, the contributions of bioarchaeology are complicated both by a lack of sufficiently preserved evidence and insufficiently

⁸ Driessen 1990, 2000.

⁹ *cf.* Driessen 2008, 76, Table 3.2.

¹⁰ Driessen 1990, 117.

¹¹ Palaima 2010, 361.

¹² In what context these Mycenaeans arrived and to what extent (if at all) they were linked to the Minoan collapse are questions wholly beyond the scope of the current study; for various hypotheses pertaining to these questions, see Wiener 2015, 140.

¹³ Chapter III.1

¹⁴ Driessen 2000, 192. Some 70% of the total names are Greek, but these are heavily biased towards more important individuals; many of the non-Greek names belong to shepherds.

specific tests. Argyro Nafplioti used strontium isotope analysis to determine that some of those buried in the Mycenaeanising warrior graves were in fact local Knossians, not Mycenaeans from the mainland.¹⁵ However, the burials she analysed were of LM III, not LM II, date, and so were likely the locally-raised descendants of the original invaders. Moreover, Knossos falls within the same geological region as the southern Peloponnese; those interred could just have equally been raised in Laconia.¹⁶ Objections that the arguments for Mycenaean presence derive “from a culture-historical interpretation of material culture history and the simplistic equation of certain material culture characteristics” understate the strength of the Linear B evidence and the widespread nature of the Mycenaeanising trends.¹⁷ While the old notion of a massive Mycenaean invasion which dis- and re- placed the older population of Knossos has rightly been discredited, the hypothesis of a new administration established by mainlanders “est toujours acceptée aujourd’hui.”¹⁸

By virtue of the dating system used for the Aegean Bronze Age, LM II Knossos is contextualised as a period of Minoan history. However, given that it housed the first Linear B administration, it is better understood as part of Mycenaean history. In so contextualizing it, many of the questions about the development of Mycenaean society can be answered, and a fully integrated analysis of the emergence of the Mycenaean palaces performed for the first time. By examining the evidence from the contemporary mainland alongside that from Knossos, it will be argued that

¹⁵ Nafplioti 2008.

¹⁶ Wiener 2015, 135; cf. the suggestion of Banou and Hitchcock (2009, 13) that the grave goods from the Vapheio tholos were loot from the conquest.

¹⁷ Nafplioti 2008, 2308. Warrior graves strikingly similar to those at Knossos have been found at Chania, including one dating to the very beginning of LM II (Andreadaki-Vlazaki 2010, 524-6). It is *a priori* more likely that this phenomenon, with its parallels to mainland practices, is a result of the arrival of Mycenaeans at both locations rather than parallel, indigenous developments.

¹⁸ Langohr 2009, 181.

every development at the beginning of the Mycenaean Palatial Age had its roots at Knossos.

Chapter I will, therefore, assess the relative chronologies: using evidence from Crete, the mainland, and the wider Mediterranean, LM II will be shown to correlate with all but the beginning of LH IIB and the very beginning of LH IIIA1. This is a period of revolutionary change on the mainland, when the megaron and the *ῥάναξ* both appear fully formed, without true Helladic precursors. This conclusion will be drawn holistically from the architectural and mortuary records of the period. It will also be argued that there is no evidence for the economic centralisation and bureaucratic structures enabled by Linear B prior to this period.

These radical changes will be contextualised in Chapter II, which will survey the evidence from LM II Knossos. While the Linear B administration was the result of a Mycenaean presence, the picture is not one of cultural domination and assertion by the mainlanders, but rather of integration and syncretism. This is especially evident in the mortuary record, where Mycenaean warrior graves and monumental tombs incorporated not only the artefacts of Minoan cult, but in one remarkable example even the practice. The architectural evidence will then be assessed in light of this cultural blending. This provides fertile ground for discussion, as the palace was rebuilt in this period, not according to the Mycenaean architectural tradition, but the Minoan; the LM II palace sits on the same footprint as its Neopalatial precursor. The key interpretative locus for this discussion will be the Throne Room, once thought to have been introduced by the Mycenaeans but now known to be much older. In this room, it will be argued, can be found the origins of those developments assessed in Chapter I: the *ῥάναξ* and the megaron. Detailed analysis of the relation between Mycenaean and Minoan cult in the Throne Room will posit a scenario by which the goddess *Πόρνια* entered the Mycenaean pantheon and the

active processes by which the figure of the $\rho\acute{\alpha}\nu\alpha\xi$, and his archaeological correlate the megaron, entered Mycenaean society at Knossos and on the mainland.

Chapter III will complete the picture, charting the evidence for the development of the Linear B script at Knossos. To this end, the relation between Linear B and its precursor Linear A will be assessed, incorporating analysis at the level of sign-shape and administrative structures such as the notation of weights and measures. With this will be integrated discussion of the archaeological context of these developments. Linear B, it will be argued, could not have been developed prior to LM II; in that period, only Knossos presents both the necessity of a written administration and the evidence for such, both in the tablets from the RCT and the archaeological evidence for economic centralization.

To augment this, and provide a new argument for its development at LM II Knossos, the development of Linear B will be contextualised within a theoretical framework. As it is so obviously modelled on an existing script, it will be considered alongside other scripts that were similarly developed. Though common, this process has yet to be systematically and theoretically analysed, so a range of other examples will be assessed to construct a framework against which Linear B can be compared. In doing this, it will be argued that Linear B does not align with the general picture, which is for scripts to emerge as optional, elite developments, driven by onomastic and prestigious concerns. Rather, Linear B emerged as an administrative tool, driven by necessity. This, therefore, is the first theoretical argument to situate its development at LM II Knossos.

CHAPTER I

The Mycenaean Revolution: LH IIB and the Transition to the Palatial Age

To assess the impact of LM II Knossos on Mycenaean society, the mainland must first be surveyed for evidence of contemporary changes. An accurate picture of the relative chronology of the period can only be established by a broad analysis of Mediterranean evidence, with an especial focus on Egyptian records both written and artistic. This evidence indicates that LM II begins slightly after LH IIB does, and ends slightly later than the beginning of LH IIIA1. Any changes contemporary with the beginning of Mycenaean rule at Knossos must therefore be sought in those periods. A holistic view of the society, and any changes, can only be achieved through analysis both of architectural and mortuary evidence. Both indicate a revolutionary change starting in LH IIB and completed in LH IIIA1. This is manifested in the architectural record by the appearance of the megaron, and in the mortuary record by a centralization of power marked by a radical decrease in competition. This latter development is in contrast with the earlier evidence for an aristocratic oligarchy, and is most likely linked to the emergence of the ῥάναξ , the pinnacle of the monarchic society evident in Linear B. Moreover, as the megaron is intimately linked with the ῥάναξ , these two developments are closely linked. Thus, in LH IIB institutions which entered Mycenaean society at contemporary LM II Knossos make their first appearance on the mainland and herald the beginnings of the Mycenaean Palatial age.

1: Chronology

It is difficult to establish synchronicities between Crete and the mainland for a period as poorly attested as LM II.¹⁹ However, a general alignment between LM II and LH IIB is attested by their shared type piece: the Ephyraean goblet.²⁰ It is also clear, from excavations at Hagia Eirene on Kea, that LH IIB was partially contemporary with LM IB, pottery of which period is found alongside LH IIB types in a destruction layer.²¹ It therefore began prior to the beginning of LM II. At the other end, the issue is unfortunately murkier: no deposits anywhere indicate which period ended first.²² However, indirect evidence from the broader Mediterranean suggests that LM IIIA1 started somewhat prior to LH IIIA1. LM II is therefore here taken to be contemporary with all but earliest LH IIB and early LH IIIA1.

The key evidence is Egyptian, and so vexed by all attendant controversy in discussions of Late Bronze Age chronology.²³ While this necessarily means that conclusions may be affected by later discoveries, there is sufficient evidence to develop an argument, and the possibility of error in such a controversial question should not be adduced to preclude the validity of inquiry. Even if the picture is less clear than here deduced, and LH IIIA does not begin until after LM II has ended, so long as the developments in question can be traced to that earlier period, the overall argument is in no way impinged.

¹⁹ For the poor attestation of LM II, see Chapter II.

²⁰ Warren and Hankey 1989, 98.

²¹ Warren and Hankey 1989, 98.

²² Manning 1999, 208.

²³ i.e. the currently unreconciled gap between dates based on radiocarbon and dates based on the evidence from Egypt. The case for the former is made most recently in Manning 2014; the evidence for the latter is presented in Höflmayer 2009.

The relevant evidence takes the form of written and artistic records from the reign of Thutmosis III, who reigned for 54 years in the 15th century BC.²⁴ This is in the form of depictions of a people called the *kftjw*, or keftiu, in Theban tomb paintings of that period (fig. 1).²⁵ Only two years after Evans began his excavations at Knossos, it was realised that the depictions of the keftiu matched exactly the depictions of the Minoans he was bringing to light.²⁶ Not only do the keftiu look Minoan, but they also bear as tribute items of transparently Minoan origin such as bull's head rhyta. The evidence is strong enough that this view, though clarified in some regards, has not been significantly challenged.²⁷ Though the term keftiu does not refer unproblematically to Crete at every instance, when paired with depictions of peoples who are clearly Minoan, the equation is clear.²⁸ Such clarity exists in six tombs from the reign of Thutmosis III.²⁹ Their interpretation, however, must balance art-historical analysis and the use of stereotyped propagandistic images with the accurate depiction of historical events. In this regard, there are two sources for the various depictions, which must represent two separate, historical visits.³⁰ The tomb of Senenmut, from Thutmosis' early reign, is the earliest attestation of the first source, and that of Rekhmire, from near the end, the first to evidence the second.³¹

²⁴ Exactly *which* years those were is a matter of some debate. Astronomical observations necessitate accession in either 1504, 1479, or 1468, with modern scholarship favouring 1468 (Kraus and Warburton 2009, 134). This is supported by current radiocarbon evidence, which aligns this period well with LM II (Manning 2009, 220-1); *cf. infra*.

²⁵ The fullest study of these scenes is still Wachsmann 1987.

²⁶ Hall 1902, 166.

²⁷ Panagiotopoulos 2001, 264-5.

²⁸ The Egyptians likely did not distinguish with much discrimination between regions that were literally the "Back of Beyond," as Hall (1902, 162) translates keftiu. For a discerning take on how they did conceive of the keftiu, see Matić 2014 and, for their place among foreigners, Judas 2013.

²⁹ Wachsmann 1987, 27-37.

³⁰ Wachsmann 1987, 121-2.

³¹ Wachsmann 1987, 122.

It is the tomb of Rekhmire which is of greatest consequence. It has been evident from the first publication of the tomb that the depiction of the keftiu here is a palimpsest: a loincloth, as in earlier tombs, was initially painted, but then concealed and replaced with a kilt.³² At some point during the tomb's preparation, after the painting of the keftiu had begun, a new deputation arrived and forced the Egyptian artists to revise their depiction.³³ This point is of the utmost importance for establishing the depiction here of a contemporary event, not something taken from a copy book.³⁴

Rekhmire ascended to the position of vizier in the 28th regnal year of Thutmose III, and as he is consistently referred to by that title in the tomb, its preparation cannot precede this.³⁵ This therefore provides a *terminus post quem* for the deputation. As work continued into the early reign of Amenhotep II, the alterations could have been made at any point until then.³⁶ However, the deputation must have occurred prior to the death of Thutmose III, as the text accompanying the images indicates that it occurred during his reign.³⁷ It is furthermore impossible, on the current understanding of the evidence, to suggest that the deputation was simply some elaborate mortuary fiction. The care taken in the depiction of the keftiu and their gifts clearly represents a certain respect on the part of the artists; their embassy was

³² Davies 1943, 25.

³³ This interpretation, too, goes back to Davies 1943 (25), and is still accepted (Rehak 1996, 50-1; Manning 2007, 115 and n. 4). The alteration of a tomb painting to avoid anachronism is a phenomenon possibly paralleled in the Ramesside era usurpation of the tomb of Dhout by Dhutemhab (Wachsmann 1987, 48).

³⁴ cf. the sources *supra*, and the discussion at Rehak 1998, 51. This mitigates Macdonald's (2001, 529) accusation that favouring the evidence of one tomb over another is "unsettlingly selective." There is simply more evidence that the tomb of Rekhmire represents contemporary events than that of Senenmut.

³⁵ Vercoutter 1956, 256.

³⁶ Vercoutter 1956, 256-7.

³⁷ Davies 1943, 20.

“a real ‘event’ in the Egyptian court.”³⁸ That such care was taken in the depictions is vital, as it allows for analysis both of both the keftiu’s clothes and wares.³⁹

For many years, it was confidently asserted that the change from loincloth to kilt in the depiction of the keftiu in Rekhmire’s tomb represented the transition from a Minoan deputation to a Mycenaean one, thought to coincide with the transition from LM IB to LM II.⁴⁰ This view is no longer tenable in light of work by Paul Rehak, whose findings are unambiguous: “kilts are neither a cultural nor a chronological indicator.”⁴¹ Both kilts and loincloths are well-established costumes in the Aegean; the assertion that the change to kilts in the tomb of Rekhmire necessarily represents the arrival of Mycenaeans cannot stand.⁴² Moreover, an evolving understanding of the relative chronologies makes it clear that the LM IB/II transition could not be so late in the reign of Thutmose III.⁴³ There is no need, therefore, to associate this tomb with the LM IB/II transition.

This aligns well with the internal evidence of the paintings. In early scholarship, the assumption was that the kilts were decorated with Egyptian motifs.⁴⁴ However, it is has now been argued that the kilts are decorated with motifs wholly in keeping with those on LM IIIA1 pottery.⁴⁵ A general correlation of the late reign with Thutmose III with LM IIIA1 can be established, both archaeologically and with radiocarbon

³⁸ Panagiotopoulos 2006, 394.

³⁹ Other tombs are similarly accurate; *cf.* Matić 2015.

⁴⁰ Manning 1999, 211.

⁴¹ Rehak 1996, 39.

⁴² Rehak 1996, 51 and *passim*.

⁴³ Manning 1999, 208-220 and Manning 2009. While this case is largely built on radiocarbon dates, it will be seen here that these are not in conflict with the archaeological evidence (*cf.* Macdonald 2001, 531).

⁴⁴ Evans 1928, 744.

⁴⁵ Barber 1991, 330-57.

dates, supporting the validity of this interpretation.⁴⁶ Further, the specific items brought by the *keftiu* as tribute are of LM II-III A1 type, further evidence that this tomb was painted only after the end of LM II.⁴⁷

Fortunately, for purposes of dating, it is perhaps possible to date this deputation with accuracy. In the 42nd regnal year of Thutmose III, a gift of lapis lazuli, copper, and “heads of bulls” was brought to the pharaoh.⁴⁸ The text is lacunose, so the identity of the peoples in question is unknown. However, on the basis that heads of bulls ought to be bull’s head rhyta, Shelley Wachsmann suggested that this was a deputation of the *keftiu*, a suggestion which has won general acceptance.⁴⁹ While lapis lazuli and copper might be thought odd imports from Crete, neither is impossible; the quantity of the former is a pittance (3.3 deben, ~300 grams) relative to recorded amounts from Mesopotamia (in Thutmose III year 34, 110 deben, ~10 kilograms), and less than the famous hoard from Thebes (496 grams).⁵⁰ To copper coming from Crete there can be no serious objection, though obviously it was not mined there.

The 42nd regnal year of Thutmose III is significant for another reason: in this year his annals record that he was visited by a prince of *tnj* or Tanaja, the first mention of such a people in Egypt.⁵¹ This ethnonym is strongly linked to Mycenaean Greece by the famous “Aegean List” from the mortuary temple of Amenhotep III at Kom el

⁴⁶ Manning 2009, with further comments on archaeological links at Manning 1999, 217-8. The archaeological evidence remains controversial, but the correlations are too strong to ignore.

⁴⁷ Matthäus 1995, 182-3. While his discussion focusses on the tomb of Menkheperresenb, the similarities of depiction in these two tombs have led Wachsmann (1987, 122) to claim they must be depictions of the same embassy.

⁴⁸ Breasted 1906, 535.

⁴⁹ Wachsmann 1987, 54-5; cf. Panagiotopoulos 2006, 394.

⁵⁰ Wachsmann 1987, 54; Kopanias 2008, 60.

⁵¹ Breasted 1906, 536.

Hetan, and might be echoed in the *Δαναοί* of Homer.⁵² Sturt Manning has suggested that this embassy was a result of the rise of palatial society in LH IIIA1 Greece.⁵³ This can be better established in a different manner, however: this deputation arrived while Thutmose III was in Syria.⁵⁴ This was probably not before LH IIIA1, when evidence appears for a connection between the Greek mainland and the Levant.⁵⁵ Thus both LM IIIA1 and LH IIIA1 seem to have started by the 42nd regnal year of Thutmosis III. As LM IIIA1 must stretch into the (perhaps late) reign of Amenhotep III, this should be very early in that period.⁵⁶ This is further supported by the strong LM II nature of the metal vases depicted in the Theban tombs.⁵⁷ However, it is unlikely that this should be quite so early in LH IIIA1, a period that still precedes the Mycenaeanisation of the eastern Aegean.⁵⁸ Thus it may be posited that the earliest developments of LH IIIA1 were contemporaneous with late LM II at Knossos.

⁵² Cline 2011, 7 and *passim*.

⁵³ Manning 1999, 220.

⁵⁴ As noted by Kelder (2010, 125).

⁵⁵ There are, in fact, no items of Syro-Palestine origin in LH IIB contexts; a serious connection between the two regions was not established until LH III (Cline 1994, 56-7, Table 31 and Figures. 10 and 11).

⁵⁶ For the necessity of pushing it late into LM IIIA1, see Brandl, Bunimovitz and Lederman 2013; this was earlier accepted by Macdonald (2001, 531).

⁵⁷ Matthaus 1995, 183.

⁵⁸ While Rhodes was Mycenaean by LH IIB, it seems Miletus and Kalymnos were not settled until LH IIIA1 had started, and not thoroughly Mycenaeanised until LH IIIA2 (Hope Simpson 2003, 214, 229).

2: The Origins of the Mycenaean Palatial Age

The Mycenaean age of Greece is often now divided into periods analogous to those on Crete: the Prepalatial and the Palatial.⁵⁹ The first began in MH III, with the demarcation of Grave Circle B at Mycenae, and the growing ostentation of the burials therein.⁶⁰ Out of this emerged a society of warrior elites, whose burials were rich beyond any precedent in the Aegean.⁶¹ For all its mortuary splendour, however, the Prepalatial mainland was far removed from the bureaucratic structures of its island contemporary. The development of the palaces was not a natural evolution of society from a lower level to a higher, but rather a radical restructuring brought about by various Mycenaean lords in emulation of (and perhaps partnership with) the Mycenaean lords of LM II Knossos and their clear successes.⁶² Here, these developments will be traced on the mainland; Chapter II will explore their roots in the mingling of Mycenaean and Minoan at LM II Knossos.

While the break between Prepalatial and Palatial Mycenaean society is often noted, it is regularly framed as a curious lag in a natural, linear progression.⁶³ There is also a tendency to link the two stages and frame the change as evolutionary. Thus Kim Shelton: “The Palatial period... sees the successful development and *evolution* of several competing polities from the previous period” (emphasis mine).⁶⁴ Such a reading elides the massive differences between the Prepalatial and Palatial periods

⁵⁹ cf. Rutter 2001 and Shelmerdine 2001.

⁶⁰ For Grave Circle B, see Mylonas 1964. While Aegina is home to the earliest elite burial of this type, it was soon surpassed by its mainland rival (Higgins 1987).

⁶¹ Most notable, of course, is the sheer volume of gold, which Crete at no point matched (Davis [1984] 2015, 457-8).

⁶² cf. Pantou 2014, 379.

⁶³ See, for example, Rutter 2001, 146: “Thus, it continues to be the case that the palace form did not make its initial appearance on the mainland until long after the Shaft Grave era had begun and possibly not until it was actually over.”

⁶⁴ Shelton 2010, 143.

in favour of a teleological model, inevitable because demonstrable.⁶⁵ This is not to suggest that models that explain the development of Mycenaean palaces as secondary state formation are invalid, only that they understate the agency of the Mycenaeans who developed the first palaces.⁶⁶ Just because the example of Neopalatial Crete existed did not mean that it had to be followed, and the curious blend of Mycenaean and Minoan at LM II Knossos is testament to the strength of Prepalatial Mycenaean identity.⁶⁷ The change was not evolutionary but revolutionary.

Evidence of this change is evidenced holistically in the architectural and mortuary records of LH I-III Greece. Architecturally, it is marked by the appearance of the megaron as the central unit of the palace, a break which is not diminished by the prior existence of elite architecture. Careful use and definition of terminology is essential here, as megaron is a fraught term, often applied inconsistently.⁶⁸ It is, however, too embedded in the scholarship and literature of the field to be avoided.⁶⁹ Here, megaron here refers only to the palatial megaron, as attested at Pylos, Mycenae, and Tiryns. This was the architectural correlate of the emergence of *ῥάναξ* ideology, the concomitant institution of which is evident in the funerary record at Mycenae.⁷⁰ The chronological link between the consolidation of royal power in the figure of the *ῥάναξ* (as evidenced by the co-opting of the tholos tomb) and the emergence of the megaron firmly links the latter with the former. Finally, contemporary with all this must be emergence of the *sine qua non* of palatial administrations: Linear B. This is marked by the increased architectural elaboration, changes in the relations between larger and smaller centres, and centralization of

⁶⁵ cf. the comments of Fitzsimons 2007, 96-7.

⁶⁶ cf. Parkinson and Galatay 2007, 122-3.

⁶⁷ Especially in the funerary sphere; see the discussion in Chapter II.

⁶⁸ Darcque 1990.

⁶⁹ cf. Petrakis 2009, 14.

⁷⁰ cf. Chapter II.

wealth in this period enabled by a written administration.⁷¹ The resultant picture is of a society that underwent radical change at the change from LH IIB to LH IIIA1.

The role of the *ῥάναξ* too must be defined. Here, the evidence of Linear B is key, as the station, responsibilities, and societal role of the *ῥάναξ* are significantly illuminated in these texts.⁷² His pre-eminence is made explicit by PY Er 312, where the *wa-na-ka* (*ῥάναξ*) holds thrice the land (*te-me-no*, τέμενος) that the *ra-wa-ke-ta* (*λαφαγέτας*) does.⁷³ The *λαφαγέτας* is further associated with the *ῥάναξ* in PY Un 718, in the context of a feast for Poseidon, and in PY Un 219, which is less clear but may record sacrifices to both.⁷⁴ While these two figures are singled out above all others in the tablets, the fact the *ῥάναξ* consistently receives and sacrifices more than the *λαφαγέτας* distinguishes him as the single most important figure in Mycenaean society.⁷⁵ Moreover, his close association with the palatial administration is evidenced in PY Ta 711, where it is recorded that the *ῥάναξ* appointed *au-ke-wa* (*Αυγέφας*) to the position of *da-mo-ko-ro*, a word of uncertain derivation but probably indicating some kind of provincial governor.⁷⁶

While it cannot be assumed that the exact functions carried out by the *ῥάναξ* in the Pylos tablets were also carried out by other *ῥάνακτες* at the inception of the institution, the evidence of LM II Linear B (from the Room of the Chariot Tablets) suggests that the *ῥάναξ* was pre-eminent from the beginning.⁷⁷ The existence of the word *wa-na-ka*, though unfortunately nothing else, is attested on KN Vc 73 and KN

⁷¹ Voutsaki 2010, 97. For the development of Linear B, see Chapter III.

⁷² Unless otherwise stated, the text of individual tablets is taken from Aurora *et al.* 2013. For an overview of this database and its utility, see Aurora 2015.

⁷³ Duhoux 2008, 304-8.

⁷⁴ PY Un 718: Duhoux 2008, 342-7; PY Un 219: Palmer 1963, 259.

⁷⁵ Shelmerdine 2008b, 127-31.

⁷⁶ PY Ta 711: Duhoux 2008, 314-7. For the role of the *da-mo-ko-ro*, see Shelmerdine 2008b, 133-4.

⁷⁷ These tablets, and their dating, will be further discussed in Chapter II.

Vd 136. More helpful is KN F 51, where *wa* (short, undoubtedly, for dat. *wa-na-ka-te*) is given more grain than any of the other named persons.⁷⁸ Though the evidence is scant, the textual records indicate diachronic evidence for the significance of the *ῥάναξ*.

It seems, therefore, that the *ῥάναξ* held an exalted position in the economic, religious, and administrative spheres; no other figure identified in the tablets can compare. This aligns well with the definition of kingship offered by James Wright: “inherited, superior authority vested in a single person, the king, who holds his position for life and who maintains his power through a manipulation of economic, militaristic and ideological forces.”⁷⁹ It also aligns well with Homer’s use of *ῥάναξ*, the same word after the loss of digamma, suggesting in this much at least a genuine reflection of Bronze Age reality in his poetry.⁸⁰ It is therefore likely that Mycenaean Palatial society was monarchic, with power at its highest level vested in the *ῥάναξ*.

2.1: The Architectural Evidence

The evidence of LH IIA is of multiple regional societies concerned with the consolidation of power, but still limited in size and scope.⁸¹ There is little evidence to suggest any particular concern for prestigious living conditions. So much is evidenced by a survey of the sites that would later become palatial. While later developments at all of the sites has destroyed much early evidence, enough in each case exists for a coherent picture to be drawn, augmented by such sites as the Menelaion where the early evidence is better preserved. This evidence must

⁷⁸ The interpretation of this tablet is uncertain, but this much at least is clear. Driessen 2000, 208; Duhoux 2008, 367-7.

⁷⁹ Wright 1995, 65.

⁸⁰ Palaima 1995, 123.

⁸¹ Shelmerdine 2001, 352.

constitute only part of the assessment, however, as prestigious buildings on their own offer limited information as to the ideologies of their builders, and so cannot *ipsis factis* constitute evidence of palatial society as it was later manifested.⁸²

Mycenae, of all sites, might be thought the best candidate for an early palace. So much, at least, occurred to Wace: “we can hardly imagine that these wealthy princes possessed no appropriate dwelling on the citadel.”⁸³ And yet the evidence suggests just that. While there is evidence of habitation from the LH I-II period on the citadel, there is no evidence for a building to match the splendour of the shaft graves.⁸⁴ Only the presence of fresco fragments in a LH IIA deposit suggests the presence of an elite building.⁸⁵ However, a fresco here is no more evidence for a palace at Mycenae than the frescoes of Akrotiri for a palace on Thera. The technique was, moreover, at use on the mainland as far back as the MH period.⁸⁶ As this is so far before the emergence of the palaces, the link once posited between the two cannot hold.⁸⁷

While it must be imagined that the citadel was at this point inhabited, and featured a building of some refinement, nothing in the evidence necessitates that it was palatial as the term is here understood.⁸⁸ While the building itself does not survive, domestic detritus was found in the same deposit, including bones broken “for the extraction of the marrow.”⁸⁹ It is possible, then, to suggest that the building was used for communal feasting, a function which survived through to the later palaces, but

⁸² Wright 2006, 41-2.

⁸³ Wace 1949, 87.

⁸⁴ The evidence is presented at French and Shelton 2005, 176.

⁸⁵ Wace 1921-3, 159; French and Shelton 2005, 176-7.

⁸⁶ At Tiryns (Kilian 1987, 213 and n. 45).

⁸⁷ Barber 1992, 17.

⁸⁸ It must have been modest in at least one respect: the hill was not artificially terraced (Wace 1949, 87).

⁸⁹ French and Shelton 2005, 176.

subsumed to the *πάναξ* ideology.⁹⁰ It might further be significant that other, earlier deposits from the acropolis, dating to MH III-LH I, also contain animal bones, oyster shells, and “domestic refuse.”⁹¹ It seems that the LH IIA remains simply represents the continuation of an earlier practice, albeit in a more elaborate setting.

Little further can be said about LH IIB Mycenae. A first megaron was, necessarily, built at some point, and the hilltop overhauled to support a full Mycenaean palace. This would correlate to Elizabeth French and Kim Shelton’s “Palace III”, which they place in the LH IIB period.⁹² Unfortunately, no evidence mandates that this occurred in LH IIB rather than LH IIIA1.⁹³ However, the fact that a megaron was installed fully formed at Tiryns in LH IIIA1 suggests that the form already existed. By this period, Tiryns was likely under the political control of Mycenae, suggesting that the model followed at Tiryns originated at Mycenae.⁹⁴ This is good evidence for pushing the development back into LH IIB.

This picture correlates well with the more abundant evidence from Tiryns, where evidence of a building in use from the LH II-III A1 periods has been found beneath that first megaron on the *Oberburg*.⁹⁵ Found in association with the remains was a LH IIA destruction layer, including fresco fragments, and LH IIB pottery contemporary with its construction.⁹⁶ Here, then, is direct attestation for a situation

⁹⁰ As suggested in French 2002, 47. For feasting in the Palatial period, see Wright 2004.

⁹¹ French and Shelton 2005, 176.

⁹² French and Shelton 2005, 177.

⁹³ Fitzsimons 2011, 103.

⁹⁴ *cf.* Kopcke 1995, 89-90 (though he places its development in LH IIIA1). There is not space here to rehearse all the arguments put forth for the relationship between Mycenae and Tiryns, but it is now broadly accepted that the only question is when Tiryns came under Mycenaean domination, not if (*cf.* Maran 2015, 280; Dickinson 1977, 54; Kelder 2010, 96-7).

⁹⁵ Published in Maran 2001.

⁹⁶ Stülpnagel 1999, 238.

very similar to that attested indirectly at Mycenae, with a major, frescoed building occupying the acropolis; evidence remains of a terraced building over at least two levels, with no formal or structural relation to the later megaron.⁹⁷ That said, passing little of the structure remains, and it is impossible to argue for any specific purpose. The potential evidence for feasting present at Mycenae has no parallel here, though absence of evidence is hardly evidence of absence. Based on the close relationship between the two through this period, it might therefore be deemed likely that buildings at the two sites served the same purpose.⁹⁸

The situation at the Menelaion near Sparta, where actual remains from the LH IIB phase remain in the form of Mansion I, is in many ways the most illustrative.⁹⁹ Their proper contextualization and interpretation is therefore vital. Mansion I is often called an early palace due to its significant size and architectural form, including its central “megaroid” arrangement (fig. 2).¹⁰⁰ However, this superficial resemblance is not necessarily meaningful, as the recent work of Panagiota Pantou has stressed.¹⁰¹ The architectural evidence suggests that, rather than the highly controlled and private organization of later palaces with their walls, gates, and centripetal arrangement, Mansion I was both open and accessible, suggesting not a private residence of the elite, but a structure which “would primarily have served to accommodate large-scale social gatherings.”¹⁰² This stands in contrast with the palatial period, when social gatherings were pushed away from the megaron at the

⁹⁷ Indeed, the upper terrace of the building was razed in the construction of the first megaron. Maran 2015, 279-80.

⁹⁸ As at Mycenae, there is also evidence of a MH/LH I building on the acropolis. Maran 2010, 724-5.

⁹⁹ Published in Catling 2009.

¹⁰⁰ Kilian 1987, 212-3; this view is still accepted in its final publication (Catling 2009, 448).

¹⁰¹ Pantou 2014.

¹⁰² Pantou 2014, 371.

centre of the palace.¹⁰³ Despite apparent similarities in plan between Mansion I and later palatial megara, the contexts and therefore purposes of the buildings are very different.

This aligns well with the suggested interpretation of the buildings at Mycenae and Tiryns, and indicates that in the early Mycenaean age prestige buildings were being developed as communal hubs.¹⁰⁴ They were not, like the later palaces, administrative centres, but the evidence of the Menelaion supports that from Mycenae; both faunal remains and the specific pottery assemblage point to communal feasting as at least one of the purposes of Mansion I.¹⁰⁵ Finding in Mansion I the origins of the megaron palace is further complicated by the fact it never developed into one – the site was continuously occupied through LH IIB-IIIB, but Mansion I was superseded not by a palace but by Mansions II and III.¹⁰⁶ This may be explained by the emergence of Hagios Vasileios in LH IIIA1, but this again suggests a break rather than continuity in the emergence of the Mycenaean palaces.¹⁰⁷

The only other major centre with potentially relevant remains from LH IIB is Thebes, where the so-called Older Kadmeion has long been dated to the LH II period, though the evidence is scant (fig. 3).¹⁰⁸ The best dating evidence is a fragmentary fresco, dated on stylistic grounds to LM IIIA, but which provides only a *terminus ante*

¹⁰³ Wright 2006, 39.

¹⁰⁴ As at Mycenae and Tiryns, fresco fragments have been found in at the Menelaion assignable to Mansion I (Catling 2009, 30).

¹⁰⁵ Faunal remains: Jones 2009, 134-46; pottery: Pantou 2014, 388-9.

¹⁰⁶ Catling 2009, 17-19.

¹⁰⁷ Here, a modest building of LH I-II date was replaced by a much larger building, complete with elaborate frescoes, in LH IIIA (Vasilogamvrou 2013; for the [undatable] Linear B, see Aravantinos and Vasilogamvrou 2012.) The full publication of these excavations is eagerly awaited.

¹⁰⁸ Dakouri-Hild 2001, 95-6.

quem for construction.¹⁰⁹ Architecturally, the Older Kadmeion appears to be a form of Korridorhaus much like Mansion I at the Menelaion.¹¹⁰ It is tempting, therefore, to suggest a construction date in LH IIB, along with its sibling in Lakonia; no evidence necessarily precludes this.¹¹¹ That buildings of the LH IIIA period elsewhere tend to take the form of the megaron also perhaps suggests an earlier date.¹¹² However, it is not clear that developments from the Argolid should be expected to be reflected in Boeotia, where “an architecturally integral palace of Peloponnesian type has yet to be found.”¹¹³ Geographic remove from Mycenae might well explain the construction of a building at Thebes whose type had already been surpassed in the Argolid. It might tentatively be suggested, therefore, that this building manifests a continuation the same cultural development as other LH II buildings, with contemporary developments yet to take hold due to its distance from Mycenae.

Pylos, too, probably represents a series of developments disjointed from those represented at the great sites of the Argolid. The remains of various MH walls have come to light atop the Englianos ridge, but hardly of monumental size.¹¹⁴ Major construction is first attested in LH I, with the erection of the northeast gateway.¹¹⁵ This is commonly associated with a contemporary fortification wall, remarkable both in that it significantly predates the “cyclopean marvels” of the rest of the Mycenaean world and that no later counterpart exists for the LH IIIB palace.¹¹⁶ Contemporary with this are various buildings, characterised in many cases by “plaster floors, cut stone column bases, and orthostate construction.”¹¹⁷

¹⁰⁹ Dakouri-Hild 2001, 97-8.

¹¹⁰ Dakouri-Hild 2005, 180-1. For the Korridorhaus *cf.* Pantou 2014, 370 and n. 19.

¹¹¹ Dakouri-Hild 2001, 106.

¹¹² As, for example, at Tiryns and Pylos.

¹¹³ Dakouri-Hild 2010, 699.

¹¹⁴ Nelson 2001, 191-4.

¹¹⁵ Palace of Nestor.

¹¹⁶ Davis 1998b, 56.

¹¹⁷ Nelson 2001, 198.

Here is a settlement worthy of great ostentation, though Kilian's reconstruction of a full Minoan style palace, built around a central court, seems to stretch the evidence too far.¹¹⁸ It is, however, the case that architectural forms at Pylos are the result of pervasive Minoan influences, which are stronger here than elsewhere on the mainland.¹¹⁹ While it is therefore tempting to call the settlement at this point a palace, if so it is a palace of Minoan form, looking backwards to an existing model, rather than an early form of the distinctly Mycenaean palace. In fact, there is no evidence for a megaron at Pylos prior to LH IIIB (fig. 4).¹²⁰ Given that this rebuilding followed a fire destruction that also affected the lower town, it is tempting to apply Wright's suggestion (aimed at the Cyclades and Crete) to Pylos as well: that the megaron, developed at Mycenae, appeared elsewhere as a result of "Mycenaean domination."¹²¹

While these buildings likely offer evidence, beyond communal purposes, of social stratification, so much is already evident from the funerary record.¹²² Nothing suggests or necessitates that this is centred around a single figure rather than the warrior aristocracy attested in Grave Circles A and B at Mycenae and the LH II tholoi. Therefore the old view, that the palaces developed organically out of significant LH II buildings, is problematic.¹²³ This is not to say that there were not aspects of continuity – feasting remained a significant social practice in the LH IIIB

¹¹⁸ Kilian 1987, 213-7 and fig. 12. While this was accepted by Barber (1992, 15), and is still cited in more recent works (Davis 2010, 683; Pantou 2014, 118) it is problematic for various reasons, not least that it requires various architectural elements to be contemporary that clearly are not (Dickinson 1994, 153; Nelson 2001, 206).

¹¹⁹ Wright 2006, 14, 21. Recent finds continue to emphasise this connection (Davis and Stocker 2016, 637 and n. 30).

¹²⁰ Nelson 2001, 208.

¹²¹ Fire: Nelson 2001, 207 and n. 574; Wright's suggestion: Wright 2006, 21.

¹²² *cf. infra*.

¹²³ As espoused especially by Barber (1992).

palaces – but much was changed radically.¹²⁴ The evidence from Tiryns is most illustrative, where both the difference in form of the older building and the violence of the imposition of the megaron indicates break, not continuity (fig. 5).¹²⁵ This, installed as it was fully formed, must have been established elsewhere: Tiryns' links with Mycenae present this as the leading candidate. The evidence suggests, therefore, that the first megaron was built at Mycenae some time before that at Tiryns, either in LH IIB, or early LH IIIA1 at the very latest – exactly contemporary with LM II.

This process is mirrored, slightly later, at Pylos: in the two cases where the building of a palatial megaron can be contextualised, it is a clear and major break from what came before. This, coupled with the fact that areas further from the Argolid built megara later (Pylos) or not at all (Thebes) mitigates against the suggestion that they represent a natural evolution from an earlier architectural tradition. Limited though it is, the architectural evidence is consistent: the introduction of the megaron represents a revolutionary change in Mycenaean architecture.

2.2: The Mortuary Evidence

Complementary and supplementary to the architectural evidence is the mortuary record, and a holistic view can only be accomplished by analysing both in light of the other. The fulsome nature of the mortuary evidence, in contrast with the architectural, makes it invaluable to the reconstruction of Mycenaean social structures, especially at the highest levels.¹²⁶ However, funerary practices do not

¹²⁴ On feasting, see *supra*.

¹²⁵ Maran 2015, 280.

¹²⁶ For the complexities of this approach, see Chapman 2013.

only reflect the social status of the buried, they also create and cement it.¹²⁷ As such, burial represents a means by which the identity of the deceased is constructed, reflecting not just the realities of their life but also the ideological concerns of the bereaved.¹²⁸ The role of the living, therefore, can never be overlooked nor forgotten.¹²⁹ As such, the burial record at Mycenae provides evidence not only for increases in wealth and social stratification, but also in the development of elite self-conception and representation. This evidence represents a diachronic view from MH III to LH II in the grave circles and from LH II-III in the tholos tombs. It is thus possible to chart the development of society's highest level at Mycenae through the pivotal LH IIB period.

It is significant that, from their beginning, the most striking aspect of the elite graves at Mycenae was not their wealth, but their sheer quantity. From MH III through LH I, 25 tombs were cut within the precinct of Grave Circle B, many of which were re-used.¹³⁰ Studies of the more complete skulls, including facial reconstruction, have demonstrating striking visual resemblances, indicating that many of those buried in the circle were related.¹³¹ Grave Circle A saw six graves cut, similarly re-used, in LH I.¹³² The chronology of these graves is not always entirely clear, due to re-use, but they were all dug within a period no longer than 150 years, and perhaps as little as a century.¹³³

¹²⁷ Voutsaki 1995, 57; Voutsaki 1998, 44-5.

¹²⁸ Ekengren 2013, 175.

¹²⁹ Chapman 2013, 53.

¹³⁰ These are named with letters of the Greek alphabet in the order of excavation, not relative chronology (Dickinson 1977, 39-42).

¹³¹ Musgrave *et al.* 1995, 125-9.

¹³² These are named with Roman numerals, again reflecting order of excavation (Dickinson 1977, 51).

¹³³ Dickinson 1977, 50-1.

There is little to merit the suggestion that the two circles represented two contemporary ruling dynasties.¹³⁴ There is a significant difference in wealth between the two: the richest graves in Circle B can compete only with the poorest in Circle A.¹³⁵ Moreover, once Circle A came into use, the wealth of the graves in Circle B dropped.¹³⁶ It is unclear whether the later burials in this circle ought to represent the diminished descendants of the earlier burials, or else “lesser relations and important retainers” of those buried in Circle A, but there was no competition or equality between the two.¹³⁷ As has already been noted, there are far too many burials over far too short a period of time, even in the more sparsely populated Grave Circle A, to find a king at the bottom of every tomb.¹³⁸ Nor is there sufficient evidence in the form of grave goods to discriminate between putatively royal and non-royal burials: the death mask in Grave Gamma of Circle B might be thought to play such a role, “but the existence of five gold masks in Graves IV and V [of Circle A] makes the equation of mask and ruler dubious.”¹³⁹ Other potential evidence, such as the putative sceptre also found in Grave Gamma, is similarly problematic.¹⁴⁰

The evidence from these and other burials is that the institution of the singular and supreme *ῥάναξ* of later Mycenaean society had not yet developed.¹⁴¹ The shaft grave dynasts were aristocrats, not monarchs, and shared power with others in their kin-

¹³⁴ *cf.* Graziadio 1991, 404 and n. 3.

¹³⁵ Dickinson 1977, 40.

¹³⁶ Graziadio 1991, 438-9.

¹³⁷ Dickinson 1977, 40.

¹³⁸ *cf.* Mee and Cavanagh 1984, 48: “If every male were a king, each would have reigned for on average only 3.6 years.”

¹³⁹ Shear 2004, 8; *cf.* Dickinson 1977, 57.

¹⁴⁰ If the scepter was part of the royal insignia, either one should be buried with each king, or else it was hereditary (as in *Il.* 2.102-8) and should not have been buried at all. Shear 2004, 110, n. 43.

¹⁴¹ *cf. infra.*

group.¹⁴² The high level of social competition is evident from the eventual eclipsing of Grave Circle B by Grave Circle A, and the ostentation of the burials should be seen not simply as wealth fit for a king, but conspicuous consumption that asserted the continued power of a faction or family group.¹⁴³ Thus the deposition of wealth was not simply a reflection of a dynast's power in life, but also a creation of both his own status and that of his surviving family.¹⁴⁴ This is perhaps especially evident in the lavish burial of two children in Grave III; their elaborate interment reflected and represented the continued prestige of their family, even in tragedy.¹⁴⁵ This emphasis on kinship is reflected also in the delimited space of the grave circle and the re-use of tombs; each interment was remembrance not only of the recently deceased, but so too his predecessors. This is further evidenced by the increasing size of the graves themselves – among other things, this allowed earlier burials to be better preserved and represented when the tomb was re-used, increasing the focus on those already buried.¹⁴⁶

It is within the context, not a sudden change in social structure, that the arrival and development of tholos tombs at Mycenae should be seen.¹⁴⁷ This continues the trend, evident in the larger graves of Circle A, towards greater expenditure of labour, in addition to material wealth, in the funerary process. While this phenomenon has yet to receive extensive study in the Mycenaean context, Rodney Fitzsimons recently performed calculations and conclusions based on an energistic

¹⁴² This (necessary) view originated with Dickinson (1977, 57), and despite some early dissent (Mee and Cavanagh 1984, 48; Kilian 1988, 292) is now broadly accepted (Shear 2004, 8).

¹⁴³ Voutsaki 1998, 44-5.

¹⁴⁴ Expanding on Voutsaki 1995, 60 and Wright 1987, 172.

¹⁴⁵ Cavanagh 2008, 336 (though it must be acknowledged that the violent grief at the death of a child may also have influenced the ostentation of the burial).

¹⁴⁶ Boyd 2015, 437-8.

¹⁴⁷ The contemporary evidence in other regions, especially Messenia, is very different, emphasising the same regionalism seen in the architectural record.

analysis of the tombs.¹⁴⁸ Through the history of Circle B, he found a general trend towards more labour-intensive burials which continued with the graves of Circle A.¹⁴⁹ Grave Gamma, perhaps the pinnacle of Circle B, required 106 mandays for construction; Graves I, III, IV, and V all vastly exceed this, Grave IV by almost a factor of 5 (485 mandays).¹⁵⁰ This, once again, is far exceeded by the first of the tholoi, the Cyclopean Tomb, at 2802 mandays.¹⁵¹ While such calculations cannot be entirely accurate, the general trend is evident. Moreover, while they are vulnerable to the objection that not all labour involved in burial would be visible in the archaeological record, that can only add to the numbers and further the underlying point.¹⁵² Due to the scope of the project, construction likely occurred prior to the death of its builder, creating greater visible prestige in life. But as tholoi were re-used, there was continuity here also in the emphasis on kinship from the grave circles.¹⁵³ Their large size also allowed for funerary proceedings within the tomb itself, in the presence of the dead whose prestige was being recalled.¹⁵⁴

In light of this continuity, there is no need to see in the origin of the tholos tomb the emergence of a monarchy at Mycenae (fig. 6).¹⁵⁵ Nothing about the sepulchral form

¹⁴⁸ Fitzsimons 2014. Earlier attempts at such analyses include Wright 1987, which was rudimentary and based only on excavation and not engineering times, and Cavanagh and Mee 1999, which calculated a staggering 20,000 mandays for the construction of the Treasury of Atreus.

¹⁴⁹ Fitzsimons 2014, 89-94. The trend towards greater amounts of labour continues in Circle A – the two smallest (II and VI) are also the earliest (using the chronology of Fitzsimons 2006, 72).

¹⁵⁰ Fitzsimons 2014, Table 1, 90.

¹⁵¹ Fitzsimons 2014, Table 4, 97.

¹⁵² *cf.* Chapman 2013, 52

¹⁵³ Contrary to expectations modelled on the Egyptian pyramids, monumental tombs can equally function as loci where “the individual is dissolved and forgotten into an idealised collective of ancestors” (Williams 2003b, 6.)

¹⁵⁴ Boyd 2015, 440-1.

¹⁵⁵ As is suggested by Shear (2004, 17-8).

is explicitly royal.¹⁵⁶ As all the tholoi at Mycenae were robbed in antiquity, and the roofs of all but two collapsed, establishing dates for each tomb is difficult. The primary guideline is stylistic, using the framework developed by Wace based on a continuum of architectural elaboration (fig. 7).¹⁵⁷ With some refinements, this still forms the basis for the currently accepted chronology of all but the Atreus and Clytemnestra tombs.¹⁵⁸ The scheme, in combination with the limited good pottery evidence, places no fewer than six tholoi in the LH IIA period.¹⁵⁹ While objections to this abundance have led some to some attempts at re-interpreting the evidence, these have not gained acceptance.¹⁶⁰ As with the shaft graves, there are simply too many that appear in too short of a period for each to belong to a succession of individual kings.¹⁶¹ The transition to the tholos was the continuation (and indeed escalation) of previous elite competition as manifested in the funerary sphere.

The funerary competition of this period was not limited to shaft graves and tholoi, however. Rock cut chamber tombs first appeared at Mycenae in LH I, while Grave Circle A was still in use, creating an alternative funerary tradition able to compete (if not in grave wealth, then at least in labour expenditure and pageantry) with the shaft graves.¹⁶² Even after the advent of the tholos, chamber tombs continued to

¹⁵⁶ As was once the accepted view – Darcque 1987, 185.

¹⁵⁷ Wace 1921-3, 283-402. For discussion of the development of this scheme and its intellectual context, see Galanakis 2007

¹⁵⁸ The date of the Treasury of Atreus is contentious – either LH IIIA2, or IIIB (an overview of the history of the competing argument is given at Fitzsimons 2006, 100-2). Recent re-analysis of excavation reports, however, has firmly dated the Tomb of Clytemnestra to early LH IIIB (Mason 2013). If Wace's placing of the Treasury of Atreus anterior to the Clytemnestra tomb holds, this would be strong evidence for a LH IIIA2 date, but it need not necessarily, and there remains the possibility of re-use.

¹⁵⁹ See the updated dates at Galanakis 2007, 244.

¹⁶⁰ See, for example, Shear 2004, 14-7.

¹⁶¹ This was the inevitable conclusion of Dickinson (1977, 62), and has since won general acceptance (*cf.* French and Shelton 2005, 182).

¹⁶² Boyd 2015, 438-9.

represent a prestigious alternative, with many demonstrating a high degree of architectural refinement and lavishly furnished with grave goods.¹⁶³ The relationship between tholoi and chamber tombs is complex, though they share the dromos, stomion, and thalamos alignment. As the tholos emerged posterior to the chamber tomb, it can be thought to imitate the earlier form; however, there are also chamber tombs that are clearly tholos-imitating, with round chambers, domed ceilings, and in one case even an imitation capstone.¹⁶⁴ As Sofia Voutsaki has argued, it is important to see both in relation to the other, and the reinforcing phenomena of “downwards emulation and the spiralling elaboration of the mortuary forms.”¹⁶⁵ The number of wealthy chamber tombs in this period suggests that society was still anterior to the absolute consolidation of power; even individuals outside of the elite, tholos-building families were able to participate in the competition of funerary ostentation.¹⁶⁶

The suggestion is occasionally taken up that the largest tholoi constructed in this period – the Aegisthus and Lion tombs – are sufficiently distinguished by their size, architectural refinement, and proximity to the acropolis to grant them royal title.¹⁶⁷ The trouble that arises from such an assessment is that these are the last of Wace’s first and second groups respectively, necessitating that the royal family received its own tholos only after (presumably) retainers and more distant relations.¹⁶⁸ Given the link between ostentatious burial and social competition at Mycenae in this period, that the king should cede the advantage to others in the evolving forum of

¹⁶³ French and Shelton 2005, 181.

¹⁶⁴ Boyd 2015, 440; French and Shelton 2005, 181.

¹⁶⁵ Voutsaki 1995, 61-2.

¹⁶⁶ Mee and Cavanagh 1984, 56. Even simple cist and pit graves were often well endowed throughout the Mycenaean period (Dickinson 1983, 63).

¹⁶⁷ Dickinson 1977, 63; Mee and Cavanagh 1984, 50.

¹⁶⁸ Dickinson (1977, 63) places in these tholoi men of the same rank as Circle B once eclipsed by Circle A.

competition does not seem likely. The degree of innovation and competition in LH IIA is further evidenced by Tomb Rho, a keel-vaulted and frescoed chamber tomb set into an earlier shaft grave in Circle B (fig. 8).¹⁶⁹ This tomb, unique on the mainland, surely belongs to “the same competitive funerary tradition, and... was intended to function as a monumental vehicle of conspicuous consumption in exactly the same fashion as the nearby tholoi.”¹⁷⁰ Its location also suggests that it presents an attempt by scions (or those who would be seen as scions) of those buried in Circle B to establish further prestige through that connection.¹⁷¹

The situation, however, changes in LH IIB. In contrast with the profligacy of LH IIA, only one tholos was constructed in this period: the Tomb of the Genii.¹⁷² Various reasons can be assessed for this sudden drop-off. The six tholoi to this point had been built in three general geographic areas, which may represent the burials of different families within larger groups, or else that six different groups were competing for primacy in this period (visible in fig. 6).¹⁷³ In this case, it is possible that each relevant group now had its own tholos, and the cost of building a new one was assessed to be too great when the old could be re-used. However, the rapid adoption of new features and the presence of both an older and newer tholos in each grouping suggests continuing competition.¹⁷⁴ It can hardly be deemed likely that the group conducting burials in the Cyclopean Tomb truly feel as if they were competing with those buried in any of the tombs from the second group.¹⁷⁵

¹⁶⁹ Dickinson 1977, 64.

¹⁷⁰ Fitzsimons 2006, 56.

¹⁷¹ French and Shelton 2005, 182.

¹⁷² Wace 1949, 43-4.

¹⁷³ French and Shelton 2005, 182.

¹⁷⁴ *cf.* Galanakis 2007, 256.

¹⁷⁵ *cf.* The comments on the potential issues with “inferior” tombs at Fitzsimons 2006, 107.

Therefore, the shift can be explained most satisfactorily as the result of a change in the underlying societal conditions.

Here is the first true break in the burial record at Mycenae. No tholos, after the Tomb of Genii, was constructed for the better part of a century.¹⁷⁶ It was the final iteration of the frantic funerary competition that spawned both the shaft graves and the tholoi; the tombs of Atreus and Clytaemnestra belong wholly to Palatial society and its monumental building programs.¹⁷⁷ But this end must also signify a beginning, and the implications of this transition have rarely been explored.¹⁷⁸ This is the first major break in the mortuary tradition at Mycenae since the beginning of the shaft grave period some 200 years earlier. Existing tholoi were not abandoned: the multiple (robbed) pits excavated in the floor of the Genii tomb suggest a significant period of use.¹⁷⁹ But new tholoi were no longer being built, as would be expected if the funerary sphere remained a competitive arena. A change is also visible in the usage of chamber tombs: while they are more widespread by LH IIIA1, they are smaller and poorer than before.¹⁸⁰ As tholoi were no longer being built with the same regularity, nor chamber tombs with the same elaboration, in LH IIB it seems that elite burial had become more restricted than before. Society, at its highest level, had likely become centralised: at this point, none earlier, the emergence of the *πάναξ* can be proposed.

¹⁷⁶ Assuming an LM IIIA2 date for the Treasury of Atreus, or much longer if it does indeed date to LH IIIB.

¹⁷⁷ Boyd 2015, 443.

¹⁷⁸ Shear 2004, 14 notes that the traditional chronology requires the Tomb of Genii to remain in use for a very long time, but avoids the issue by attempting to re-date the tholoi at Mycenae. Fitzsimons (2006, 180) tentatively suggested that the Tomb of Genii may be associated with the earliest palace, but shied away from conclusions because he did not consider the chronology sufficiently clear.

¹⁷⁹ Wace 1921-3, 379.

¹⁸⁰ Voutsaki 1995, 62.

The evidence from the rest of the Greek mainland, at least, does not contradict this picture. It is unfortunately limited, due both to tomb robbing and a lack of evidence elsewhere for the range of tombs and funerary competition that so typifies Mycenae. Nevertheless, the situation is mirrored in the rest of the Argolid: tholos tomb construction peaks in LH II, but no new ones are built after that, except at Mycenae and Dendra.¹⁸¹ These tholoi are all monumental, but interestingly not all as wealthy as contemporary chamber tombs.¹⁸² While the competition for status was centred on Mycenae, it was not despised by those in its broader orbit.

This situation seems to extend beyond the Argolid as well. The LH IIB tholos at Vapheio in Lakonia, for example, compares well with tholoi of Wace's second group at Mycenae (especially the Panagia tomb) in terms of size and masonry.¹⁸³ Moreover, the unlooted burial found in its floor represents wealth that would not have been out of place in Grave Circle A.¹⁸⁴ But it is in the only tholos in the area, and it is difficult to situate it among the surrounding settlements. It is most commonly associated with Palaiopyrgi, just to the south, but the Menelaion hill is only 5 km to the northeast, and Hagios Vasileios 4.5 km to the southwest.¹⁸⁵ Considering the decentralised nature of settlement in Lakonia, it seems best to associate this monument with the same phenomenon of funerary competition visible at Mycenae, in a situation prior to the development of centralised power.¹⁸⁶ This may well have been in imitation of contemporary practice in the Argolid, though in a context of

¹⁸¹ Voutsaki 1995, 58-9. Tiryns, as ever, is a complicating factor, as its tholoi cannot be dated.

¹⁸² Voutsaki 1995, 61.

¹⁸³ Banou and Hitchcock 2009, 8.

¹⁸⁴ Dickinson 1977, 90.

¹⁸⁵ Chapin *et al.* 2014, 147.

¹⁸⁶ Banou and Hitchcock 2009, 18. The rich LH III finds, including Linear B, from Hagios Vasileios (*cf. supra*) suggest that it was the eventual palatial site.

external competition, rather than the internal competition at Mycenae, between various petty chiefdoms in Lakonia.¹⁸⁷

Simply because the Vapheio tholos seems to reflect the practice at contemporary Mycenae does not mean that all tholoi beyond the Argolid did.¹⁸⁸ This is especially the case in Messenia, where the first mainland tholoi appeared in MH III.¹⁸⁹ However, far from the elite, monumental sphere in which they functioned at Mycenae, many of the early tholoi in Messenia were small and poorly built.¹⁹⁰ It seems, therefore, that these were not restricted to the highest level of society, nor even to the particularly wealthy.¹⁹¹ Three tholoi atop the Englianos ridge do, however, have significant links to the palace and palatial authority.¹⁹² Two of these, the Vayenas tomb (sometimes called a grave circle) and Tholos IV, were both in contemporaneous use from MH III – LH II.¹⁹³ Tholos III was constructed in LH IIA, resulting in a situation not dissimilar to that at Mycenae with multiple tholoi all in use contemporaneously.¹⁹⁴

To this situation must now be added the “Griffin Warrior,” the rich interment found in an elaborate, stone-lined shaft grave of LH IIA date.¹⁹⁵ This tomb was found scant metres through from the dromos of Tholos IV, and the relation between the two is

¹⁸⁷ cf. Voutsakis 1998, 54, who characterises LH II as a region of “petty kingdoms,” but this term is unsatisfactory as “*ῥάναξ*” is so often translated as “king.”

¹⁸⁸ cf. Voutsaki 1995, 57-8.

¹⁸⁹ Murphy 2014, 212; Mee 2010, 285. Whether this was an indigenous development or under influence from the tholoi on Crete remains an open (and vexed) question. For a recent assessment, with summary of prior views, see Kanta 1997.

¹⁹⁰ Voutsaki 1998, 51-2.

¹⁹¹ Voutsaki 1998, 52.

¹⁹² Murphy 2014, 213.

¹⁹³ Murphy 2014, 213.

¹⁹⁴ Bennet (1999) 2007, 34.

¹⁹⁵ Davis and Stocker 2016, 635-6.

not yet clear.¹⁹⁶ However, the existence of this grave and three contemporary tholoi in LH IIA suggests strongly against kingship at Pylos in this period; as at Mycenae, these tombs represented “arenas of competition and power negotiations” among the Pylian elite.¹⁹⁷ Beyond Englianos, LH II saw many new tholoi built throughout Messenia, suggesting an absence of centralised control, but as in the Argolid most had gone out of use by LH III.¹⁹⁸ The evidence, once again, is for break only at the LH II-III boundary, suggesting, despite architectural differences, power was being centralised at Pylos and Mycenae in broadly the same period. As at Mycenae, only one tholos (III) remained in use at Pylos into LH III, suggesting that here too the form had been co-opted by the emergent *πάνακτες*.¹⁹⁹ However, new tombs to match the tholoi of Atreus and Clytaemnestra were never constructed, and death, burial, and ancestors seemed to have been less significant at Palatial Pylos than Mycenae.²⁰⁰

The only other site of sufficient significance in this and the following periods that might be suggested as the “birthplace” of the *πάναξ* is Thebes. This is immediately complicated by the fact that there are no tholoi there, and only one in all of wider Boeotia, the Treasury of Minyas at Orchomenos.²⁰¹ The evidence from the chamber tombs, however, broadly matches the developments in Messenia and the Argolid. The tombs in use in the Kolonaki cemetery from LH I-III A1 have an average size of almost 20 square meters, while those later average only about eight.²⁰² The only tomb that might deserve the designator royal is the so-called “Tomb of the Children

¹⁹⁶ Davis and Stocker 2016, 635-6.

¹⁹⁷ Murphy 2014, 215.

¹⁹⁸ Voutsaki 1998, 54.

¹⁹⁹ Bennet (1999) 2007, 34-5.

²⁰⁰ Murphy 2014, 218-9.

²⁰¹ Dakouri-Hild 2010, 624.

²⁰² Symeonoglou 1985, 54.

of Oedipus.”²⁰³ This, the largest chamber tomb in Greece at over 80 square meters, featured two dromoi, decorated ceilings, and extensive frescoes, and dates to LH IIIA2-B1.²⁰⁴ The evidence is consistent with that seen elsewhere – funerary architecture formed an arena for social competition until LH III, when it became much more restricted.

Other, smaller sites paint the same picture. While Aegina was undoubtedly important in the early Mycenaean period, nothing suggests it was ruled by a *ῥάναξ*, and the fact it was eclipsed by Mycenae by LH II strongly suggests against its playing a significant role in the development of the Mycenaean palaces.²⁰⁵ The same can be said for Thorikos in Attica which, despite early tholoi and mineral wealth, had become similarly eclipsed in LH III.²⁰⁶ Mycenae, with its wealth and well-preserved burial record, must be considered the best evidence for the emergence of the *ῥάναξ*. Here, the evidence suggests this occurred in LH IIB, and the archaeological record elsewhere suggests that the centralization of palatial authority and emergence of *ῥάνακτες* occurred only later in LH III.

As was the case with architecture in this period, the evidence in the funerary record is for break, not continuity. This is contrary to the suggestion that the development of the *ῥάναξ* was a slow process, with more and more power accruing to the individual through the LH I-II periods.²⁰⁷ The notion of early Mycenaean kingship emerges much more, as Robert Laffineur has noted, from the romanticism of Schliemann and the allure of Homer than the actual evidence.²⁰⁸ The shift, then, manifests in exactly the same time the megaron was introduced: LH IIB at Mycenae,

²⁰³ “Des enfants Oedipe.” Darcque 1987, 203.

²⁰⁴ Symeonoglou 1985, 54.

²⁰⁵ Kelder 2016, 311-2.

²⁰⁶ Laffineur 2010, 718-20.

²⁰⁷ See, for example, Wright 1995, 74-5; Palaima 1995, 126; and Shear 2004, 18.

²⁰⁸ Laffineur 1995, 81 and *passim*.

and LH IIIA1 elsewhere. Such synchronicity is unlikely to be coincidental, as both developments can be linked to the emergence of the *ῥάναξ*, a man of singular prestige in life and in death. The evidence of a clear break from prior practices in the burial record augments the clear break in the architectural record. Pascal Darcque's argument that there is no observable link between tholoi and palatial sites beyond Mycenae does not diminish this point: the development of the tholos antedates the development of palatial society, and while it was co-opted by the *ῥάναξ* at Mycenae, it was not integral to palaces elsewhere.²⁰⁹

3: Conclusion

The revolutionary changes on mainland Greece which saw the leap from Prepalatial to Palatial society began in LH IIB at Mycenae and spread across the mainland in the beginning of LH IIIA1. The contemporaneity of these periods with LM II was established by close analysis of the evidence for Aegean interaction in the Egyptian records. While the architectural evidence for LH IIB especially is limited by the massive construction efforts of the mature Palatial age in LH IIIB, the image that emerged corresponds well with the evidence of the LH IIB mortuary record. That this period saw the emergence of the *ῥάναξ* provides a strong explanation for the available evidence. This was manifested architecturally in the appearance of the megaron at Tiryns in early LH IIIA1, almost certainly following an earlier development at Mycenae. There, the funerary record demonstrates a break in LH IIB, when the rate of elite tomb construction slowed to a halt, representing the end of the funerary sphere as an arena for prestige; this can be seen as the result of the centralization of power. This change, from oligarchy to monarchy, was not

²⁰⁹ Darcque 1987, 201-2.

unmotivated, and did not occur organically.²¹⁰ As will be assessed in the next chapter, the origins of these developments are most likely to be found at LM II Knossos, the domination of which paved the way for the beginnings of the Mycenaean Palatial age.

²¹⁰ It is not the nature of oligarchs to cede power; *cf.* Syme 1939, 17: "Lack of capacity among the principal members, or, more properly, personal ambition and political intrigue, constrained them, in mastering these manifold dangers, to derogate from oligarchic practice and confer exorbitant military power on a single general."

CHAPTER II

Adventus Mycenaearum

In this chapter, LM II Knossos will be assessed to posit the origins of the developments on the mainland in LH IIB-III A1 assessed in Chapter I. As with the mainland evidence, this will be accomplished through a holistic analysis of the mortuary and architectural records of LM II Knossos. Of especial note will be those areas where Minoan influence are visible on the Mycenaean lords. The widespread nature of this Minoanisation will be demonstrated through the hybrid mortuary forms and the purely Minoan form of the Mycenaean palace at Knossos. The roots of the megaron and the *φάναξ* will thus be adduced, as will the active processes through which they were adopted by Mycenaean culture and transposed to the mainland. The key evidence is the Knossos Throne Room, which, it will be argued, was the architectural correlate of the *φάναξ* at Knossos just as the megaron would be on the later mainland. Following the demonstration that Mycenaeans adopted elements of Minoan culture and religion in their tombs, this abstract discussion will be applied to the origins of the Mycenaean goddess *Πότνια* and the ritual in which she legitimated the rule of the *φάναξ*.

1.1: The Mortuary Evidence

When Mycenaeans arrived at Knossos, they brought with them a set of cultural values already manifest and visible in LH IIA. However, identity is dynamic, and it ought not be supposed that it would manifest itself identically on the mainland and captured Crete.²¹¹ The construction of identity at LM II Knossos was a complex

²¹¹ Tsipopoulou 2005, 203.

process that involved the negotiation and integration of both imported and native influences, creating for half a century a hybrid identity that stubbornly refutes the simple dichotomy of Mycenaean versus Minoan.²¹² This is especially clear in the mortuary record of LM II Knossos, including both the simpler warrior graves and the monumental tombs of the Isopata cemetery.²¹³ While the appearance of mainland sepulchral forms, such as the shaft grave and the tholos tomb, is unsurprising in light of the *adventus Mycenaearum*, none of these is implemented in exactly the form it takes on the mainland.²¹⁴ These graves manifest the presentation and construction of the identity of the deceased, who brought with them a culture that, while distinct, had always readily adapted Minoan elements, especially in the funerary sphere.²¹⁵ The apparent heterogeneity of cultural elements therefore need not indicate experiments by Minoans, but rather a manifestation of the Mycenaean appreciation for, and appropriation of, Minoan cultural iconography.

These graves arrange themselves, generally, into two groups. The first consists of shaft graves and chamber tombs, broadly similar to those on the mainland in form and assemblage. The second consists of the monumental tombs at Isopata and the Kephala Tholos, all of which incorporate elements of both cultures to such an extent that they cannot be properly called either Minoan or Mycenaean.²¹⁶ In both, the conspicuous consumption and militaristic aspect of contemporary Mycenaean burials are visible. However, while simple warrior graves represent relatively

²¹² These ideas are explored in Stürmer 1997 and Driessen and Langohr 2007.

²¹³ Preston 1999, 134-5.

²¹⁴ Miller 2011, 64-5.

²¹⁵ While the Minoan grave goods in the shaft graves at Mycenae have demonstrated this for years, the recent evidence of the rather more carefully excavated Griffin Warrior tomb at Pylos suggests that the appropriation of Minoan culture in the funerary sphere was a careful and deliberate act (Davis and Stocker 2016, 649-52).

²¹⁶ Preston 1999, 136.

conservative Mycenaean burials, the more elaborate tombs speak to a deeper melding of cultures.

The first warrior graves at Knossos were discovered already by Evans, both on the acropolis hill at Knossos and in the Zapher Papoura cemetery (fig. 9).²¹⁷ The main discovery, however, occurred in the early 1950s during the course of excavations conducted by Sinclair Hood: a shaft grave was found at Hagios Ioannis, as well as another shaft grave and three chamber tombs at the New Hospital Site.²¹⁸ A second grave was discovered at Hagios Ioannis in 1953 after a widening of the road revealed bronze weapons.²¹⁹ Securely dated by to LM II by their pottery (especially squat alabastra and Ephyraean goblets), these tombs, along with Evans' assessment of the new LM II dynasty, led Hood to suggest the presence of "some kind of military aristocracy" at Knossos in this period.²²⁰ Wace was quick to seize on this as evidence of his longstanding theory of Mycenaean influence at LM II Knossos, and took Ventris' decipherment of Linear B as spectacular vindication.²²¹

These graves, despite their names, need not represent the burials of warriors any more than those on the mainland, but only that the interred wished to be remembered as warriors, or that those performing the burial wished for them to be remembered in that way.²²² There is no reason to assume, as has been done, that these graves represent the martial "conquerors" of Knossos themselves. Osteoarchaeological analysis of Mycenaean burials with weapons only very rarely

²¹⁷ Evans 1935, 849; Evans 1906, 51-9.

²¹⁸ Hood and de Jong 1952, 243 and *passim*.

²¹⁹ Hood 1956, 83-4 and *passim*.

²²⁰ Hood and de Jong 1952, 245. For the pottery, see Hood and de Jong 1952, 253-5.

²²¹ Wace had been positing this idea at least as far back as 1939 (see Pendlebury 1939, 229, n. 2), and cites the warrior graves in his triumphant foreword to *Docs*¹ (Wace 1956, xxix).

²²² See the discussion in Chapter I and *infra*.

demonstrates proof of combat trauma.²²³ Rather, they were likely the administrators who wrote on, and were named in, the earliest Linear B tablets.²²⁴

Even those who now doubt that the funerary record is sufficient to argue for the presence of Mycenaeans at LM II Knossos acknowledge that a “mainland-oriented identity was being expressed in death for the individuals involved” in these graves.²²⁵ The sepulchral forms – shaft graves and single-chamber tombs – have their closest antecedents on the mainland, not Crete.²²⁶ Similarly, the burial assemblages, even beyond the weapons, are “undeniably close” to those found on the contemporary mainland.²²⁷ The only significant difference is that all of these tombs seem to have been designed to hold no more than two interments, as opposed to the trend towards larger, communal graves on the mainland.²²⁸ This was, however, slightly mitigated by the discovery of the tomb of the Griffin Warrior at Pylos, a stone-built tomb very similar to a shaft grave with only a single burial.²²⁹ It is also clear that grave re-use on the mainland was associated with construction of prestige and legitimacy for the deceased through association with their ancestors; the new rulers of Knossos, of course, were at great geographic remove from the graves of their forebears.²³⁰ As a similar phenomenon is attested in Mycenaean-type chamber tombs in the Dodecanese, it seems that the “‘group or family’ element... was diluted” beyond the Greek mainland.²³¹

²²³ Though the LM II interments from Knossos have not been thus analysed. Georganas in press, 210 and *passim*.

²²⁴ Driessen and Schoep 1999, 395.

²²⁵ Preston 1999, 135.

²²⁶ Alberti 2004, 128.

²²⁷ Alberti 2004, 136.

²²⁸ Preston 1999, 135.

²²⁹ Davis and Stocker 2016, 630.

²³⁰ *cf.* Chapter I.2.2.

²³¹ Dickinson (1994, 230).

It is significant also that all of these burials occurred either in newly demarcated cemeteries or else isolated regions where no earlier burials have been found.²³² Concomitantly, the major Neopalatial cemetery at Poros Heraklion was abandoned.²³³ Little requires saying: the new Mycenaean lords of Knossos established new cemeteries, where they were buried largely as if they were lords of the contemporary Peloponnese. At Knossos now as Mycenae, funerals represented a competitive social arena.²³⁴ Even in these conservatively Mycenaean graves, however, Minoan influence is evident in the presence of braziers in the funerary assemblages, a feature with a long tradition on Crete but unparalleled on the mainland.²³⁵ Their exact usage is unclear; they may have served the practical purpose of fumigating the tomb, but do not always show signs of burning, suggesting a prestigious, ritual aspect to their usage.²³⁶ Precisely why they entered the funeral assemblages of the Knossian Mycenaeans cannot be known; it may be that they found something agreeable in the ritual, or else that funerals came to involve high status Minoans (possibly with whom they had intermarried) who insisted on their usage. In any case, they indicate that even in the most conservative Mycenaean burials, the new lords of Knossos did not despise Minoan culture and influence.

This is all the more evident in the second group, the monumental tombs at Isopata and Kephala. These have, historically, received less study than the warrior graves, perhaps due to their heterogeneous assemblages which do not support the notion of

²³² Miller 2011, 9.

²³³ Warren 2012, 258.

²³⁴ *cf.* Chapter I.

²³⁵ Alberti 2004, 134. The exact purpose of these items is not clear, and the terminology used to describe them is frustratingly inconsistent: they are variously painted lamps, incense burners, fumigators, and braziers (Hood 1956, 92). Brazier is used here in accordance with Hallager 1997, 417.

²³⁶ Evans 1935, 1011.

a mainland invasion to the same extent as the more conservative warrior graves.²³⁷ While these can only lead to frustration when used as putative evidence for the cultural identities of contemporary Knossian elites, it is “rewarding to explore the innovations and experiments with cultural symbolism that were taking place.”²³⁸ As the presence of Mycenaeans is here taken as certain, these graves become fascinating loci for the exploration of Mycenaean adoption and adaptation of Minoan culture in the funerary sphere. This is a particularly clear demonstration of the dichotomy identified by Veit Stürmer between Mycenaean power and Minoan culture at LM II Knossos.²³⁹ The willingness of Mycenaeans to incorporate Minoan elements into their burials is a strong indication of the negotiation of identity required for the alien rulers of Knossos.

Of these tombs, the one closest in form to those from the contemporary mainland is the Kephala Tholos, discovered in 1938 and dated by its excavator to LM IA.²⁴⁰ Such a conclusion had political undertones, however, as it provided a Minoan model for the tholoi of Mycenae in support of Evans’ views, and an emendation to LM II was suggested already shortly after publication.²⁴¹ Recent re-analysis of the excavation records by Laura Preston has clarified a LM II date.²⁴² At its most basic level, then, this represents the transposition of the LH II sepulchral form *par excellence* from Mycenae to Knossos. But such a reading is too simplistic. While little can be said about the funerary assemblage due to later re-use and collapse, the architectural form demonstrates significant deviations from the mainland.²⁴³

²³⁷ Preston 1999, 136.

²³⁸ Preston 2004b, 327.

²³⁹ Stürmer 1997.

²⁴⁰ Hutchinson 1956, 78 and *passim*.

²⁴¹ Preston 2005, 67-8.

²⁴² Preston 2005, 83-6.

²⁴³ Preston 1999, 139.

Unlike any tholos on the mainland, the dromos of the Kephala tomb ends with a “fore-hall,” with a side chamber on either side (fig. 10).²⁴⁴ This is reminiscent of the antechambers of earlier Minoan tholoi, and is also seen in the Royal Tomb at Isopata.²⁴⁵ The fine finishing of this forehall suggests it was intended for view and not infilled after the burial.²⁴⁶ While re-use of the tomb means no clues remain in the archaeological record as to the function of this feature, that it remained visible and open suggests that it could have presented a location for later commemorative practices. The dromos also demonstrates interesting features.²⁴⁷ It was built with gypsum and ashlar blocks that must needs have been repurposed from Neopalatial buildings, as many of them bore mason’s marks not cut after LM I.²⁴⁸ Indeed, signs of re-use are visible also in the forehall, suggesting that all of the masonry in the tholos was recycled.²⁴⁹ The quintessentially Minoan combination of gypsum, ashlar and mason’s marks in highly visible contexts indicates an appreciation for the prestige symbols of the Minoan past.²⁵⁰

The Kephala Tholos represents a fascinating manifestation of the creation of identity at LM II Knossos, with the application of Minoan elements to a Mycenaean form, linking the new dynasty with the old. While this has been seen as political exploitation of the Minoan past for purposes of legitimation, such a cynical reading

²⁴⁴ Hutchinson 1956, 76.

²⁴⁵ Preston 2005, 70. For antechambers in Early and Middle Minoan tholoi, see Branigan 1970, 93-5.

²⁴⁶ Preston 2005, 71-2.

²⁴⁷ There is, however, some possibility it was only built at a later date (Preston 2005, 71).

²⁴⁸ Hood 1992, 137.

²⁴⁹ Preston 2005, 72.

²⁵⁰ The use of gypsum, especially, was widespread in the constructions of LM II. Langohr 2009, 45. Mason’s marks were also prominent on the walls of the Temple Tomb at Knossos (Evans 1935, 971), though the use of this building as a tomb in the Neopalatial period is unclear; *cf. infra*.

is not perhaps strictly necessary.²⁵¹ While political aspects undoubtedly played a part, this should also be seen as an aspect of abiding respect for Minoan culture by the Mycenaeans, and a willingness to incorporate alien elements into their own displays of prestige.²⁵² This is all the more evident in the monumental tombs at Isopata, where explicit Mycenaean elements are far less visible. Tomb 1 at Isopata represents an interesting example. This tomb, along with the rest of the Isopata cemetery, was excavated by Evans in 1909 and 1910.²⁵³ Unfortunately, it was looted in antiquity and so little can be said about the burial assemblage.²⁵⁴ All of the other tombs in the cemetery, however, feature many elements of the warrior grave assemblage, and so it is unlikely that this one should have been any different when complete.²⁵⁵

This chamber tomb, despite the small size of its thalamos, represents a monumental sepulchre typical only of LM II Knossos.²⁵⁶ Its forehall and dromos of ashlar masonry are paralleled in the Kephala Tholos, and it is one of only three tombs at Knossos with a corbelled vault (fig. 11).²⁵⁷ This feature is especially noteworthy, as corbelling was rare in Aegean tombs outside of tholoi; of the three known, two are at

²⁵¹ Driessen and Langohr 2007, 189.

²⁵² The enigmatic inscription at the chamber entrance can unfortunately add little to the debate. It could be either Linear A or B, as both signs appear in both, nor can it be otherwise dated, as it can be determined whether it was old and re-used, inscribed fresh when the tomb was constructed, or even added at a later date (Hutchinson 1956, 76-7). It should probably be best considered alongside the other mason's marks; the only possible cogent Linear B reading is literally apotropaic (*a-pi* = *ǎπι or *ǎπει, begone!), which seems unlikely (Nagy 1963, 205). The mason's marks on the door jamb of the Peristeria tholos present a partial and unclear parallel (Preston 1999, 138, n. 42).

²⁵³ Evans 1914, 2.

²⁵⁴ Evans 1914, 9.

²⁵⁵ Alberti 2004, 132-4 and Table 8.5.

²⁵⁶ It is only half the size of the Kephala Tholos, and a fifth of the size of the Royal Tomb (Preston 2005, 70 and Table 1).

²⁵⁷ Preston 2005, 70.

Knossos and date to LM II.²⁵⁸ The other is Tomb Rho in Grave Circle B at Mycenae, itself an architectural oddity already discussed. The monumental tombs at Ugarit which provide the best architectural parallels were constructed perhaps as much as 150 years later, and so attempts to see Levantine influence are inviable.²⁵⁹ In terms of form, therefore, no lineage can be drawn, but the experimental nature of the Mycenaean funerary sphere, visible in the development of tholoi and Tomb Rho, can be invoked as inspiration.²⁶⁰ The degree of elaboration rather suggests that this tomb was meant to be seen, as does its location high on the Isopata ridge overlooking the harbour at Poros (fig. 9).²⁶¹ This might be best contextualised alongside Tomb Rho and the more elaborate chamber tombs of the contemporary mainland, not a tholos but still engaged fully in the competitive arena of elite funerary display. The forehall, with its parallels in the Kephala Tholos and Royal Tomb, might be taken as Minoan influences, but the fact that this forms an elaborate façade should not be overlooked. The evidence of the mainland suggests that funerary architecture need not be overly conservative, and the incorporation of new elements to increase the visual impact of the tomb should be considered quintessentially Mycenaean.²⁶²

The Isopata Royal Tomb, perhaps the most impressive of the LM II tombs at Knossos, bears similar features to the Kephala Tholos and Isopata Tomb 1. It was excavated by Evans in 1904, though it had been discovered rather earlier by nearby villagers, and the construction of a nearby church owed rather a lot to the robbing of its upper courses of masonry.²⁶³ When constructed in LM II, this was among the

²⁵⁸ Isopata Tomb 1 and the Isopata Royal Tomb, on which see *infra*.

²⁵⁹ Preston 1999, 137 and n. 37.

²⁶⁰ Preston 1999, 143. It might also be that there was some practical influence: a rectangular chamber with only two corbelled sides is more stable than a circular one (*cf.* the comments of Fyfe at Evans 1906, 163).

²⁶¹ Preston 2007, 296.

²⁶² The magnificent façades of the Treasury of Atreus and Tomb of Clytaemnestra are good, if later, parallels.

²⁶³ Evans 1906, 136-7.

most impressive tombs in the Aegean, with a 47 m² main chamber and a forehall almost 7 m long all laid in well-cut masonry (fig. 12).²⁶⁴ Both the main chamber and the forehall featured corbelled vaults (fig. 13).²⁶⁵ When complete, the main chamber rose to a height of approximately 8 m.²⁶⁶ Beyond the sense of interior monumentality this provided, it also raised the apex of the tomb 3 m above surface level; a mound would have covered this to an even greater height, increasing the visibility of a tomb already built on an ostentatious plateau.²⁶⁷ That monumentality and visibility were concerns can also be adduced from the 24 m dromos, longer than that of any of the Mycenaean tholoi.²⁶⁸

This monumentality situates it well within the mainland funerary tradition, as do the grave goods. While looted perhaps as early as the destruction of the palace, the finds were still impressive.²⁶⁹ Especially noteworthy are the XVIIIth dynasty Egyptian vases, testament to the continued connection between Knossos and Egypt in this period.²⁷⁰ The prestige associated with these imports – the largest collection of Aegyptiaca from a single context on Crete – coupled with the monumentality of the tomb speak to the importance of those buried within it.²⁷¹ Equally noteworthy are the elements of apparent Minoan influence it shares with the Kephala Tholos – the forehall, niches, and prominent display of mason's marks.²⁷² Two phenomena, not necessarily mutually exclusive, may be at play here. The first is a selective

²⁶⁴ Evans 1906, Pl. XCIV.

²⁶⁵ Evans 1906, 137-9.

²⁶⁶ Based on Fyfe's reconstructions (Evans 1906, 163 and fig. 145).

²⁶⁷ Evans 1906, 140.

²⁶⁸ Evans 1906, 139. The dromoi of the Aegisthus and Lion tombs were only 22 m (Wace 1949, 17).

²⁶⁹ Evans 1906, 144.

²⁷⁰ Preston 1999, 138-9; *cf.* the discussion in Chapter I.

²⁷¹ Phillips 2008, 129.

²⁷² Preston 1999, 138-9.

adaptation of Minoan ideas for increased prestige.²⁷³ In support of this is the fact is the geographical setting of Isopata, overlooking the harbour rather than the palace, suggesting a display “principally to the outside world.”²⁷⁴ The competition manifested in the funeral sphere need not have been wholly internal; it is likely that Knossos was at this point competing also with various mainland centres. The appropriation of Minoan elements in a manner impossible outside Crete may therefore have been an advantage to be exploited.²⁷⁵

The second possibility is that this process was political in a different way. Having come into control of the cosmological centre of Knossos, it possible that the new dynasts were forced to incorporate elements of Minoan ideology to legitimise their rule in the eyes of the native Cretans.²⁷⁶ This interpretation is supported by the strikingly Minoan Tomb of the Double Axes, firmly dated by its pottery to LM II.²⁷⁷ This is part of the Isopata cemetery, and was excavated in 1909-10 along with Isopata Tomb 1 and the rest. A dromos preserved to a length of 14.8 m but certainly once longer proceeds on an incline, gradually widening, to a chamber “of a complex form altogether unique among any existing Minoan or Mycenaean tombs” (fig. 14).²⁷⁸ It is, roughly, a double chamber tomb, a type with good Neopalatial Minoan pedigree.²⁷⁹ However, the architectural refinement – including likely barrel vaulting in the central part between the two chambers – and long dromos point to Mycenaean influences.²⁸⁰

²⁷³ Contra Preston 1999, 140.

²⁷⁴ Preston 1999, 142.

²⁷⁵ A readiness to appropriate external sepulchral forms is ably demonstrated by the Mycenaean adoption of the Messenian tholos.

²⁷⁶ Cosmological centre: Soles 1995.

²⁷⁷ Preston 2007, 289.

²⁷⁸ Evans 1914, 35.

²⁷⁹ Preston 1999, 136.

²⁸⁰ The roof had collapsed by the time of excavation, but visible cuttings in the rock indicate the chamber was once vaulted (Evans 1914, 36).

Further Mycenaean elements are visible in the assemblage. While the tomb was looted, likely in antiquity before the collapse of the roof, two “gold-plated studs of a sword” attest to the quondam presence of weapons.²⁸¹ Secondly, two beads and a disc of Baltic amber were found.²⁸² While amber is common in Mycenaean burials from Grave Circle B onwards, it is wholly lacking from any earlier contexts on Crete and this represents its earliest appearance on the island.²⁸³ While it is unclear whether its earlier absence was due to cultural taste or (more likely) a Minoan inability to exploit northern trade routes, its appearance here is striking.²⁸⁴ An item of unique properties from far-flung climes, Mycenaean warriors seem to have worn amber not as jewellery but as a talisman, making it an item of significant cultural significance.²⁸⁵ Its appearance here, therefore, cannot be taken as incidental, but must be taken as a strong and certain sign of Mycenaeanisation. The pottery assemblage, too, is generally consistent with that found in contemporary warrior graves.²⁸⁶

The rest of the tomb, however, is so Minoan as to approach cliché. Among the assemblage were two bronze double axes of votive type and a bull’s head rhyton (fig. 14).²⁸⁷ The two chambers were split by a bastion resembling the pillars so

²⁸¹ Evans 1914, 39-40.

²⁸² Evans 1914, 42-3.

²⁸³ Harding and Hughes-Brock 1974, 146-7. One possible exception exists in the bead given to Evans apparently from a tomb near Arvi (Evans 1914, 43, n. 2; Evans 1928, 174, n. 2). This was found with a sword, on the stylistic basis of which Evans dated the deposit to LM I or II. Avoiding the circular logic that LM I is impossible as no amber has been found in LM I contexts, even such date for the sword does not guarantee it was not an heirloom, and the apparent effort of looters cannot be considered firm evidence of anything.

²⁸⁴ Harding and Hughes-Brock 1974, 153.

²⁸⁵ Maran 2013.

²⁸⁶ Alberti 2004, 132-4.

²⁸⁷ Evans 1914, 53.

common in Minoan architecture, onto which was carved an engaged column, doubling down on the iconography.²⁸⁸ A final flourish: the grave cist itself was dug in the shape of a double axe.²⁸⁹ The result is an unprecedented application of Minoan cultic symbols to the funerary sphere.²⁹⁰ This, coupled with the spacious chamber and the bench apparently not used for the mortuary assemblage, suggests that it served not only as a tomb but also as a shrine, a locus of cultic practices at the time of interment.²⁹¹ The best parallel, with its columns, pillar, and double axes is perhaps the earlier Temple Tomb, which was likely a funerary shrine rather than tomb in the Neopalatial period.²⁹² Such mortuary shrines have significant Minoan pedigree.²⁹³

The incorporation of this cultic function into the thalamos of the tomb itself indicates a marriage of Mycenaean funerary ostentation to Minoan religious practice with significant implications. Though the size and prestige of the tomb coupled with the Mycenaean elements in the assemblage mandate that the interred was Mycenaean, the adoption of Minoan elements here goes beyond the simple poaching of prestige elements seen in contemporary tombs. What has been appropriated is not simply the iconography of Minoan cult, but the implements and practice thereof, supporting the notion that an integration into the religious sphere was a necessary strategy for the new dynasts.

²⁸⁸ Evans 1914, 36.

²⁸⁹ Evans 1914, 55-6.

²⁹⁰ Preston 1999, 137.

²⁹¹ Alberti 2009, 106.

²⁹² Soles 1992, 151-5; *cf.* Preston 1999, 136 and n. 17.

²⁹³ Preston 1999, 137 and n. 33.

1.2: The Architectural Evidence

This willingness to incorporate rather than efface the Minoan past is further evidenced by the architecture of LM II Knossos. The mechanics of rulership were not therefore confined to the Mycenaean sphere, but based on indigenous practice. It is to be remembered that, at this stage, there were no Mycenaean palaces nor any evidence for a mainland system sufficient for the administration of a site like Knossos.²⁹⁴ Coupled with the architectural evidence for this period, this indicates that the Mycenaeans did not want to turn Knossos into a second Mycenae, whatever that might have looked like, but rather rule a Minoan palace in all its splendour.

It is unfortunately difficult to know what, exactly, the palace of Knossos looked like in LM IB. The old view, based on the dearth of evidence, was that in this period Knossos was a “ruined” or “ghost” palace, with only minimal cultic practice and no administration.²⁹⁵ However, it is now clear that reconstruction following an LM IA destruction was completed, and an elaborate palace functioned at a high level.²⁹⁶ Despite the Little Palace and Unexplored Mansion lying (apparently) empty and decrepit, it was supported by buildings along the Royal Road classified by their excavator as “dependencies of the Palace and connected with it.”²⁹⁷ Due west along the Royal Road at the Stratigraphical Museum Extension (SEX) site, the significant North Building, with its frescoed walls, was also in use through LM IB.²⁹⁸ Much of the town west of the palace also shows signs of inhabitation through this period, as does the area of Gypsades to the south, including ritual activity at the House of the

²⁹⁴ *cf.* Chapter I.

²⁹⁵ These drastic epithets come from MacDonald 2002, 36; see also Driessen and MacDonald 1997, 139-70 for a full presentation of the evidence.

²⁹⁶ Warren 2012, 266.

²⁹⁷ Hood 2011, 154. The Little Palace had no LM IB deposits (Hatzaki 2005, 199); nor did the Unexplored Mansion (Popham 1984, 158).

²⁹⁸ Warren 2011, 183-4.

High Priest.²⁹⁹ Knossos was, if not the seat of power over all of Crete, at least the most opulent manifestation of Neopalatial Minoan splendour.³⁰⁰ While evidence for an LM IB destruction at Knossos contemporary with those that burned across the island was once thought lacking, the LM IB dumps in the South House seem to fill this gap.³⁰¹ This is further supported by the evidence of the Royal Road and SEX excavations.³⁰²

The situation that presented itself to the Mycenaeans was therefore one of ruined splendour. To become lords of Knossos and “inherit the Kingdom of Heaven,” reconstruction was required.³⁰³ While the mainland architectural tradition was in this period not particularly strong, the fact remains that there were alternatives to reconstructing the palace on the same footprint. However, though the rebuilding process was long, and not entirely completed in LM II, its motives and end seem to have been the reconstruction of the Neopalatial palace (fig. 16).³⁰⁴ Far from the posited Mycenaean hatred of Minoan culture and religion, predicated more on the Theseus myth than any serious fact, the stones themselves of the LM II palace speak to the depth of Mycenaean appreciation for Minoan culture.³⁰⁵

²⁹⁹ Hatzaki 2007, 185-6; for the House of the High Priest, see Driessen and MacDonald 1997, 166.

³⁰⁰ Warren 2012, 267. The insoluble question of the political structure of Neopalatial Crete is well beyond the scope of this paper.

³⁰¹ Mountjoy 2003, 24.

³⁰² Hood 2011; Warren 2011.

³⁰³ Cribbing the expression from Driessen and Langohr 2007, 178, with apologies to St. Matthew.

³⁰⁴ The reconstruction efforts are neatly summarised at McEnroe 2010, 121, Figure 10.2

³⁰⁵ *cf.* Weiner 2015, 139.

2: The Throne Room

The most significant element of the LM II palace is the Throne Room (fig. 17). In Evans' eyes, this was a "radical implantation," an intrusion entirely out of keeping with the prior architectural history of the palace.³⁰⁶ On this reading, once Linear B was deciphered, the Throne Room was naturally read as an installation of the Mycenaeans as they subjugated the Minoans to their patriarchal, monarchical rule.³⁰⁷ However, later work has shown that such a narrative does not hold: the Throne Room dates back to MM II, and presents a form paralleled by a contemporary building in Quartier Mu at Malia.³⁰⁸ In this phase, the function of the room was undoubtedly cultic, as indicated by the Lustral Basin present both here and in Quartier Mu.³⁰⁹ The throne itself, and the benches surrounding, it were added in a slightly later phase, still, however, prior to the re-paving of the central court.³¹⁰ The central court was re-paved twice, with the result each time that steps had to be installed in the antechamber to reach its new level.³¹¹ The first time cannot be dated, but the second was early in LM IIIA.³¹² Even if it is assumed that the Mycenaeans re-paved it twice in the space of fifty odd years but the Minoans never in 300, the second phase which introduced the throne still preceded that first re-paving. The throne, therefore must date to the Neopalatial period.

³⁰⁶ Evans 1935, 883, 888.

³⁰⁷ Wace 1956, xxvii-iii.

³⁰⁸ Niemeier 1987, 163-4.

³⁰⁹ Niemeier 1987, 163. For Lustral Basins, which whatever they were were *not* bathrooms, as the presence of one in a Throne Room ought to have made clear long ago, see Hitchcock 2000, 160-3.

³¹⁰ Niemeier 1987, 163.

³¹¹ Niemeier 1987, 163.

³¹² Popham 1970, 56.

This is supported by the physical evidence of the throne itself, which is embedded in the final level of plaster on the wall behind it, dating it earlier than the famous antithetic griffins.³¹³ This fresco is generally dated to LM II on stylistic grounds, and it follows that it must have been re-painted following the LM IB destruction.³¹⁴ However, due to the stylistic, iconographic, and contextual parallels with the fresco above the Lustral Basin in Xeste 3 at Aktrotiri, it is likely that the Mycenaeans did not invent a new iconographic scheme, but simply adapted and replaced the existing one.³¹⁵ Even if this is not the case, the throne itself must antedate the LM II replastering. Moreover, the evidence of skeuomorphism in the counter-arch below the chair identified by Evans indicates that this throne had wooden forebears.³¹⁶ The Mycenaeans appropriated the throne of Knossos – they did not introduce it.

2.1: The Origins of the Megaron

Whatever the purpose of the Throne Room complex in the Neopalatial period, its adoption by the Mycenaeans on their arrival speaks to a conscious interaction with existing manifestations of Minoan cult practice.³¹⁷ So much ties in well with the funerary evidence already assessed. There is, however, a more significant implication of the Mycenaeans adopting rather than installing the Throne Room. While it was once thought that the similarity in layout between the Mycenaean megaron and the Knossos Throne Room was a result of a remodelling of Knossos by Mycenaeans, the clarified chronology precludes this possibility.³¹⁸ While it is, of course, the case that no megaron features an extant throne to mirror that at Knossos,

³¹³ Rehak 1995b, 97.

³¹⁴ Hood 2005, 65; *cf.* also Shaw 1986, 119.

³¹⁵ Shaw 1993, pp. 676-8; Shaw 1986, 119; Hitchcock 2010a, 111.

³¹⁶ Evans 1935, 918-9.

³¹⁷ *cf. infra.*

³¹⁸ Blegen (1956, 96) and Wace (1956, xxvii-iii) were predictably fond of this suggestion.

it is disingenuous to dismiss the corroborating circumstantial evidence from Tiryns and Pylos, especially the throne base from the former and the iconographic parallels with Knossos in the frescoes of the latter.³¹⁹

2.2: The Function of the Throne Room and the Origins of the *Φάναξ*

When the Mycenaeans arrived at Knossos, there is no evidence to suggest that the megaron already existed or that the institution of the *φάναξ* had been established.³²⁰ In the case of the megaron, the situation is more straightforward. While the hearth and extended axial arrangement are Helladic elements, in basic form and layout the greatest influence is the Throne Room at Knossos.³²¹ The implications of this are significant. Architecture is not passive, but represents the manifestation of underlying ideologies.³²² For the megaron to have transferred to the mainland and become the centre of palatial architecture, some underlying ideology of sufficient potency to influence all later elite architecture on the Peloponnese must have been fomented in LM II in the Throne Room at Knossos.

The function of the Throne Room in LM II should therefore be explored. The throne represents a position of singular focus and prestige within the palace. While the situation is less explicit than in the centripetal Mycenaean palaces, the Throne Room has a close connection with the central court, the architectural focus of the palace.³²³

³¹⁹ Rehak 1995b, 100-1. The picture might in fact now be changing, if the find from the Chavos ravine at Mycenae, beneath the collapsed megaron, is indeed a fragment of the throne, but the situation remains contentious and nothing can be said with anything like certainty prior to full publication (Maggidis 2015, 12 July; Maggidis 2015, 14 December).

³²⁰ *cf.* Chapter I.

³²¹ *cf.* Maran 2015, 270.

³²² *cf.* Chapter I.

³²³ Building on Diressen 2002, 4-5. It should also be noted that Mycenaean megara do open off of courtyards, though significantly smaller (Hitchcock 2010b, 203-4).

Since the complex can be entered directly from the court, it holds a much more central position than the larger Hall of Double Axes, which is situated down multiple flights of stairs (fig. 16).³²⁴ No other room matches its centrality and elaboration. Moreover, the continuity of the decorative scheme seems to suggest that it maintained its Neopalatial cultic purpose.

Of course, in LM II, when the *ῥάναξ* is attested in the Linear B records, that the pre-eminent member of society took the position of greatest prestige – the throne – is a natural assumption.³²⁵ However, the institution of the *ῥάναξ* does not seem to have yet been developed at the beginning of LM II/LH IIB when the Mycenaeans arrived at Knossos. If the *ῥάναξ* is therefore to be placed in the Knossos Throne Room, the institution must have been developed there, or else borrowed from an existing Minoan model. This latter notion would once have been considered heresy, due to the self-evidently secular rule of an Indo-European king, Agamemnon retrojected, against the apparent theocratic nature of rule on Crete.³²⁶ However, such views have significantly eroded, especially in light of the work by Thomas Palaima over the past twenty years.³²⁷

This likely represents the subordination of the court to the megaron, whereas at Knossos the central court antedated even the palace itself (Driessen [2004, 78] dates it to EM IIB), and thus could not be superseded.

³²⁴ Driessen 2002, 5. It should be noted that while Evans (1930, 333-8) reported finding the remains of a wooden throne in the Hall of Double Axes, the evidence for this is unclear and has never been re-assessed (Rehak 1995b, 98-9).

³²⁵ For the *ῥάναξ* in Linear B, see Chapter I.

³²⁶ Maran and Stavrianopoulou 2007, 286.

³²⁷ Palaima 1995, 2006, 2007, and 2016.

2.2.1: The Etymology of ῥάναξ

Efforts to find an Indo-European (IE) etymology for $(\text{ῥ})\alpha\nu\alpha\chi$ have long tested the ingenuity of scholars.³²⁸ The most recent etymological dictionaries of Greek both despair of an IE solution: “inconnue,” Chantraine assesses, while raising the possibility it may be a loan-word; “probably a substrate word,” demurs Beekes.³²⁹ The suggestion of a Tocharian A cognate in the form of *nātāk*, “lord,” was speciously plausible as the feminine, *nāśi*, seemed also to correspond with ῥάνασσα .³³⁰ This, however, was thoroughly rebutted by the discovery of a more convincing etymology of *nātāk* and demonstration that the form *nāśi* owed its form to analogy rather than etymology, though for all this it has not disappeared entirely from IE studies.³³¹ The only major suggestion for an IE derivation more recent than Beekes is Lothar Willms’, which posits a derivation of **wen-aġ-t*, with **wen* in the sense of “strive, win,” **aġ* in the sense “to lead,” and *-t* as an agentive suffix – i.e. one who leads to victory.³³² This is, however, hardly a novel approach, and has been rebutted by Palaima in the past.³³³ Moreover, and ironically, in light of his injunction “to confirm the plausibility of a social term” from evidence beyond etymology, Willms simultaneously oversells the evidence for a militant ῥάναξ and undersells the evidence for his cultic role.³³⁴ It is moreover unclear how Willms expects Homer to have remembered with precision the earliest meaning of ῥάναξ even after (by his

³²⁸ See Willms 2010, 232-3 and n. 5 for a good overview of attempts.

³²⁹ Chantraine 2009, 80-1; Beekes 2010, 98-9.

³³⁰ Winter 1979, 53.

³³¹ Willms 2010, 251. It was still being cited as an unproblematic cognate for ῥάναξ in 2006 (Mallory and Adams 2006, 267-8).

³³² See Willms 2010, 252-9 for the full elaboration of this theory.

³³³ Palaima 2016, 140; cf. Palaima 2006, 55-6.

³³⁴ Palaima 2016, 141; cf. Chapter I.

own admission) much of its military role may have been relegated to the λαφαγέτας (a situation, moreover, for which the tablets offer no real evidence).³³⁵

It must therefore be queried how exactly *φάναξ* entered the Mycenaean vocabulary. If not IE, it may have come from a pre-Hellenic substrate language of the Balkans. This is suggested by evidence from Phrygia, where in 1800 was discovered a monument inscribed with the words “ΜΙΔΑΙ ΛΑΦΑΓΤΑΕΙ FANAKTEI.”³³⁶ The correspondence of ΛΑΦΑΓΤΑΕΙ to λαφαγέτας (dat. λαφαγέται) and FANAKTEI to *φάναξ* (dat. φανάκτει) is clear. Here, then, is evidence that in historical times the two Mycenaean roles had accrued to a single figure. The monument is unfortunately difficult to date. If this is the King Midas who passed into legend, it must date to the end of the eighth century BC.³³⁷ However, stylistic elements may push its date as late as the third century BC.³³⁸ Even assuming an early date for the tomb, there is still half a millennium between it and the final Linear B tablets, making the appearance of the terms here truly remarkable.

The relevant question is how *φάναξ* and λαφαγέτας entered the Phrygian language. There are two possibilities: either they were cognates in Greek and Phrygian from some Balkan substrate, or else borrowed from Greek into Phrygian. The former is possible as linguistic similarities between Greek and Phrygian suggest that Phrygian originated in the Balkans, and was later taken to Anatolia.³³⁹ It is moreover likely that the exact administrative implications of the terms were delineated only when the palaces were established, even if the words had existed prior.³⁴⁰ Happily, on this front, there is no real reason to assume that the terms should antedate the palaces.

³³⁵ The λαφαγέτας: Willms 2010, 260; Homer: Willms 2010, 262-3.

³³⁶ Huxley 1959, 86-7.

³³⁷ Ruppenstein 2015, 92.

³³⁸ Willms 2010, 246.

³³⁹ Ruppenstein 2015, 94.

³⁴⁰ For the details of these positions, see Shelmerdine 2008b, 127-31.

Mycenaean connections with the southern Balkans are well attested throughout the palatial period, and even if it is objected that there was no centralised state and so leader worthy of appropriating the terms, it does not follow that this precludes knowledge of the terms or a desire to emulate more successful southern neighbours.³⁴¹ Even if they were not borrowed then, there was plentiful Greek contact with Asia Minor in the eighth century BC.³⁴² While the term λαφαγέτας is not attested in Homer, its metrical shape is impossible in hexameter (˘ ˘ ˘ ˘), and this need not be taken as evidence that the word was lost. Indeed, the form λάγετας, which emerged after the Doric loss of digamma, is attested in Pindar, and maintains royal connotations (*Pyth.* 10.31 Περσεὺς λαγέτας). Ruppenstein's objection that the specific meaning was lost by this time elides the fact that the inscription is muddling the facts anyway: we know of no Mycenaean φάναξ who was also λαφαγέτας.³⁴³ There is thus no reason to argue against a borrowing, nor any necessity to assume a substrate origin for either φάναξ or λαφαγέτας.

The origin of the term, then, is not necessarily restrained to the Indo-European or substrate realms. The possibility that it is of Minoan origin remains open. To this, however, it may be objected that, as far as it can be interpreted, no correspondent to the word φάναξ appears in Linear A.³⁴⁴ The suggestion that the apparent root U.NA.KA- could be the same etymon, with U/WA alternation, does not hold.³⁴⁵ While *u* and *wa* do alternate in Linear B, this only occurs as a result of differing

³⁴¹ Responding to Ruppenstein 2015, 94-7.

³⁴² Willms 2010, 247.

³⁴³ Ruppenstein 2015, 98.

³⁴⁴ Assuming signs AB 54, 06, and 77 maintain their Linear A value in Linear B, nothing like the sequence *wa-na-ka* in any form appears in Linear A (using the sign index in GORILA).

³⁴⁵ This was made by Paul Faure, but published in Driessen 2002, 2, n. 6. For the sake of legibility, Linear A is here transcribed according to Linear B values, but this does not represent any commentary on the validity of these values.

syllabification in the writing of diphthongs, and never in word-initial position.³⁴⁶ There is also no word-initial WA/U (AB 54/10) alternation internal to Linear A.³⁴⁷ Moreover, U.NA.KA- only ever appears as a root in what appears to be a verb, and appears more often as U.NA.RU.KA-, which is inexplicable if it is to be linked with *ῥάναξ*.³⁴⁸ Absence of evidence, however, is hardly evidence of absence, especially in a corpus as small as that of Linear A.³⁴⁹ Moreover, the Linear A documents that survive do not seem to be similar to those in Linear B on which evidence for the *ῥάναξ* is attested.³⁵⁰ Royal references even in Egyptian Hieroglyphics are far from common in purely administrative texts.³⁵¹ There is also evidence that Linear A, though not Linear B, was written on perishable materials, which could explain the absence of certain elements from the tablets.³⁵² The written records of Neopalatial Crete are insufficient, therefore, to disprove the existence of a Minoan *ῥάναξ*.

2.2.2: Πότνια and Cult in the Throne Room

In the Neopalatial period, the most common interpretation is that the Throne Room was closely linked with the “Minoan Goddess,” representing a theatre for her epiphany in the doorway on the western wall, emerging from Evans’ Inner Shrine (fig. 17).³⁵³ As a part of this ritual she almost certainly sat the throne, an interpretation supported by the bountiful evidence for enthroned females in Minoan

³⁴⁶ Melena 2014, 98-102.

³⁴⁷ Using the indices in GORILA.

³⁴⁸ GORILA; for the syntactic evidence for its use as a verb in the so-called Libation Formula, see most recently Brent 2013.

³⁴⁹ There are only some 7,400 total extant Linear A signs, compared with over 57,000 for Linear B (Olivier 1989, Fig. 1).

³⁵⁰ Palaima 1995, 128.

³⁵¹ Palaima 2016, 135.

³⁵² Tomas 2010, 348-9.

³⁵³ Niemeier (1987, 165-7); *cf.* Hitchcock 2010a, 107, though her interpretation differs radically.

art.³⁵⁴ However, it is not clear that this is how the ritual ended, nor that it did not involve others. While Maran and Stavrianopoulou are probably going too far when they suggest that the *ῥάναξ* himself embodied the goddess for purposes of the ritual, they were likely right to suggest that he was involved.³⁵⁵ It is possible to suggest that this ritual culminated in the granting of power and legitimacy to the *ῥάναξ* by the “incarnate” goddess. This reading is well supported by the archaeological evidence, which singles out the Throne Room/megaron as the point of primacy in the palace, the textual evidence linking the *ῥάναξ* with a goddess *Πότνια*, and iconographic evidence which may be suggested to represent its culmination.

The word *po-ti-ni-ja* and its derivatives appears 41 times in the Linear B records, with many qualifiers, and it is debatable as to whether these reference one goddess or many.³⁵⁶ However, Chadwick’s argument that unqualified derivatives signify that *Πότνια* was not simply an epithet but had a distinct meaning of its own is clear and persuasive.³⁵⁷ Whether the qualified uses of *po-ti-ni-ja* represented different aspects of the same goddess or else individual *genii locorum* remains impossible to tell; the salient point is that a goddess *Πότνια* likely did exist.³⁵⁸ Despite the good IE pedigree for her name, it is widely accepted that her origins are to be sought elsewhere.³⁵⁹ The most natural suggestion is that the name is a calque of the name of a foreign goddess.³⁶⁰ The Minoan “goddess,” so visible in iconography, presents the

³⁵⁴ Niemeier 1987, 165; seated women in art: Rehak 1995b, 109-17; cf. also Maran and Stavrianopoulou 2007, 288-9 for the history and development of this idea.

³⁵⁵ Maran and Stavrianopoulou 2007, 289-90.

³⁵⁶ Thomas and Wedde 2001.

³⁵⁷ Chadwick 1985, 195.

³⁵⁸ For two recent, conflicting takes, see Trümper 2001 and Boëlle 2001. The name is attested in its “bare” form at Mycenae (MY Oi 704), Pylos (PY Fr 1231, PY Fr 1235, PY Tn 316, and PY Un 219), and Knossos (Kn M 729 and KN Oa 7374).

³⁵⁹ Palaima 2008, 352. For the etymology, see Trümper 2001, 411.

³⁶⁰ Chadwick 1957, 123; Ruijgh 1967, 51.

most likely candidate.³⁶¹ The notion that Πότνια rather corresponds to a Pre-Hellenic mainland goddess is rather less likely, as it relies not on independent evidence from Early Helladic times, but rather the highly problematic notion that various “primitive” societies worshipped a “Great Mother Goddess.”³⁶²

The likelihood of religious syncretism in LM II is further evidenced by the Linear B records, as Joann Gulizio and Dimitri Nakassis have recently argued.³⁶³ At Knossos, multiple names are listed among gods receiving offerings not attested on the mainland, many of which either follow apparent Minoan spelling conventions or else display clearly non-Greek linguistic features.³⁶⁴ Others display orthographic variations based on attempted phonetic transcription of alien phonemes, or are spelt using undeciphered Linear B syllabograms borrowed from Linear A, which must similarly represent Minoan phonemes.³⁶⁵ The collocation *pa-si-te-o-i* (πασι θεόηι) in the Knossos F-series tablets moreover parallels contemporary Near Eastern practice for the honouring of foreign gods.³⁶⁶ That evidence for this is attested already in the RCT indicates that syncretism was a relatively rapid process.³⁶⁷

³⁶¹ cf. Lupack 2010, 258. She could, much like the aspects of Πότνια, represent one goddess or many, a similarity that perhaps strengthens the argument. The existence of one or more female deities is sufficiently clear from iconography (cf. Younger and Rehak 2008, 167-8) that no appeal to the problematic notion of a Neolithic “Great Goddess” need be made (cf. *infra*).

³⁶² cf. Chadwick 1957, 123: “Potnia was the Mycenaean name for a mother-goddess of non-Greek origin.” For an assessment of the “Great Goddess” theory that demonstrates its thoroughly modern roots, see Hutton 1997.

³⁶³ Gulizio and Nakassis 2014.

³⁶⁴ Such as *pi-pi-tu-na* on KN Fp 13, with characteristic Minoan reduplication and vowels, and *si-ja-ma-to* on KN Fp 48 (among others), which cannot be Greek due to the already attested loss of word-initial sigma (Gulizio and Nakassis 2014, 121-2).

³⁶⁵ Such as the name *pa-ze*, which appears in that form in the RCT (KN V 114, KN Xd 140), but as *pa-de* in later F-series tablets, representing the shifting pronunciation of an uncertain loanword (Gulizio and Nakassis 2014, 122).

³⁶⁶ Gulizio and Nakassis 2014, 123-4.

³⁶⁷ cf. the discussion *supra* of *pa-ze*.

Beyond this, the sanctuary on Mt. Iouktas continues in use without break from LM I-II.³⁶⁸ When the evidence of the graves is also adduced, it seems that the Mycenaeans did not efface but rather incorporated the practice of Minoan religion following their conquest of Crete, one reflex of which was the introduction of the goddess Πότνια to the Mycenaean pantheon. That she was closely linked to the palatial system further explains why she is never attested after its collapse.³⁶⁹ It is possible to suggest, therefore, that this was the goddess manifested in the epiphany ritual in the Knossos Throne Room.

The argument for linking the *φάναξ* with the Throne Room has already been made.³⁷⁰ It is furthermore evident from the Linear B records that he had a close association with Πότνια.³⁷¹ It is thus possible to bring the argument full circle. In LM II Knossos, as in Neopalatial times, the Throne Room played host to an epiphany ritual wherein “Πότνια” made her appearance and sat in the throne, where she was approached by the *φάναξ* whose position she legitimised. Such a hypothesis conforms well to the evidence already adduced, and may be supported by an LM IIIA1 signet ring from Mycenae depicting the culmination of this ceremony (fig. 18).³⁷² Here a male, dressed in a breechcloth and holding a sceptre, extends his hand to a seated woman of much greater proportion. She in turn holds her hand out to him – it is possible he is grasping her wrist.³⁷³ Her seat has arched supports between the legs, much as the Knossos throne, and the “ovoid objects” behind her may well represent either the undulating back of the throne or else the mountainous outcrop on which it was apparently modelled.³⁷⁴ A tentative interpretation may therefore be

³⁶⁸ Whittaker 2001, 359.

³⁶⁹ *cf.* Ruijgh 1967, 52.

³⁷⁰ *cf.* *supra*.

³⁷¹ Hiller 2008, 188-9.

³⁷² Sakellariou 1964, 117 (CMS I.101).

³⁷³ Evans 1930, 463-4.

³⁷⁴ Rehak 1995b, 104.

posited. The woman's greater size suggests greater authority – if not Πότνια herself, then her priestess.³⁷⁵ The male is identified by his sceptre, which Palaima has argued should be taken as an emblem of power that, borrowed from the Minoans, became one of kingship.³⁷⁶ Thus the φάναξ approaches “Πότνια” seated in the throne, whence she welcomes and acknowledges him, legitimising his rule.³⁷⁷ Robert Koehl's suggestion that this represents a *ἱερός γάμος* relies too much on the later convention of the groom taking his bride by the wrist, but the broad suggestion may be correct in light of the suggestion by Maran and Stavrianopoulou that the role of Πότνια was played by the φάνασσα.³⁷⁸ In this way, perhaps, was the authority of the φάναξ to sit the throne established.

While this ritual as reconstructed must have had its origins in Minoan times, the goal here is not to retroject an image of kingship to Neopalatial Crete.³⁷⁹ It is possible, and perhaps even likely, that the Minoan φάναξ was not a king, but a priest of the goddess.³⁸⁰ However, when the ritual was adopted by the Mycenaeans, the singular focus of this ritual on the φάναξ was co-opted for political means by a Mycenaean lord who used it to elevate himself in prestige above his compatriots.³⁸¹ Once this institution took hold, the ideology spread to the mainland, where it manifested in the architectural form of the megaron. Not only did this mirror the Knossos Throne Room in form, but the service rooms and access routes continued to allow for a modified version of the epiphany ritual.³⁸² Of course, it is also possible

³⁷⁵ While interpretations vary as to the divinity of the woman, there is consensus that she is the more important figure in the scene (Koehl 2001, 239-40).

³⁷⁶ Palaima 1995, 135-8; Palaima 2016, 147-9.

³⁷⁷ Koehl 2001, 339-40 and *passim*; Maran and Stavrianopoulou 2007, 289-90.

³⁷⁸ Koehl 2001, 339-40 and *passim*; Maran and Stavrianopoulou 2007, 289-90.

³⁷⁹ For the vexatious question of Minoan kingship, see Koehl 1995.

³⁸⁰ *cf.* the suggestion of Ruijgh (1967, 50-1) that the φάναξ was the priest of Πότνια in Mycenaean times.

³⁸¹ *cf.* Whittaker 2001, 359.

³⁸² Maran and Stavrianopoulou 2007, 289-90.

that by the mature Mycenaean period, once the *ῥάναξ* ideology was deeply rooted in society and memories of the Minoan past faded, the epiphany ritual became less significant. Paul Rehak was certainly right to suggest that the Mycenaeans had no ruler iconography because their notions of kingship evolved from Minoan models.³⁸³ To this a suggestion may now be added: the *ῥάναξ* was never depicted seated because the throne was not truly his; he sat there only by the grace of *Πότνια* to whom it belonged.

3: Conclusion

As with the LH IIB mainland, both the architectural and mortuary records of LM II Knossos were assessed to provide a holistic analysis of the period. Though the evidence of Linear B indicates that the rulers were Mycenaean, discussion focussed on the evidence for the blending of Minoan and Mycenaean elements. This was particularly evident in the mortuary record; while the simple warrior graves were of conservative, mainland type, the Minoan elements in the monumental sepulchres of the period were adduced as evidence for the adoption of Minoan cultural iconography and cultic practices by the Mycenaean lords of Knossos. This picture was supported by analysis of the architectural record, which does not represent Mycenaeanisation to the same extent as the graves, but rather it was demonstrated that the palace of LM II rebuilt on the same footprint as that of the Minoan Neopalatial period. The implications of this were explored fully in an in-depth discussion of the Throne Room.

Complementing the picture of Chapter I, it was argued that the megaron owed its form to the Knossos Throne Room; the appearance of the architectural form on the

³⁸³ Rehak 1995b, 116.

mainland contemporaneous with LM II can thus be seen to demonstrate the debt of Mycenaean Palatial society to Minoan. Closely linked to this is the evidence adduced for the origins of the *φάναξ*. Linguistic analysis made the case that the word had no Indo-European roots nor any necessary origin in a Pre-Hellenic substrate. Based on the links between the *φάναξ* and the Throne Room, it was thus possible to suggest the Minoan origins of the institution. This was done through the reconstruction of a ritual attested iconographically on an electrum ring from Mycenae, wherein the *φάναξ* was (it was argued) legitimised at the conclusion of an epiphany of Πότνια in the Throne Room. He was thereafter able to sit the throne himself. The transition of these two features of palatial society from Minoan to Mycenaean were thus contextualised, and the active processes which led to their institution on the mainland assessed. The similar origins of the final element of Mycenaean Palatial society, Linear B, will be demonstrated in Chapter III.

CHAPTER III

The Development of Linear B – A Comparative Approach

In this chapter, the development of Linear B will be explored. To this end, internal studies of the script will be assessed. These include focussed discussion of analyses comparing Linear B to its precursor Linear A, including palaeographic studies and investigations into their respective systems of weights and measures. To enable a holistic view, discussion of the archaeological context of these developments will be integrated at all stages. It will be argued that Linear B, on internal evidence, could not have been created prior to LM IB, and, on archaeological evidence, its invention should be placed in LM II Knossos. Only there is it likely that a script as administratively focussed as Linear B could have been born; the LH IIB mainland does not demonstrate evidence for the sort of centralised economy that would necessitate nor make use of such a singularly administrative tool.

Such efforts are typical of attempts to situate the development of Linear B. This chapter, however, will continue by contextualising Linear B within a theoretical framework. As a script that is based on an existing model, the creation of Linear B will be defined as a case of secondary script development, a widespread phenomenon which has nonetheless hitherto received no systematic study. As no existing framework can be applied, a range of other cases of secondary script development will be assessed to identify consistent traits of the phenomenon. From these, it will be argued that the situation evident in Linear B does not match the general picture, which is for the development of writing as an elite development, driven by onomastic and prestigious concerns; instead, it was an administrative tool

that emerged out of necessity. This constitutes the first theoretical argument for the situation of the development of Linear B at LM II Knossos.

1: Linear B

Linear B is the best attested of the prehistoric Aegean scripts, preserved on over 5000 tablets, nodules, and stirrup jars.³⁸⁴ As its name suggests, it is a derivation of the earlier script Linear A. Both were discovered at Knossos by Arthur Evans; though he could not read them, he was able to distinguish the two scripts and establish various elements of their relationship.³⁸⁵ The excavations of Carl Blegen at Pylos in 1939 revealed for the first time that the script was also put to administrative use on the mainland.³⁸⁶ After Alice Kober demonstrated evidence for nominal inflection in 1945 and Emmett Bennett Jr. published the Pylos tablets discovered in the 1939 season, the British architect Michael Ventris was able to identify the language of the tablets: Greek.³⁸⁷ With the collaboration of John Chadwick, he made preliminary publication of his findings in 1953; full publication followed in 1956, months after Ventris' untimely death.³⁸⁸

In over 100 years since it was first discovered, the range of Linear B finds has spread to include the major sites of Mycenae, Tiryns, Midea, and Thebes on the mainland, and Khania on Crete.³⁸⁹ Beyond these, it has also been found at smaller sites like Dimini, Medeon, and Volos; the most recent discoveries are at Iklaina in Messenia and Hagios Vasileios in Laconia. Significantly more sites can be listed if the

³⁸⁴ Palaima 2010, 358.

³⁸⁵ Evans 1935, 666-98.

³⁸⁶ Blegen and Kourouniotis 1939, 564-70.

³⁸⁷ For a recent overview of the whole process, see Pope 2008.

³⁸⁸ Ventris and Chadwick 1953; 1956 saw the publication of *Docs*¹.

³⁸⁹ All sites listed identified by the DĀMOS database (Aurora *et al.*).

inscribed stirrup jars are added, including Orchomenos, Eleusis, and Gla.

Remarkably, all of these finds share the same medium: clay. There is no definite attestation of the script on any other medium.³⁹⁰ Moreover, and the result of grave disappointment in the early days of the decipherment, every inscription represents an administrative record.³⁹¹ This is in contrast with its parent script of Linear A, which is also found in religious and prestigious contexts.³⁹² As this trend stretches across over a century of archaeological endeavour and thousands of recovered inscriptions, the absence of any non-administrative records represents a real trend, not just an *argumentum ex silentio*. In fact, the situation is exactly the opposite of what would be expected: the attestations of early writing are most often exactly those which were designed to survive, carved into hard and durable materials.³⁹³ All that survives of Linear B, however, are ephemeral records on clay, preserved only by the fires that destroyed their storage rooms. This paradoxical preservation should be taken as strong evidence that the purely administrative nature of the extant evidence is in keeping with the fundamental nature of the script.³⁹⁴

The two largest contextual questions concerning Linear B are where and when it was developed. The former may be dealt with first. Suggested dates range from MM III – LM II. The early date finds its origin in Maurice Pope’s 1962 article, “The Date of Linear B.” Comparing the Linear B figures with their Linear A antecedents, Pope dated its origin to MM IIIA on the basis that this is when the parallel signs in Linear A best resemble those of Linear B.³⁹⁵ Two issues must give initial pause to such a

³⁹⁰ For the Linear A or B signs inscribed on the Kephala Tholos, see Chapter I; the Kafkania Pebble is addressed *infra*.

³⁹¹ Bennet 2014, 131-2.

³⁹² These are the Z-series, including inscriptions on stone and metal, including a gold ring from Knossos (KN Zf 13) and a gold axe from Arkhalakori (AR Zf 1), for which see GORILA.

³⁹³ Postgate, Wang and Wilkinson 1995, 464.

³⁹⁴ *cf.* Karagianni 2015.

³⁹⁵ Pope 1962, 318-9.

conclusion. The first is that, if Pope is correct, a lacuna of multiple centuries exists between the invention of the script and its first recorded documentation.³⁹⁶ The second arises from the second, contingent half of his conclusion: the Greeks of the late MH period had their own form of written administration.³⁹⁷ While this would nicely tie writing in with the beginning of the shaft grave period, there is no evidence for anything like palatial administration this early on the mainland.

At this point, it is necessary to address the “Kafkania Pebble,” a small stone excavated in 1994 at Kafkania in a MH III context and inscribed with Linear B figures.³⁹⁸ Superficially, this seems to vindicate Pope and his followers as evidence for an early invention, but the issue is not so clear. Initially thought a significant find, its anomalous medium and anachronistic nature soon cast aspersions on its value as evidence.³⁹⁹ The question was settled by Palaima’s 2003 philippic, which argued convincingly that the decoration is without parallel in art of the Bronze Age Aegean, though strikingly modern; the signs do not take the early, proto-form that might be expected of an inscription made some 200 years before the next extant attestation of the script, but rather seem to be based on those of the master hand at Pylos some 400 years later; and, in fact, it seems to do nothing less than name the excavator and his son.⁴⁰⁰ This should all, perhaps, come as no great surprise: it was found on the first of April. While the pebble still sneaks into the literature occasionally, Palaima is on firm ground when he denounces these references as unconscionable.⁴⁰¹

³⁹⁶ Palaima 1988, 307.

³⁹⁷ Pope 1962, 319.

³⁹⁸ See Arapogianni, Rambach and Godart 1999 for the initial publication.

³⁹⁹ See, for example, Driessen 2000, 144, n. 134, where its existence seems to compromise his entire endeavour, but already in 2001 he expresses greater scepticism towards it (Driessen 2008 was submitted for publication in 2001; see the footnote to its title).

⁴⁰⁰ Palaima 2003, *passim*.

⁴⁰¹ Palaima 2010, 359.

With the fraudulence of the pebble established, the matter becomes more straightforward. With the use of evidence published since Pope's article (especially the publication of the LM IB Linear A archive at Hagia Triada), Palaima has demonstrated that "the sign forms of the Linear A script were developing in the direction of the sign forms of Linear B right to the very end of LM I B."⁴⁰² There remains no need to postulate long centuries of lost Linear B records, nor MH written administrations.

Other proponents of an early date, such as Hooker and Duhoux, relied on Pope's palaeographic argument, and so are addressed and dispatched simultaneously by Palaima's analysis.⁴⁰³ Jan Driessen has also addressed the palaeographic evidence, though only in the context of the LM II tablets from the RCT, and found that many of the sign shapes attested there are closer to their Linear A forebears than those from any other Linear B deposit.⁴⁰⁴ This, at the very least, suggests that the script should have been adapted relatively recently before these tablets were written, if Linear A features could be present in these but gone already by the next deposit.⁴⁰⁵ This supports Palaima's assertion of a *terminus post quem* for its invention in LM IB.⁴⁰⁶ The question then becomes whether it is possible to place its development in LM IB, alongside Linear A in its final decades, or afterwards, in LM II. At this point, the question of where it was developed becomes inextricable from that of when. Three

⁴⁰² Palaima 1988, 307.

⁴⁰³ Hooker 1979, 49-52 and Duhoux 1985, 25, 27; *cf.* Palaima 1988, 279 and n. 35.

⁴⁰⁴ Driessen 2000, 102-57, and 145 especially.

⁴⁰⁵ At Iklaina; *cf.* *infra*.

⁴⁰⁶ It also furnishes a further argument against the Kafkania Pebble – if such diachronic changes are visible here, no argument for scribal conservatism could explain identical shapes in Middle and Late Helladic III across a gap of some 400 years.

locations, as ever in the Aegean Bronze Age, present themselves as options: Crete, the Cyclades, and the Greek mainland.⁴⁰⁷

If development before LM II is posited, this is much more likely in either the Cyclades or the mainland. While some have argued for LM IB Knossos, such a development is difficult to contextualise. As there is no evidence to suggest that Linear B was ever used outside of administrative contexts, in a palace with a fully functional Linear A bureaucracy it is hard to see what necessity may have led to its development.⁴⁰⁸ Moreover, their co-existence is unlikely, as each notated weights and measures differently. Linear B used a sexagesimal notation, familiar from the historical period of Greece, with a base unit of a *τάλαντον* equivalent to 60 *μναῖ*, 600 *δραχμαί*, or 3600 *ὀβολοί*.⁴⁰⁹ While the system in Linear A remains less than entirely clear, quantities were certainly notated by a complex series of fractions, many of which were apparently indivisible by two.⁴¹⁰ Indeed, Jan Driessen and Ilse Schoep have argued that Linear B represents a significant and conscious simplification and reform of the system of measurement.⁴¹¹ Its use contemporary with Linear A would thus preclude good sense. The same problems present themselves elsewhere on Crete, with Linear A in use at all active palatial sites.⁴¹²

A similar problem confronts the argument for the Cyclades, which interacted significantly with both Crete at the mainland in LM IB/LH II.⁴¹³ Margalit Finkelberg

⁴⁰⁷ Melena (2014, 7) has also suggested Miletus, but the chronological issues he himself acknowledges seem insurmountable; there is no sign of Mycenaeans there until LH IIIA1, which postdates the RCT deposit at Knossos.

⁴⁰⁸ There being no evidence that Linear B was ever used in anything but an administrative context.

⁴⁰⁹ Melena 2014, 154.

⁴¹⁰ Bennett 1999, 165.

⁴¹¹ Driessen and Schoep 1999, 392.

⁴¹² Tomas 2010, 342.

⁴¹³ Thus Palaima (1982) 2015, 380.

has even suggested a Cycladic origin in an earlier period, suggesting that the Linear A found outside Crete resembles Linear B more closely than that from Crete.⁴¹⁴ The Kafkania Pebble, however, is used as a key piece of evidence; that it is a fake does not wholly defeat her argument, but it certainly leaves it much weaker. Moreover, Finkelberg's assessment met immediate resistance from Emmett Bennett, who saw no particular connection between the Linear A of the Aegean fringe and Linear B, and it ignores Palaima's palaeographic conclusions.⁴¹⁵ The salient point of her argument is that Linear A was widespread throughout the Aegean in LB I.⁴¹⁶ Remaining beyond the controversial issue of the thalassocracy, the range of Linear A from Crete through the Cyclades and the Aegean fringe strongly suggests it played the role of a trading *scriptum francum* throughout all of the eastern Mediterranean.⁴¹⁷

The Cyclades, then, may well represent the location where mainland Greeks first became familiar with Linear A. It is difficult to imagine how Linear B, with its radically different system of measures, would have been more helpful in this context to the Mycenaeans than simply adopting, as it seems the rest of the Cyclades had, Linear A as the written form of the language of trade. This would, at the very least, be more in keeping with comparative examples from the contemporary Near East, where the spread of Akkadian cuneiform preceded the adoption of the script to native languages.⁴¹⁸ This is neatly represented by the Hittites, who first adopted the

⁴¹⁴ Finkelberg 1998.

⁴¹⁵ Bennett, at Finkelberg 1998, 272: "I am afraid that I think this is not at all connectable to Linear B."

⁴¹⁶ Finkelberg 1998, 266.

⁴¹⁷ See Palaima [1982] 2015, 380 and *passim*, for its role both in commercial and administrative purposes through the Cyclades. There is one isolated find of Linear A on the Greek mainland, a piece of stone inscribed with two signs from Hagios Stephanos in Laconia, with no clear context nor use, though obviously not administrative (Janko 1982).

⁴¹⁸ Huehnergard and Woods 2008, 84-5.

use of Akkadian cuneiform as a sign of prestige and legitimacy among their neighbours, and only later adapted it to notate their own language.⁴¹⁹

It is not, of course, impossible to imagine that exposure to Linear A suggested to the Greeks the possibility of recording their own language in writing. This, however, must have taken a different form than Linear B as it is attested – administrative. No Linear B has been found in the Cyclades, and the stratification of a Linear A tablet beneath a major LH III building at Phylakopi on Melos among LM I B sherds strongly suggests that it maintained its place as the administrative script of the Aegean at least that late.⁴²⁰ It is difficult, therefore, to situate the invention of Linear B, so administratively focussed, in this context. Indeed, while Palaima once placed the development of Linear B in the LC I Cyclades, he later acknowledged that this done “without considering the implications of this proposed date.”⁴²¹

This does not preclude the idea of writing being spread through the Cyclades to the mainland, but the evidence there is nonetheless no more indicative of LH IIA Linear B. While it is possible that all early examples have simply been lost, the evidence from the mainland is not for the sort of administrative complexity that would be expected with the introduction of the script.⁴²² If it dates this early, its uses must have been primitive or prestigious, but the absolute absence of any such attestations rules strongly against such a hypothesis. While the argument has been made that writing systems are never developed outside of the language’s “home country,” this is a reflection only of mid-twentieth century, language-centric views of identity, not

⁴¹⁹ van den Hout 2010, 103

⁴²⁰ Renfrew 1977, 111-3 and *passim*.

⁴²¹ Palaima ([1982] 2015); Palaima 1988, 275. He then, (339-41) presents a conclusion of LH II based on administrative necessity, either at Mycenae or Knossos, with no reason to prefer one over the other.

⁴²² *cf.* Chapter I.

any necessary historical reality.⁴²³ Moreover, while Hooker once argued that if the Mycenaeans arriving at Knossos were not already literate, there was no reason for a new script to be invented for a people who could not actually read it.⁴²⁴ The rebuttal to this is political: the invention of a new script, knowledge of which was restricted to palatial administrators, precluded those who knew Linear A (more, it seems, than ever knew Linear B) from understanding it.⁴²⁵ This ties in well with the evidence of the strained and distrustful relationship between the new administration at Knossos and the rest of the island.

At multiple of the so-called “Refuge Settlements” in the mountains of central and eastern Crete, LM II-III A1 sherds have recently been discovered.⁴²⁶ That the populace felt the need to flee to these high inaccessible sites for the entirety of the LM II period says much about their outlook. Moreover, significant militaristic capabilities are attested at contemporary Knossos. The Sc tablets from the RCT record a force of at least 156 chariots, a significant number on Crete where the topography limits their utility and horses are difficult and expensive to maintain.⁴²⁷ These, the “stealth bombers of the Bronze Age,” would have provided the lords of Knossos significant military power and mobility.⁴²⁸ No wonder, then, the Minoans fled for the hills. The evidence, moreover, suggests that the Mycenaeans had good reasons for maintaining significant military might at Knossos. During the course of LM II, not only the Unexplored Mansion but also much of the west wing of the Palace were destroyed.⁴²⁹ While it is impossible to ascribe these destructions with

⁴²³ Bennet 2008, 19.

⁴²⁴ Hooker 1979, 47-8.

⁴²⁵ Thus, broadly, Driessen and Schoep 2005, 392. For the widespread, non-administrative use of Linear A in the Proto- and Neopalatial periods, see Bennet 2008, 8-9.

⁴²⁶ Nowicki 2008, 81.

⁴²⁷ Driessen 2000, 210; Driessen 1996, 492-3.

⁴²⁸ Driessen 1999, 14.

⁴²⁹ Unexplored Mansion: Popham 1984; Palace: Driessen 1990.

certainty to Minoan insurrection, in light of the other evidence no other explanation makes so much sense. This also explains the more limited scope of the Knossian kingdom in LM II than LM III.⁴³⁰ Concern for defence would have prevented too large an expeditionary force from having been mounted, especially given that it was likely to meet significant resistance.

Therefore, the argument from cultural development and necessity may come to the fore. The question of ruling as large a territory as they now did raised significant methodological questions: Mycenaeans had never hitherto controlled a palatial territory. Their solution was, for the most part, the simplest available: to adopt the Minoan system of written administration, with a complex hierarchy of sites.⁴³¹ This is evidenced by the fact that all so-called “second order centres” in LM II Crete were previous sites of Minoan administration: Khania, Phaistos (or Hagia Triada), and perhaps Malia.⁴³² However, the primacy of Knossos is evident, with subjugation of previously autonomous sites.⁴³³ The great difference between Mycenaean and Minoan administration was not the structure, but the language used: rather than inheriting Linear A, the Mycenaeans invented Linear B.⁴³⁴

⁴³⁰ Significantly, it did not yet control the Lasithi plateau (Driessen 2001, 102-3).

⁴³¹ Bennet 1990, 209.

⁴³² Bennet 1990, 209.

⁴³³ Even if these sites were not autonomous in the Neopalatial, they were certainly not subordinate to Knossos to the same extent as in LM II-III (Bennet 1990, 199-200).

⁴³⁴ cf. Palaima and Sikkenga 1999.

2: Primary and Secondary Script Development

Studies of grammatogeny, or the origins of writing, are predominantly focussed at the theoretical level on its creation *ex nihilo* and the circumstances that lead to such a development.⁴³⁵ However, the utility of these studies is severely limited for the analysis of Linear B, which was so clearly modelled on Linear A. Moreover, a full, theoretical study of such “secondary” scripts has yet to be conducted, though some efforts have come close.⁴³⁶ In the 1990s, Peter Daniels divided grammatogeny into “sophisticated” and “unsophisticated” forms: the prior for when a script is invented in a context where the idea of writing is known, the latter in a context where the idea of writing is unknown.⁴³⁷ While Linear B might seem a good candidate for a case of sophisticated grammatogeny, Daniels instead focuses his study on cases where a script “exhibits a correlation between phonetic features of the units represented and the graphic shapes of the symbols.”⁴³⁸ As this is not the case for Linear B, Daniels’ framework is not particularly useful. A more useful study was presented at the second Idea of Writing conference by Alex de Voogt.⁴³⁹ This, however, was purely linguistic in scope, and did not address the socio-historical context of the transfer of writing. As such, no existing framework can be applied to situate the development of Linear B among other scripts developed in similar contexts. Moreover, a precise term for this context does not yet exist. As such, grammatogeny is here divided into two mutually exclusive categories: primary and secondary script development.⁴⁴⁰ Primary script development refers to *creatio ex nihilo*, where the development of a

⁴³⁵ See, for example, the studies in Houston 2004.

⁴³⁶ This absence was noted by Ferrara (2015, 43) and confirmed to me in personal correspondence.

⁴³⁷ Daniels 1992; Daniels 1996.

⁴³⁸ Daniels 1992, 87.

⁴³⁹ de Voogt 2011.

⁴⁴⁰ Analogous to primary and secondary state development in world-systems theory; cf. Parkinson and Galatay 2007, 113.

script is concomitant with the invention of the idea of writing. Secondary script development occurs when the idea of writing is borrowed rather than invented, and a script developed often based on an existing model.⁴⁴¹

As secondary script development has yet to receive systematic study, it will be undertaken here to compose and survey a catalogue of comparanda from the ancient Mediterranean. This will be hardly exhaustive, but by surveying cases across almost 2000 years and in a variety of contexts will be able to point to multiple consistent traits of this phenomenon. Because illiterate societies were often coming into contact with literate ones, the ancient Mediterranean provides a fulsome range of scripts for analysis.⁴⁴² These include: Minoan writing, in all its forms; the multiple Cypro-Minoan scripts of Cyprus; Luwian Hieroglyphics from Anatolia; Proto-Canaanite and its descendants, the alphabetic scripts of Greece, Etruria, and Rome; and a final offshoot of that family, Germanic runes, to demonstrate the diachronic applicability of the model.

It will be found that secondary script development does not, as a rule, occur for reasons of administration, but rather out of concerns for prestige and elite self-representation. As such, it will be argued that Linear B, if it had been invented prior to LM II, would not have emerged fully formed as such a sophisticated administrative tool in its first attestation. Therefore, Linear B does not represent a generic case of secondary script development, which is always optional, but rather a forced response to the problem of administering a Minoan palatial territory. As

⁴⁴¹ The term development is used in lieu of invention based on de Voogt's (2011, 2) observation that "if the idea of writing is already present, it is better to speak of borrowing and innovation processes."

⁴⁴² Because of the complexities of its transmission, which often included adoption and adaption, the various forms of cuneiform will not be surveyed.

Linear B has never been assessed along such lines before, this provides a strong new argument to locate its development at LM II Knossos.

2.1: The Minoan Scripts

Linear A and Cretan Hieroglyphic, the earlier scripts of Minoan Crete, might be thought to provide the best comparanda for Linear B.⁴⁴³ Any attempt to use them as such, however, is vigorously retarded by the fact that their origins are wholly unclear. While the traditional view is that the Cretan Hieroglyphics were influenced by Egyptian writing (hence the name), this view has come under increased scrutiny in recent years.⁴⁴⁴ Indeed, differences at the structural level preclude the possibility of the borrowing of anything except the broad idea of writing.⁴⁴⁵ The notion that the idea must have been borrowed, a legacy of monogenetic theories of script development, leads to generic statements of “undoubted” influence: “Without doubt, the Minoans at the beginning of the second millennium did not ‘re-invent’ writing independently.”⁴⁴⁶ Recent studies have, however, stressed the organic nature of the development of writing on Crete. The so-called Archanes Script (EM III – MM I), the earliest form of writing on the island, is closely linked to the earlier Minoan glyptic tradition.⁴⁴⁷ This script has features both of Cretan Hieroglyphic and Linear A, and so may represent a common ancestor of both.⁴⁴⁸ Colin Renfrew seems to have been ahead of his time when he suggested that writing on Crete could well

⁴⁴³ The term Cretan Hieroglyphic is here maintained, for conventional purposes, despite the fact that it seems to be a syllabic script, unlike Egyptian Hieroglyphics.

⁴⁴⁴ Ferrara (2015, 41-2) provides an overview of the history of this view.

⁴⁴⁵ Ferrara 2015, 42.

⁴⁴⁶ Olivier 1986, 378.

⁴⁴⁷ Glyptic traditions: Ferrara 2015 (*passim* but especially 43) and Whittaker 2013, 115-6

⁴⁴⁸ Schoep 1999, 266.

have been an indigenous invention.⁴⁴⁹ This idea has moreover been raised in recent grammatological scholarship, as has the plausibility of more independent inventions of writing than first thought.⁴⁵⁰

Other evidence also speaks to the (relative) independence of the invention of writing on Crete. There is significant debate as to whether the Archanes Script represents writing *stricto sensu* or else non-phonetic semasiography. The possibility that this does represent only semi-writing would suggest indigenous development: “if the idea of writing is known... the script signs and values are borrowed or invented, and the entire writing system is created relatively sudden.”⁴⁵¹ This does not match the apparent situation on Crete, with the long gestation of its writing systems in earlier glyptic.⁴⁵² With only the limited examples of an undeciphered script available to guide the discussion, no conclusive answer is possible.⁴⁵³ But even if this *is* secondary script development, it is of a type quite unlike any of the others here surveyed, and does not represent a useful comparandum.

2.2: The Cypro-Minoan Scripts

Some hundred years prior to the development of Linear B, its sibling was born on Cyprus.⁴⁵⁴ This is conventionally called Cypro-Minoan, a name which has not

⁴⁴⁹ Renfrew 1977, 411-4.

⁴⁵⁰ Assuming, as seems necessary, that the cryptic reference to the invention of Linear B as primary script development by de Voogt (2011, 4) was a mistaken reference to Linear A. For the trend against monogeneticism, see Senner 1989b, 2.

⁴⁵¹ de Voogt 2011, 2.

⁴⁵² *cf.* Palaima 1990, 86.

⁴⁵³ Ferrara 2015, 32.

⁴⁵⁴ The earliest extant attestations are dated to the Late Cypriot IA-B period, early 16th to late 15th centuries BC in absolute terms (Duhoux 2013, 29). If a Linear A filiation is posited, it must be rather closer to the beginning than the end of this range; see further *infra*.

escaped the general tendency in studies of Aegean prehistory to proscribe any and all terms coined by Arthur Evans.⁴⁵⁵ Cypro-Minoan will here be maintained, though it should not be understood to preclude the possibility of influence from areas other than Crete and Cyprus.⁴⁵⁶ Though frustratingly little can be said about this script for certain, as it too remains undeciphered, it has been the subject of much recent scholarship which provides a valuable basis for further discussion.⁴⁵⁷

A matter of some context is required here. The script is commonly divided into three separate corpora – Cypro-Minoan 1 (CM1), Cypro-Minoan 2 (CM2), and Cypro-Minoan 3 (CM3).⁴⁵⁸ To these can be added a fourth, archaic Cypro-Minoan or Cypro-Minoan 0 (CM0).⁴⁵⁹ The relationship between the four is complex and not entirely clear, though CM0 and CM3 can be accounted for with the greatest ease. CM3 encompasses all the Cypro-Minoan inscriptions found at Ugarit, which is to say it is distinguished by external rather than internal evidence.⁴⁶⁰ The oddities in CM3 can thus be ascribed to geographical isolation and the possible recording of a different language.⁴⁶¹ CM0 is the earliest form of the script attested, in Late Cypriot (LC) IB (c. 1500 BC), and apparently anomalous for this very reason: the sole tablet on which it is attested demonstrates greater affiliations with Linear A than any other

⁴⁵⁵ See, for example, Sherratt 2013, 15 (an appeal too long to quote in full, and too fulsome to abbreviate). An overview of some modern views is given by Steele (2013b, 4-5).

⁴⁵⁶ i.e. Anatolia (Sherratt 2013).

⁴⁵⁷ Steele 2013a compiles significant studies on all aspects of the script and thus forms an invaluable starting point, and Ferrara 2012a and 2012b present a full corpus with discussion.

⁴⁵⁸ Duhoux 2013.

⁴⁵⁹ Duhoux 2009, 5-6.

⁴⁶⁰ Olivier 2013, 11. Some try to distinguish this palaeographically, and call some of the inscriptions from Ugarit CM1 and some CM3 (thus Ferrara 2013, 57), but Olivier (2013, 11) despairs of the possibility of making such distinctions.

⁴⁶¹ Ferrara 2013, 58.

item in the Cypro-Minoan corpus.⁴⁶² It is difficult to tell whether this should represent an earlier stage of CM1 or an abandoned alternate tradition.⁴⁶³ It is certain, however, that CM0 played some role in the development of CM1. The latter did not appear until LC II, a period roughly contemporary with LM II-III A.⁴⁶⁴ This is after the disappearance of Linear A, and CM1 cannot have been influenced by Linear A except through CM0.⁴⁶⁵ No sign of Linear A descent appears in CM2 or CM3 that was not in CM1, and so also CM0.⁴⁶⁶

The relationship of CM1 to CM2 is more complex: the former is the most widespread form of the script, while the latter is attested only on three tablets from Enkomi.⁴⁶⁷ While it is possible that CM2 truly represents a different script, and so another case of secondary script development, there is too much uncertainty present (and, with only three tablets, too little evidence) to pursue this avenue of thought.⁴⁶⁸ So long as the script remains undeciphered, and the relationship between the various forms murky, a study of the script's origins must limit itself to CM0 and CM1.

⁴⁶² Duhoux 2009, 6 and n. 10. The extent of the Linear A affiliations is debated, but still clear enough: even the most negative assessment identifies 11 of the 20/21 CM0 signs as derivative from Linear A – the most positive, 18 (Duhoux 2009, 30-1 and nn. 112 and 114).

⁴⁶³ Ferrara 2013, 57. *cf.* further discussion *infra*.

⁴⁶⁴ Ferrara 2012a, 8 (Table 1.1) for relative dates.

⁴⁶⁵ See *infra* for the influence of Linear A on Cypro-Minoan. While not all of the Cypro-Minoan signs of clear Linear A descent are attested in CM0, this must be dependent simply on the corpus of CM0 (22 or 23 signs; *cf.* Duhoux 2009, 14-22) not representing the entire writing system.

⁴⁶⁶ *cf.* Steele 2013c, 24, Table 2.

⁴⁶⁷ Olivier 2013, 31.

⁴⁶⁸ The validity of the division of the script has increasingly come into question since Palaima 1989. While Ferrara 2012a argued that the dissolution of the tripartite division was “a compelling consequence deriving from a contextual study of the script and its inscriptions,” Olivier 2013 continues to argue for its validity. The question must remain open until further palaeographic studies are undertaken, or, more helpfully, more inscriptions are unearthed.

Despite the recent attempt by Susan Sherratt to point at inspiration from elsewhere than Crete, nothing had so great an influence on the invention of Cypro-Minoan as Linear A.⁴⁶⁹ While comprising only a relatively small portion of the corpus, those signs which have the same shape and phonemic value in Linear B and the classical Cypriot syllabary, descended from Cypro-Minoan, provide convincing evidence for a shared ancestor.⁴⁷⁰ As Linear B is unattested on Cyprus, these similarities cannot be the result of later contact.⁴⁷¹ The alternative, that Cypro-Minoan and Linear A are rather descended from a common ancestor, is passingly improbable in light of the apparent indigenous development of writing on Crete.⁴⁷² Sherratt's argument that the absence of logograms in Cypro-Minoan complicates the relationship with Linear A cannot stand.⁴⁷³ Simplification is a regular result of secondary script development: "In the development of a new writing system where the idea of writing is already present, the signs, the value of the signs and the resulting system of writing are borrowed in degrees."⁴⁷⁴ Indeed, such simplification seems to have been a goal in the development of Cypro-Minoan, as the script seems to eschew many other scriptural complications of Linear A.⁴⁷⁵

The lack of frequent contact between Crete and Cyprus in the 16th century BC can therefore complicate the picture, but not dismiss the argument.⁴⁷⁶ Necessarily, some form of contact between the two islands led someone with knowledge of Linear A

⁴⁶⁹ Even she (Sherratt 2013, 101) admits that "[Cypro-Minoan] and Linear A and its successor Linear B are very probably related in some way."

⁴⁷⁰ See Steele 2013c, 50-1 and Table 5. Linear B is unattested on Cyprus, so it is difficult at best to attempt to account for these similarities through later contact. Steele 2013c, 72-3 and n. 170.

⁴⁷¹ Steele 2013c, 72-3 and n. 170.

⁴⁷² See relevant discussion *supra*.

⁴⁷³ Sherratt 2013, 82, n. 6.

⁴⁷⁴ de Voogt 2011, 3. Simplification of the model script is also amply visible in the development of Proto-Sinaitic from Egyptian Hieroglyphics; *cf. supra*.

⁴⁷⁵ Ferrara (forthcoming).

⁴⁷⁶ Sherratt 2013, 83.

and the language of Cypro-Minoan to create a new script.⁴⁷⁷ Other influences are not impossible, but they must be in addition to, not in lieu of, this.⁴⁷⁸ Nor was Cypro-Minoan the result of some ill-defined Minoanisation – if this had been the case, Linear A would be expected, as in the Cyclades, not an entirely new script.⁴⁷⁹ Later, when the Cypriots were utilising Akkadian cuneiform for communication with their neighbours, and in the multi-lingual context of Ugarit, the distinctive form and resiliency of Cypro-Minoan suggests a close link between the script and “a burgeoning and progressively expanding... Cypriot culture.”⁴⁸⁰

That this was a goal from the inception of the script is likely. Its first attestation is the cryptic CM0 tablet fragment from Enkomi.⁴⁸¹ It is here, as aforementioned, that the Linear A influences are the strongest, though it has two signs on the side, a phenomenon which has its best parallels in the cuneiform tradition.⁴⁸² This, at the very least, suggests active adaption rather than passive adoption.⁴⁸³ This is perhaps further borne out by the contents of the inscription. Unlike Linear A, a language limited on tablets to administration and replete with ideograms and numerals, neither of these is featured on the CM0 tablet.⁴⁸⁴ While this does not wholly preclude

⁴⁷⁷ The context in which this may have occurred is discussed briefly but cogently at Palaima 2005, 35-6.

⁴⁷⁸ For a discussion of the possibilities, see Steele 2013c, 50, though the suggestion of a shared ancestor is, as mentioned, problematic.

⁴⁷⁹ This is the central argument of Sherratt 2013.

⁴⁸⁰ Ferrara 2012a, 62-3.

⁴⁸¹ Duhoux 2009.

⁴⁸² Duhoux 2009, 25-6.

⁴⁸³ This would hold even if Palaima's (1989, 138-9) argument that the entire signary is derived from Linear A should prove true.

⁴⁸⁴ Duhoux 2009, 13.

an administrative purpose, it opens up the possibility that writing was used for another purpose.⁴⁸⁵

An examination of the context of the writing reveals little more. The tablet was found in a building called the Fortress, which was linked to the Cypriot copper trade, and from this Silvia Ferrara and others have argued that it must be linked to that industry.⁴⁸⁶ However, the tablet was found in fill between walls, and so it is in the Fortress only because of secondary deposition; its original context is lost.⁴⁸⁷ The writing on the side, while likely designed for some sort of indexing, need not indicate a financial record, but simply that someone wanted to be able to find the tablet again. That the sequence on the side is also present at the end of the tablet's first line strongly suggests that it has been sorted by keyword, which could, but need not, be economic.⁴⁸⁸ It is moreover a purely Aegean phenomenon that tablets should be used exclusively for record keeping; in the Near East, letters, histories and literature were all considered appropriate for that medium.⁴⁸⁹ The evidence here is, unfortunately, insufficient to make any statement at all conclusive.

While CM1 must be descended from CM0, the absence of over half of the attested CM0 signs in CM1 suggests a radical difference between the two scripts.⁴⁹⁰ At some stage anterior to the first attestation of CM1, the old CM0 script was adapted, with

⁴⁸⁵ The tablet is fragmentary, and there is one parallel in Linear A (and more in Linear B) for lengthy prolegomena to accounting documents (Palaima 1989, 140 and n. 34).

⁴⁸⁶ Ferrara 2012a, 61-3, though she is more circumspect in Ferrara (forthcoming).

⁴⁸⁷ Duhoux 2009, 7-8.

⁴⁸⁸ Duhoux 2009, 25.

⁴⁸⁹ Duhoux 2009, 22.

⁴⁹⁰ Duhoux 2013, 30.

either new signs developed, or old ones dropped.⁴⁹¹ While little can be said about why CM0 was developed, the CM1 corpus is much more extensive, and revealing. While further CM0 evidence, or an (improbable) interpretation might change the picture, viewing CM1 as another case of secondary script development is the most cogent reading of the evidence as it is.

CM1 is first found on two gold signet rings from Tomb II at Kalavassos.⁴⁹² It has been suggested that writing, therefore, emerged as a “marker of the local elite prestige paraphernalia.”⁴⁹³ This is consistent with other LC II attestations of writing, such as cylinder seals.⁴⁹⁴ It is also a striking fact that CM1 has yet to be found on a tablet.⁴⁹⁵ Nor is it likely that economic records were kept on perishable materials, as this would go against both Aegean and Near-Eastern models.⁴⁹⁶ It seems, at this point, that writing on Cyprus was a political tool of the emergent elite in a time of great social and political development.⁴⁹⁷ A desire for nationalistic self-representation therefore undoubtedly played a role. While it remains impossible to rule out an administrative purpose for the CM0 tablet, CM1 was developed with an eye for the prestigious. An administrative purpose was not manifest until much later.⁴⁹⁸ While Ferrara has suggested that this was in response to other uses, a

⁴⁹¹ Either is possible, as we do not have the entire CM0 corpus (*cf. supra*). This may have been to record a different language; as with Crete, it is unclear if there was one or more languages spoken on Bronze Age Cyprus (Steele 2013c, 5)

⁴⁹² Ferrara 2012a, 67.

⁴⁹³ Ferrara 2012a, 67.

⁴⁹⁴ Ferrara 2012a, 69.

⁴⁹⁵ Olivier 2013, 12, though his list includes the CM0 tablet.

⁴⁹⁶ Ferrara (forthcoming).

⁴⁹⁷ Ferrara 2012a, 71.

⁴⁹⁸ The clay boule, which came into use at the boundary of LC II and III, was possibly linked to production processes (Ferrara [forthcoming]), and the tablet format returned with CM2, but this was not until the late 12th century BC (Olivier 2013, 13). Though neither of these is self-evidently economic or administrative, they are at least possibly linked to that sphere.

deliberate redefinition of what writing could be, it seems just as likely that elite, onomastic and prestigious uses of writing have a universal appeal.⁴⁹⁹

2.3: Luwian Hieroglyphics

Luwian Hieroglyphics first appear on Hittite seals of the 16th century BC.⁵⁰⁰ There are two significant possible explanations for their development. The first is nationalistic: it was “by the Luwians, in Luwian lands, for the Luwians.”⁵⁰¹ This suggests western Anatolia, which is doubly auspicious: firstly, the differences from cuneiform (right down to the basic lexical unit) are explained by geographic isolation from the territories it dominated, and Miletus allows for a point of contact with the Minoans, as Cretan Hieroglyphics are often posited as an influence.⁵⁰² Much like Linear B, and so likely also the earlier scripts of Crete, Luwian Hieroglyphics are consonantal, with a CV structure. This differs not only from cuneiform, the signs of which can take the form CV, VC, or CVC, but also Egyptian Hieroglyphics, which notate only consonants. In this case, their earliest use is on personal seals, naturally prestigious.⁵⁰³ To this might also be added a dedicatory inscription on a silver bowl in Ankara.⁵⁰⁴ This would represent the earliest attestation of a complete sentence in the script, but is problematic on the basis of current evidence because it significantly antedates all other inscriptions of similar elaboration.

⁴⁹⁹ Ferrara (forthcoming).

⁵⁰⁰ Melchert 1996, 120.

⁵⁰¹ Güterbock 1956, 518: “von den Luwiern, für das Luwische, in Luwischen Landen.”

⁵⁰² Hawkins (2003, 168-9) is among the latest to suggest influence from Cretan Hieroglyphics, based not only on external similarity of form, but also of structure (*cf. infra*).

⁵⁰³ Melchert 1996, 120.

⁵⁰⁴ Though this is controversial; for a recent overview of the issue, see Giusfredi 2013, 667 and *passim*.

The issue here, however, may be with the evidence, as it seems likely that Luwian Heiroglyphics were also written on wood.⁵⁰⁵ In this case, the chronology also aligns: in certain Middle Hittite texts with a connection to Luwian Kizzuwatna, foreign influence is visible in elements of the language (such as word order) but not in the ductus; “this inconsistency would be solved if these original Kizzuwatna texts were in fact written down in the Luwian language in [Luwian Heiroglyphics].”⁵⁰⁶ The transition from Old to Middle Hittite is now dated to the reign of Tudhaliyas I/II, who may in fact be named on the Ankara bowl.⁵⁰⁷ Extended writing in Luwian Heiroglyphics might, therefore, not be so problematic chronologically around 1400 BC as had been previously thought. It would also suggest that the early seals bearing Luwian Heiroglyphics represent true writing, and not ideographic “semi-writing” as is sometimes posited.⁵⁰⁸ It is hoped that the developing understanding of western Anatolia in the 2nd Millennium BC may shed further light on this question, perhaps with additional finds.⁵⁰⁹ At any rate, the script was first used for prestigious self-identification in the form of seals, and perhaps also dedicatory inscriptions; if it was put to administrative ends, this use developed only later.⁵¹⁰

The second theory is more problematic, but has received recent attention, and so bears consideration. The argument, as espoused by Ilya Yakubovich, is that Luwian Heiroglyphics were developed as a full script only at the beginning of the 14th century BC in Hattusa.⁵¹¹ In this view, nationalistic concerns led the Hittites to develop an ornamental (and monumental) system of writing out of the existing

⁵⁰⁵ Most recently Waal 2011.

⁵⁰⁶ Waal 2011, 26.

⁵⁰⁷ van den Hout 2009, 34.

⁵⁰⁸ Hawkins 2003, 167.

⁵⁰⁹ cf. Roosevelt and Luke 2017.

⁵¹⁰ The Middle Hittite texts that show apparent Luwian influence are all religious, not administrative. Waal 2011, 26.

⁵¹¹ Yakubovich 2010, 295.

symbols that decorated their seals free of the polyglot ambiguity of cuneiform.⁵¹²

This assumes that earlier attestations were not writing *stricto sensu*, and requires that all writing on wooden boards have been done in cuneiform.⁵¹³ This would also support the suggested later date for the Ankara inscribed bowl.⁵¹⁴ While some of Yakubovich's assertions are problematic (their links to the Luwian language are stronger than he allows), there is too little certainty in the overall evidence for this suggestion to be discarded out of hand.⁵¹⁵

In this case, secondary script development was not impeded by the existence of an existing administrative script, but contingent on an expression of nationalism.⁵¹⁶ This desire for elite representation through writing has strong parallels with the situation on Cyprus, with an eye for the exploitation of writing's prestigious aspects. The invention of a new script in a multilingual capital also bears illuminating similarities with LM II Knossos, where the invention of Linear B (rather than the adoption of Linear A) likely illustrates similar nationalistic concerns.⁵¹⁷ However, Linear B was not exploited for monumental and elite purposes in the way Luwian Hieroglyphics were; no value was ascribed to them beyond the purely administrative. Ferrara, following Yakubovich's interpretation, has interpreted Luwian Hieroglyphics as "a determining element in the unifying process of a people in the process of expanding into a centralised entity."⁵¹⁸ That Linear B might have been exploited to the same purposes seemingly escaped the Mycenaeans at Knossos.

⁵¹² Yakubovich 2010, 296-7.

⁵¹³ Yakubovich 2008, 297.

⁵¹⁴ cf. Giusfredi 2013.

⁵¹⁵ See Rietveld and Woudhuizen 2009 (esp. 231-2) for a review of his work generally unfavourable to his conclusion.

⁵¹⁶ Yakubovich 2010, 295.

⁵¹⁷ cf. discussion *supra*.

⁵¹⁸ Ferrara (forthcoming).

2.4: Proto-Canaanite

Proto-Canaanite, the first formal ancestor of the Latin alphabet, was developed in the Levantine littoral during the 18th century BC.⁵¹⁹ This script was created in a context of heavy cultural interaction; the range of scripts attested at Ugarit alone is almost comprehensive of those in use during the period.⁵²⁰ Ultimately, it was the Egyptian Hieroglyphics that gave Proto-Canaanite its external form, though the structural simplification may find its inspiration elsewhere.⁵²¹ While it remained an abjad, notating only consonants, the complex double and triple signs of Egyptian Hieroglyphics were abandoned, as were determinatives, greatly reducing the size of the signary and significantly simplifying writing. It was by this original, consonantal script, that all the ‘alphabetic scripts’ (truly abjads) of this period were inspired.⁵²² The earliest attestations of Proto-Canaanite are all religious or prestigious: names inscribed on vases and other small items like daggers.⁵²³ Until the end of the Bronze Age, this script was never used for any other purpose; administration in the Levant was the province of cuneiform and Egyptian hieratic.⁵²⁴ Here, then, is another case of a script that could not have possibly been invented as

⁵¹⁹ Cross 1989, 5. There is a great deal of variation in the terminology, with Canaanite and Semitic seemingly used interchangeably (compare, for example, Cross 1989 and Powell 2009). There is also debate as to whether it ought to be called the alphabet at this stage, since it did not notate vowels and is so strictly an abjad; for an overview of the (surprisingly political) issue, see O’Connor 1996, 88.

⁵²⁰ At Ugarit, Sumerian, Akkadian, Hittite and Hurrian cuneiform, Luwian Hieroglyphics, Egyptian Hieroglyphics, Cypro-Minoan, and the Ugaritic “cuneiform alphabet” are all attested (Sanders 2008, 99, n. 3).

⁵²¹ Powell 2009, 185; he suggests potential Aegean influence in the creation of a “self-contained phonetic repertory,” though as these scripts were all syllabic rather than consonantal, if there was inspiration it must have been rather abstract.

⁵²² Cross 1989, 80-4.

⁵²³ Sparks 2013, 76-7. To this may potentially be added the Proto-Sinaitic inscriptions, thought to be religious, but hitherto undeciphered (Powell 2009, 178-81).

⁵²⁴ See the useful overview in Sparks 2013, Table 3, 99.

an administrative tool. The case is potentially problematised by the presence of scripts used for those purposes, and so Proto-Canaanite was never required in service of those goals. Telling, however, is the mere fact of its development in such an environment. The evidence of Proto-Canaanite further demonstrates that no economic nor administrative purpose need be seen to necessitate secondary script development; it is a voluntary, prestigious process.

2.5: The Greek Alphabet

The earliest attestations of the Greek true alphabet are inscribed on pottery, and record little practical information. The very earliest is found not in Greece but Italy, at Latin Gabii in an early eighth century BC context.⁵²⁵ The meaning of the inscription is obscure, but it may perhaps be interpreted as a name.⁵²⁶ Other early inscriptions are clearer: hexameter verse is recorded on an oinochoe from the Dipylon cemetery at Athens (mid-late eighth century BC) and the so-called Cup of Nestor from Pitheculasae.⁵²⁷ Among other early inscriptions, no group is larger than that which represents the “marking of personal property, of men or of deities.”⁵²⁸ Beyond this, only epitaphs and draughtsmen’s signatures, in addition to the already mentioned hexameter inscriptions, are attested; the chance to demonstrate the ability to write seems to have been a significant motivating factor.⁵²⁹ Not until the mid-late

⁵²⁵ Powell 2009, 236.

⁵²⁶ Powell 2009, 236,

⁵²⁷ Voutiras 2007, 273.

⁵²⁸ Jeffery 1961, 62. Powell’s (1989) more recent catalogue shows that recent finds have not changed the picture: of the 45 of 53 total inscriptions that have a restorable sense (excluding the undateable rock inscriptions from Thera), 33 bear personal names and 11 are metrical. None is commercial.

⁵²⁹ Harris 1989, 46-7.

seventh century BC did the Greeks turn to writing to record their laws, nor until the sixth lists of local notables: ἄρχοντες, priests, and athletic victors.⁵³⁰

Despite the protestations of Semiticist palaeographers, it the Greek alphabet was likely invented only slightly anterior to these earliest finds.⁵³¹ Their argument is based largely on letter forms and the various directions of writing in early Greek.⁵³² Directional experimentation of this sort, however, seems to be a common feature of early-stage literacy.⁵³³ Recent finds have also indicated that the palaeography of the Semitic script in this period is complex, with some inscriptions featuring (from internal evidence) clearly archaising letter forms.⁵³⁴ The presence of a bowl bearing Semitic inscription in a tomb at Knossos from the early ninth century BC strongly suggests that this must be prior to the invention of the Greek alphabet.⁵³⁵ It is furthermore, as Powell notes, difficult to posit too many years between the invention of writing and its first extant attestation, given the increasing frequency with which inscriptions appear in the following decades.⁵³⁶ It is further doubly unlikely that its earliest adopters should fail to make use of one of the most commonly available media, pottery, prior to the eighth century, but then make great use of it afterwards.⁵³⁷ The mid to late ninth century seems the most likely date for its invention.⁵³⁸

⁵³⁰ Jeffery 1961, 61.

⁵³¹ They would date its development as early as 1100 BC; see Swiggers 1996, 267-8 for a brief overview of the dispute.

⁵³² The argument is well espoused in Naveh 1973.

⁵³³ For the natural development of boustrophedon and the constrained nature of inscribing an awkwardly shaped vase or votive, see Jeffery 1961, 46-7. Cf. also the discussion of runes *infra*.

⁵³⁴ Amadasi Guzzo 1991, 300-1 and *passim*.

⁵³⁵ Vokotopoulos 2007, 261.

⁵³⁶ Powell 2009, 240.

⁵³⁷ Hall 2014, 58.

⁵³⁸ Woodard 2010, 44. The Fayum copper plates, now published in Woodard 2014, bear noting here. They feature abecedaria, which, on palaeographic evidence, date

A matter of terminology bears mentioning here. The Greek alphabet was not, as is commonly asserted, transmitted to the Greeks.⁵³⁹ This is a true case of secondary script development. Resemblances between the Greek and Semitic systems stop at the aesthetic; structurally the two are entirely distinct. The Semitic abjad recorded only consonants – fine for a language heavy in them, but incapable at a structural level of recording Greek with its wealth of vowels.⁵⁴⁰ A syllabary would do, as the Cypriots and Mycenaeans had proved, but the Greek inventor despaired of developing such a system: to mark the 16 consonants he could borrow and the five invented vowels, he would require 85 signs from an exemplar of 20; if he wished to mark vowels for length, 170. His solution was a deconstructed syllabary, with consonants marked but reliant on bordering vowels for vocalisation, which allowed for easy expression of all permutations of consonant and vowel clusters – all by adding only one letter.⁵⁴¹ The impact of this development is often overstated, but on

to the late 9th or early eighth century BC. If they represent the Greek alphabet, as Woodard believes, then these become its earliest attested form (the Fayum, though their findspot, is highly unlikely to be their site of manufacture). However, this is not a clear-cut conclusion: they lack any of the so-called “supplemental letters” of the Greek alphabet which distinguish it from the Semitic, and, most damningly, end at *tau* – before *upsilon*. Powell (2009, 231-5), logically views the development of the vowel *upsilon* from Semitic *wau* as a key development in the invention of the Greek true alphabet, with its full notation of vowels. That these plates must needs therefore depict the *Semitic* alphabet is a conclusion he draws, bluntly and regularly, in his review of Woodard’s work (Powell 2015). As the debate is on-going, and adds little clear evidence to the present argument, the evidence of the plates is here discounted.

⁵³⁹ Powell 1991, 357-8.

⁵⁴⁰ As already noted in Carpenter 1938 (67), the letter “v” could equally represent a particle (ἄν), a preposition (ἐν), a finite verb (ἦν), and a relative pronoun (ὅν), among others. Poetry is even worse: even with word divisions, the first line of the *Iliad* descends into meaninglessness without vowels: ΜΝΝ·Δ·Τ·ΠΙΔ·ΚΛΣ (so Powell 2009, 241; κ for χ as the aspirated form is a later innovation). Μῆνιν may be guessed from ΜΝΝ, but Δ confounds the ability of even the most creative reader to reconstruct the original ἄειδε. English, poorer in vowels, does not present the same problem.

⁵⁴¹ Building off Powell 2009, 231-5.

purely grammatogenic terms, it is as radical a development as the Proto-Canaanite simplification of the Egyptian Hieroglyphic system.

From this evidence, it seems clear that from Voutiras' list of possible purposes for the first alphabetic writing in Greece – “marking or protection of ownership of an object, the keeping of accounts and archives, exchanges of messages and the recordings of various kinds of texts, especially poetic ones” – it is only the first and last which are actually represented.⁵⁴² It is a commonly noted “surprising” feature of the Greek alphabet that it is not put to economic purposes until well after it was developed.⁵⁴³ In light of this, while it continues to be suggested that it was invented for a “utilitarian end,” this seems to swim strongly against the current of the evidence.⁵⁴⁴ That this is merely an *argumentum ex silentio*, based on the failure of accounting documents on perishable materials to survive, is a worthy argument. While the Greek word δέλτος, writing tablet, is a Semitic loan, it does not follow that it must have been borrowed at the same time as the alphabet.⁵⁴⁵ Rather, when the Greeks applied the alphabet to the mercantile sphere which required and made use of the δέλτος, then the word entered the language. This adaptation need not be inferred to have been concomitant with the development of the alphabet, a conclusion supported by the synonym πίναξ, which, with its probable pre-Greek roots, is likely to indicate the original term used for writing tablets.⁵⁴⁶ Further

⁵⁴² Voutiras 2007, 274-5.

⁵⁴³ See, *inter alii*, Powell 2009, 240; Johnston 1983, 67; and Hall 2014, 58-9.

⁵⁴⁴ See, recently, Woodard 2010, 43.

⁵⁴⁵ As suggested by Teodorsson (2006, 170 n. 20), though here he wrongly conflates it with the synonym πίναξ (see below). The Semitic origin of δέλτος is accepted by both Beekes (2010, 313) and Chaintraine (2009, 249-50).

⁵⁴⁶ Pre-Greek origin: Beekes 2010, 1193). Πίναξ is also the first of the two attested with the meaning “writing tablet,” at Hom. *Il.* 6.169 and Aesch. *Supp.* 946 (LSJ⁹ πίναξ A.1); δέλτος has a similar meaning in Aesch. *fr.* 281a.21 R (LSJ⁹ δέλτος I), but is not unambiguously a writing tablet until Soph. *Trach.* 683 and Herodotus (LSJ⁹ δέλτος A).

evidence for this may be espoused by the evidence of Semitic inscriptions found in Greece during this period, such as the Knossos bowl: these are all elite objects, inscribed with dedications.⁵⁴⁷ It is therefore possible that writing was introduced, not by merchants, but in the context of elite interaction.⁵⁴⁸ This would account both for the nature of the earliest inscriptions and also the apparent lag in the adaptation of Semitic accounting terminology (such as δέλτος).

If the earliest Greek writing was on a perishable medium – leather, papyrus, or wooden πίνακες – and now lost, it is difficult to argue that it must have represented writing of a completely different sort to that which has survived.⁵⁴⁹ Linking it explicitly with trade, administration, or the keeping of accounts contradicts directly what evidence exists. The prestigious, onomastic factor visible in its first ancestor, Proto-Sinaitic, and other scripts of the Bronze Age, exerts the greatest claim. This might be granted more weight than the theory that it was adapted for the recording of verse as it is *prima facie* more likely that simpler inscriptions preceded more complex ones, though this phenomenon certainly manifested itself very early.⁵⁵⁰

⁵⁴⁷ Bisi 1991, 279-80. The Knossos bowl may bear either a dedication or an anthroponym (Bisi 1989, 279, n. 14).

⁵⁴⁸ Bisi (1991, 279-80) doubts that such elite items could have been responsible due to their scarcity and lack of mobility, but it is certainly clear that they belong to the same elite sphere as the earliest Greek inscriptions.

⁵⁴⁹ Wooden πίνακες do seem to be the most likely – papyrus was probably known, and leather was certainly used, but both of these are much more expensive in comparison (Jeffery 1961, 50-8).

⁵⁵⁰ See most recently Powell 2009, 240-2, for the argument that it was Homer's verse especially that the Greeks sought to record. While there are problems with this argument – the works of Homer seem only to have been written in the later, developed Ionic alphabet (Voutiras 2007, 274) – multiple early inscriptions *are* written in hexameter verse.

2.6: The Etruscan Alphabet

The Etruscans adapted the alphabet from their southern Greek neighbours at the beginning of the seventh century BC, not long after it arrived in Italy.⁵⁵¹ This was a “voluntary and conscious” act, borrowing the form of its model but adjusting the phonemic values of various signs to better align with Etruscan linguistics.⁵⁵²

Motivation can only be restored from the evidence of the earliest attestations of the script. From these, it is evident that the prestigious aspects of writing, exploited in Pithecusae, played a significant role: of the 76 inscriptions Dominique Briquel catalogued from the seventh century BC, 40 are possessive and 27 gift-giving formulae.⁵⁵³ The parallels with Greek practice can be traced right down to the syntactical level: so-called “speaking inscriptions,” as seen on the Cup of Nestor (Νέστορος εἶμι = I am Nestor’s), are common.⁵⁵⁴ This level of specificity indicates a borrowing through routes not economic but elite, made possible by high level interactions between Greeks and Etruscans even to the level of bilingualism.⁵⁵⁵

The Etruscans made extensive use of writing, using it to augment social relationships through elite gift exchange. The two no doubt came together through the onomastic feature of writing: a man may forget from whom he received a gift, but not if the gift itself bears the name of the giver. While it is not economic, this does represent a practical aspect of writing, participating as it does in a significant cultural practice. Here is perhaps the best evidence that writing need not spread as a utilitarian tool through the mercantile class, but can rather represent an elite

⁵⁵¹ Wallace 2015, 308-9.

⁵⁵² Briquel 1991, 617 (“volontaire et conscient”).

⁵⁵³ Briquel 1991, 620.

⁵⁵⁴ Briquel 1991, 620-1. Other examples from Pithecusae are listed at Powell 1989, 324.

⁵⁵⁵ While parallel development of speaking inscriptions may be posited, bilingualism is at any rate necessitated by the Etruscan alphabet *ipso facto*.

technology. Even when it spread to the more utilitarian sphere, it maintained a prestigious role, as demonstrated by the seventh century ivory writing tablet from Marsiliana d'Albegna.⁵⁵⁶ More widespread use of wooden writing tablets is not attested until the 6th century BC, at which point purposes must be more mundane.⁵⁵⁷

2.7: The Latin Alphabet

The Etruscans exerted massive cultural influence on their neighbours in Latium from an early date, right down to the linguistic level.⁵⁵⁸ In this context of cultural and linguistic interaction, the Etruscan alphabet was adapted to the Latin language.⁵⁵⁹ This was almost certainly done under Greek influence: the “dead” consonants in the Etruscan alphabet were restored to their original Greek values.⁵⁶⁰ The earliest Latin inscriptions, dating from the end of the seventh century BC, demonstrate great similarity to early Etruscan inscriptions: the *fibula praenestina*, a gold fibula from Praeneste, bears an obvious gift-giving inscription, indicating both maker (more likely giver) and receiver.⁵⁶¹ Other items, such as a silver bowl bearing the name

⁵⁵⁶ Cornell 1991, 23.

⁵⁵⁷ Cornell 1991, 23-4.

⁵⁵⁸ Elements of the Roman counting system (the subtractive indication of 18 and 19 as *duodeviginti* and *unumdeviginti* respectively, and perhaps even the construction of *res publica*) are Etruscan calques (Adams 2003, 164).

⁵⁵⁹ This, rather adaptation from the Greek model, is necessitated by various features (Wallace 2011, 9-12).

⁵⁶⁰ These were preserved in Etruscan abecedaria, but never used. That their values could have been restored from their names is possible, but why and how a language which did not utilise their phonemes would preserve names utilising those phonemes is not immediately clear. The Latin alphabet, moreover, does not preserve the Greek letter names; the antiquity of the Latin names is unknown, but scripts are so conservative that it is not impossible that they date back to its invention. Cf. Adams 2003, 41-2.

⁵⁶¹ A century of controversy surrounds this item, but its authenticity is now accepted (Franchi de Bellis 2011, 215 and *passim*).

Vetusia (cf. Livy 3.8.2 *Vetusius*) further indicate the prestigious context of early writing in Latin.⁵⁶²

There is significant evidence of horizontal social mobility between Italian elites of this period, including between Etruscans and Latins.⁵⁶³ The transfer of writing should be seen as a reflex of this phenomenon.⁵⁶⁴ Through elite interactions in a trilingual sphere, the Latins co-opted the technique of writing as a cultural tool to be exploited at the highest level of society. This was not, in practice, entirely derivative: the formulae of possession in Latin are more elaborate than the simple speaking inscriptions of Greek and Etruscan vases.⁵⁶⁵ However, this arises from a similar cultural impulse and a desire to conduct the practices of a foreign elite in their own language. The story is the same as it was for the Etruscans: writing was adopted as an elite technology for purposes of prestige. That this occurred in a time when Etruscan writing seems to have spread from the purely elite sphere makes this more significant: a model existed for more utilitarian writing, but that which was adopted maintained the elite aspect.⁵⁶⁶

2.8: Germanic Runes

Germanic runes represent a further step in the development, either from a North Italic script or else an earlier form of the Greek alphabet.⁵⁶⁷ The latter, however,

⁵⁶² The (contested) Latin nature of this inscription is defended by Cornell (1991, 18-9), and Wallace (2011, table 2.3) includes it in his catalogue of early Latin inscriptions.

⁵⁶³ Cornell 1995, 156-9.

⁵⁶⁴ So Wallace 1989, 123-5, and more recently Wallace 2011, 13-4.

⁵⁶⁵ Wallace 1989, 124.

⁵⁶⁶ See the discussion of the movement of Etruscan writing into more utilitarian spheres *supra*. Greek writing, too, had at this point moved beyond its initially elite context.

⁵⁶⁷ See Antonsen 1989 for a good overview of the controversy.

supposes a lacuna of multiple centuries between their development and first attestation. The earliest inscription that might be runic is the Meldorf fibula, which dates to the mid-first century AD, but this could equally well be the Roman alphabet; the oldest inscriptions that are certainly runic date to about 100 years later.⁵⁶⁸ Pointing to epigraphic features such as sinistroverse and boustrophedon writing, various scholars have argued that runes must have been developed from a system which also contained those features, so a Greek-derived script of probably no later than 400 BC.⁵⁶⁹ In support of this are various indications in the runes themselves that the language they first represented was not any of the Germanic tongues attested but rather proto-Germanic.⁵⁷⁰ If this indeed the case, nothing can at all be said about the earliest uses of runes, as they must have been on some perishable substance (wood presents the likeliest case), or else remain to be discovered.⁵⁷¹

In recent years, however, scholarship has moved away from this argument.⁵⁷² The case remains that a lacuna of some half a millennium is a remarkable thing to posit, especially considering that by AD 200 runic inscriptions are occurring regularly.⁵⁷³ It is further the case that runes correspond much more closely to the Roman alphabet than any attested Greek script.⁵⁷⁴ The so-called archaic features, sinistroverse and boustrophedon writing, might best be considered experimental features of early script development, in line with the Greek alphabet itself. Elmer Antonsen's objection that directionality is the *sine qua non* of alphabetic legibility is not hereby

⁵⁶⁸ Barnes 2012, 9.

⁵⁶⁹ Barnes 2012, 13.

⁵⁷⁰ See Antonsen 1989, 145-56.

⁵⁷¹ Wood, as the straight lines and avoidance of curves necessitate that they were carved into *something*; cf. Antonsen 1989, 144.

⁵⁷² Williams 2004, 264.

⁵⁷³ See the catalogue at Looijenga 2003, 149-76.

⁵⁷⁴ Barnes 2012, 12.

contradicted; Attic vase inscriptions are no less legible for occasional sinistroversion, nor the Gortyn law code for its boustrophedon.⁵⁷⁵ Runes, moreover, created in opposition to an existing script, might preserve in their conventions deliberate differences from that model.⁵⁷⁶

If this is accepted, runes were invented in an area of Romano-Germanic contact sometime prior, but perhaps not by much, to their first attestation in AD 150. This is complicated by the fact that it is not, as might be expected, the Rhineland that yields the earliest runic finds, but rather a region centred around modern Denmark.⁵⁷⁷ It is, however, possible to reconstruct the journey of the technology north, supported by other, contemporaneous Roman finds, as Looijenga has done; so much cannot be said for any earlier posited invention.⁵⁷⁸ Moreover, it is significant that their first attestation is not on the boundaries of Rome, where the adoption of Latin would have proved a more expedient route to literacy.

The idea of writing was rather transferred north, to a society that had little need for it, and put to use not in administration, but rather for purposes of personal prestige: of the 29 early runic inscriptions for which an interpretation may be ventured, some 20 feature a personal name (occasionally with verbs like “made” or “dedicated”); another four might feature a personal name; four more likely feature a word describing a trait of the object, and the final records a line of alliterative verse.⁵⁷⁹ It was not until the 6th century AD that a practical use was exploited: the inscribing of messages on sticks.⁵⁸⁰ This, however, seems to be a later development; in their early

⁵⁷⁵ Antonsen 1989, 146.

⁵⁷⁶ Barnes 2012, 13.

⁵⁷⁷ Looijenga 2003, 78. Runes did not appear in southern Germania until the fifth century AD (Barnes 2012, 11).

⁵⁷⁸ Looijenga 2003, 78-103.

⁵⁷⁹ Information taken from the catalogue at Looijen 2003, 149-76

⁵⁸⁰ Elliott 1996, 335.

days there is evidence only for primitive and hardly practical use.⁵⁸¹ The onomastic element, as suggested by Ferrara and evident through all stages of the alphabet, seems to have been the central motivating factor.⁵⁸²

3: Linear B in Light of the Comparative Evidence and Conclusion

The evidence here adduces presents the argument that, when a society adopts the idea of writing for the first time and invents its own script, this is done for purposes of prestige and culture, not administration. Cypro-Minoan, Anatolian Heiroglyphics, Proto-Canaanite, the Greek and Roman alphabets, and Germanic runes – all were invented for use in elite contexts; the central concerns were prestigious and onomastic, not economic and administrative. The cumulative weight of this evidence furnishes the argument that Linear B, only ever found on clay in administrative contexts, did not emerge in the typical circumstances of secondary script development. Of the consistent traits of this phenomenon, only nationalistic concerns may be adduced in its origins. If Linear B had been developed in the LH II mainland or contemporary Cyclades, the comparative evidence here suggests that its earliest uses would have been prestigious, on materials other than clay. The competition for status among the aristocratic oligarchies of Prepalatial Mycenaean society may be thought a fertile ground for the development of the strategies of elite representation and construction of prestige offered by secondary script development. That there is no evidence Linear B was ever put to such purposes suggests that it was developed under circumstances very different to those typical of secondary script development. While other secondary scripts were developed in contexts independent of administration, and even in situations where administrative

⁵⁸¹ Williams 2004, 270-3.

⁵⁸² Ferrara 2015, 45.

scripts already existed, Linear B was developed only as a solution to the problem of administration. The only situation that matches these requirements is LM II Knossos.

Such a reading is consistent with the palaeographic and archaeological evidence, which necessitate a development no earlier than LM IB. A development that early, however, is not likely, as Linear A was the Aegean *scriptum francum* of that period, and it is difficult to posit the co-existence of the two in the mercantile or administrative spheres. As has been stressed, there is no indication that Linear B ever existed beyond those contexts, despite the fact that prestigious items in metal or stone are much more likely to survive than the clay which has. From this evidence, its development should be dated to LH IIB/LM II. The picture can be clarified and narrowed by contextualising the origins of Linear B among other cases of secondary script development. This indicates an optional development on the mainland would likely have resulted in a script manifested very differently from Linear B as it is known. Rather, Linear B was developed at Knossos in LM II out of the necessity of administering a Minoan palace and its territory. Its continued restriction to the administrative sphere reflects the circumstances of its birth; not optional, nor perhaps even desired, it was pressed into effective but narrow service by a society that did not embrace the wider potential of writing. The results were far-reaching; now able to administer a complex society and vast territories, the application of Linear B administrations to the mainland revolutionised Mycenaean society.

CONCLUSION

It has been argued that the revolutionary changes on mainland Greece in LH IIB-III A which saw the leap from Prepalatial to Palatial society were the result of the Mycenaean presence at LM II Knossos. Chapter I assessed the mainland evidence, starting with a wide-ranging survey of the evidence for the contemporaneity of these periods. This was followed by a holistic analysis of the architectural and mortuary evidence of the mainland from the beginning of the Mycenaean period. Two corresponding conclusions were furnished: firstly, the change from Prepalatial to Palatial society likely occurred in LH IIB at Mycenae and LH IIIA1 elsewhere; secondly, the changes were not evolutionary but revolutionary, with no demonstrable roots in Prepalatial Mycenaean society.

These changes were explored and explained in Chapters II and III by the analysis of LM II Knossos, contextualised as a period of Mycenaean history for the first time. Firstly, analysis of the mortuary and architectural evidence of LM II Knossos furnished evidence for strong Minoan cultural and cultic influence on the new Mycenaean lords. The implications of this were then explored in targeted discussion of the Knossos Throne Room, which was posited as a locus for that transition of Minoan cultic elements to the Mycenaeans. By assessing literary, architectural, and iconographic evidence, it was argued that the Throne Room furnished the blueprint for the megaron, which spread to the mainland as a result of the adoption of the *μέγαρον* into Mycenaean culture. At Mycenae, Tiryns, and Pylos, the megaron was identified as the location of a legitimising ritual for the *μέγαρον* just the same as the Throne Room was at Knossos. This integrated view was therefore able to explain the LH IIB/III A1 developments on the mainland in a way analysis of more limited geographic scope could not.

In Chapter III, the full scope of the debt the Mycenaean Palatial age owed to the developments of LM II Knossos was illustrated by arguing that it was only there that the Linear B script could have been developed. This began with an analysis of the traditional evidence, especially its relationship with Linear A. From this, an independent argument suggesting its likely development at LM II Knossos was furnished. However, to provide a fuller picture, Linear B was compared with a range of other cases of secondary script development, and assessed within the resultant theoretical framework. It was thus argued that secondary script development most regularly occurs as a result of elites desiring new avenues of prestigious self-representation and nationalistic concerns. As Linear B does not correspond to these circumstances, it was posited that its development must not have been along such lines; rather, it was devised as a response to the manifest problem of administering the palatial territories of Knossos. This represents the first theoretical approach to the problem, providing new evidence for the development of Linear B at LM II Knossos that should be taken into account by anyone now wishing to argue otherwise.

Overall, by contextualising LM II as a period of Mycenaean history, many of the questions about the origins of the Mycenaean palaces can be answered. Old, teleological readings for indigenous development should be considered with a great deal of circumspection, as it has been argued here that the origins of the active processes by which the megaron, *ῥάναξ*, and Linear B entered Mycenaean society can now be situated at LM II Knossos. With apologies to Horace (*Ep.* 2.1.56):

Creta capta ferum victorem cepit, et artes intulit agresti Graecia.

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FIGURES

Figure 1: Keftiu in the tomb of Rekhmire (Vercoutter 1956, frontispiece).

Figure 2: Plan of Mansion 1 at the Menelaion (Catling 2009, Figure 10).

Figure 3: Older Kadmeion at Thebes (Dakouri-Hild 2001, Figure 4).

Figure 4: Pylos in LH III (Wright 2006, Figure 1.3).

Figure 5: Tiryns in LH IIIA1 (Wright 2006, Figure 1.5).

Figure 6: Map of Mycenae with tholos tombs marked (French 2002, Figure 10).

Figure 7: Representative examples of Wace's three groups of Mycenaean tholoi (French 2002, Figure 12).

Figure 8: Interior of Tomb Rho at Mycenae, showing the vaulted chamber (Mylonas 1957, Figure 84).

Figure 9: Map of the Knossos region, showing major cemeteries (Preston 2004, Figure 2).

Figure 10: Plan and section of the Kephala tholos, showing building materials (Hutchinson 1956, Plate 9).

Figure 11: Plan and sections of Isopata Tomb 1 (Evans 1914, Plate I).

Figure 12: Plan and section of the Isopata Royal Tomb (Evans 1906, Plate XCVII).

Figure 13: Picture looking down the dromos of the Isopata Royal Tomb, demonstrating vaulting of forechamber (Evans 1914, Figure 121).

Figure 14: Plan and section of the Tomb of Double Axes (Evans 1914, Plate V).

Fig. 15: Plan of the Tomb of Double Axes with finds and burial cist (Evans 1914, Figure 53).

Figure 16: Plan of the Mycenaean palace at Knossos; number indicates an area of LM II-III rebuilding (McEnroe 2010 Figure 10.2). The Throne Room is 41-8, the Hall of Double Axes 90, and the Room of the Chariot Tablets 28-34.

Fig. 17: Plan of the Throne Room at Knossos (Evans 1935, Figure 887).

Figure 18: Drawing, impression, and photograph of LH III ring from Mycenae (Sakelliarou 1964, 117).