

The Late Minoan III Necropolis of Armenoi

Volume I: Introduction and Background

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The Late Minoan III Necropolis of Armenoi

Volume I: Introduction and Background

edited by

Yannis Tzedakis, Holley Martlew, and Robert Arnott

with the assistance of

Andrew Sparkes



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Chronology

The chronology, both relative and absolute, which the editors followed in previous publications was based on *Aegean Bronze Age Chronology* by Peter Warren and Vronway Hankey (Bristol, 1989), but it also considers the more recent work by Peter Warren (2010, “The Absolute Chronology of the Aegean circa 2000 B.C.–1400 B.C. A Summary,” in *Die Bedeutung der minoischen und mykenischen Glyptik. VI. internationales Siegel-Symposium aus Anlass des 50-jährigen Bestehens des CMS Marburg, 9.–12. Oktober 2008* [CMS Beiheft 8], W. Müller, ed., Mainz am Rhein, pp. 383–394). To maintain consistency with previous publications, this chronology has been retained in this volume.

Late Minoan IIIA:1
ca. 1425–1390 B.C.
Late Minoan IIIA:2
ca. 1385–1300 B.C.
Late Minoan IIIB:1
ca. 1300–1240 B.C.

Late Minoan IIIB:2
ca. 1240–1210 B.C.
Late Minoan IIIC:1
ca. 1210–1170 B.C.

A revised chronology for Late Bronze III based on Malcom Weiner (2003, “The Absolute Chronology of Late Helladic III A2 Revisited,” *BSA* 98, pp. 239–250) has also been taken into account as amended and is presented below.

Late Minoan IIIA:1
ca. 1430–1390 B.C.

Late Minoan IIIA:2
ca. 1390–1310 B.C.

Late Minoan IIIB:1
ca. 1310–1250 B.C.
Late Minoan IIIB:2
ca. 1250–1200 B.C.

Late Minoan IIIC:1
ca. 1200–1170 B.C.

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Antonis Pentaris. The figures in Chapter 2 are the work of Andrew Gize. In Chapter 3, [Figures 3.1](#) and [3.2](#) are the work of Henry Buglass at the University of Birmingham, and [Figures 3.3–3.9](#) are by Steve Allender. In Chapter 4, [Figure 4.1](#) is by Henry Buglass, and [Figures 4.2–4.11](#) are the work of Peter Masters. In Chapter 5, [Figures 5.1–5.10](#) are by Alexandra Ariotti, and [Figures 5.11–5.29](#) are by Andrew Gize. All figures in Chapter 6 are the work of Alexandra Ariotti. In Chapter 7, [Figures 7.1, 7.2, 7.4–7.15](#) are by Andrew Gize; [Figure 7.3](#) is based on the work of Antonis Pentaris. In Chapter 8, [Figures 8.1, 8.3–8.9, and 8.11](#) are the work of Andrew Gize; [Figures 8.2, 8.10, and 8.12](#) are based on the work of Antonis Pentaris. In Chapter 9, [Figures 9.3–9.7](#) are the work of Andrew Gize.

List of Abbreviations

Abbreviations for periodicals in the references of individual chapters follow the conventions of the *American Journal of Archaeology*.

Cat. No.	catalog number	ha	hectare(s)
CHM	Archaeological Museum of Chania	HM	Heraklion Museum
cm	centimeter(s)	IGME	Institute of Geology and Mineral Exploration
<i>CMS</i>	<i>Corpus der minoischen und mykenischen Siegel</i>	kb	kbar(s); unit of pressure measurement
Cu K α	Copper K-alpha	kg	kilogram(s)
d.	diameter	km	kilometer(s)
dec.	decorated	KTEO	Κέντρο Τεχνικού Ελέγχου Οχημάτων
dim(s).	dimension(s)	L.	length
E	east	LBA	Late Bronze Age
EM	Early Minoan	LH	Late Helladic
est.	estimated	LM	Late Minoan
Exc. No.	excavation number	LRA	Late Roman Amphora
GMT	Greenwich Mean Time	Lst.	limestone
GPR	ground penetrating radar	m	meter(s)
GPS	global positioning system	m asl	meters above sea level
h	hour(s)	Ma	million years ago
h.	height		

max.	maximum	RP	Roman and Byzantine pottery
Mi	Midea	S	south
mm	millimeter(s)	SM.	survey number prefix for Minoan pottery
MM	Middle Minoan		
MN	Nafplion Museum	SR.	survey number prefix for Roman and Byzantine pottery
MP	Minoan pottery		
N	north	th.	thickness
No.	number	USGS	United States Geological Survey
nT	nanotesla	w.	width
pers. comm.	personal communication	W	west
pres.	preserved	WP	waypoint
RM	Archaeological Museum of Rethymnon	wt	weight
		WW II	World War II

Introduction to the Series

Yannis Tzedakis and Holley Martlew

This is the first volume of the final publication of the Late Minoan (LM) III Necropolis of Armenoi. It sets the scene, introduces the site and its topography, and offers the results of field surveys and their finds. The research projects were initiated and supervised by Holley Martlew with the permission and cooperation of Yannis Tzedakis while he was Cultural Counsellor to the Cultural Olympiad. Time passed and the projects continued.

Future volumes will be thematic, and we anticipate producing them at regular intervals. The next volume, currently in preparation, will be *The Late Minoan III Necropolis of Armenoi. Volume II: Context, Contents, and Plans* (in three parts; Tzedakis, Martlew, and Arnott, eds.).

We would like to thank, at the very beginning, our colleagues at the INSTAP Academic Press.

We wish to give recognition and thanks to all those who are carrying out specialist studies on every aspect of the necropolis and whose work will be published in subsequent volumes: Yannis Tzedakis, Eleni Banou, Vicky Kolivaki, Stephen Litherland, and Philip Mann (architecture); Yannis Tzedakis and Vicky Kolivaki (pottery); Anna Simandiraki (miniature vases); Holley Martlew (dromoi, ritual pits, crypts, niches, and trial trenches); Ioanna Efstathiou (bronzes); Katerina Baxevani (larnakes); Eleni Papadopoulou (stele); Olga Krzykowska (seals); Vicky Kolivaki (small finds); Robert Arnott, coordinator of the study of human remains; and the Director of Surveys, Steve Litherland.

The Necropolis of Armenoi is the most important and extensive, and the only intact, necropolis that dates to Late Bronze Age (LBA) III on Crete. The publication

of the necropolis will not only augment knowledge of Minoan ritual and burial practices, but it also will add significantly to what we know about the Minoans as a people.

The contents of the chamber tombs and dromoi are providing important insights into what made this community so wealthy and enabled its inhabitants to build such a necropolis. The finds, pottery, bronzes, larnakes, seals, and small finds are revealing what the Minoans produced. It is clear that both production and access to raw materials in the surrounding countryside would have provided a basis for trade both within Crete and externally. The study of the finds is telling us the ways they planned for death, and the result of that means we are learning a great deal about their customs and values. The study of the human skeletal material is contributing to our understanding of what health problems the Minoans had and what diseases caused them suffering while still in this world.

Because the necropolis was in use for such a short period of time, roughly 200 years, it also presents a unique microcosm of the Minoan world. As if that were not enough, as a result of our initiatives, we located and made a start on the excavation of the remains of the nearby LM III town in the modern village of Kastellos in 2007. This long-awaited discovery means that a new chapter now can be written on the history of the town where those buried in the necropolis lived their lives.

Volume I represents the beginning, an introduction to the information we have amassed and are assessing. We look forward to the future. We are involved in a very important project, and all of us who have given, and are giving, so much time and effort to it are mesmerized by it and proud to be a part of it.