

“Minding the Gap”

Reexamining the Early Cycladic III “Gap” from the Perspective of Crete: A Regional Approach to Relative Chronology, Networks, and Complexity in the Late Prepalatial Period

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Abstract

The proposed Early Cycladic III “gap” was identified through careful correlations in the late Early Bronze II ceramic records of the mainland and the Cyclades. The absence of Cretan material was noteworthy when viewed against the rich Early Minoan (EM) I–II record, revealing that large amounts of material in the Kampos and Keros-Syros styles was reaching the island via Cycladic colonies or trade. This article considers the wealth of new finds on Crete, which are helping scholars trace these developments from EM I to EM III. Studies have drawn attention to the role of a small number of gateway communities on the north coast of Crete in the transmission of Cycladic raw materials and products in the EM I–II periods. Significant changes in EM II suggest that this dynamic relationship was transformed as Cretan groups began to take a more active role in developing off-island networks to the east and west. The second half of the article highlights recent efforts in north-central and eastern Crete to define regional ceramic production in EM III and to consider major developments in the late Prepalatial urban and political landscape that appear to have played a role in the emergence of the first palaces on the island.*

In 1983 and 1984, Rutter challenged the relative chronology of the Cyclades in the Early Bronze Age,

suggesting that the Early Bronze (EB) III period in the Aegean witnessed a dramatic decline in inter-regional exchange between earlier and later floruits of international exchange.¹ Rutter’s starting point was the observation that the material culture labeled Kastri/Lefkandi I should be defined as a late EB II horizon rather than as Early Cycladic (EC) IIIA, thus creating a “gap” in the extant EC III ceramic record.² Crete played an indirect role in his description of this horizon and the EC III gap, because Early Minoan (EM) IIB and EM III pottery was not found on the Cycladic Islands, and Kastri Group material was absent from EM IIB/III deposits on Crete.³ Moreover, the poorly understood character of EM III material made it difficult to look for traces of interregional links both on and off Crete.⁴ Rutter’s discussion of the other side of the gap, however, did have a Cretan component—namely, the appearance of Middle Minoan (MM) IA material in early Middle Helladic (MH) I or Middle Cycladic (MC) I levels at a growing number of sites on the mainland (e.g., Lerna Va) and the islands (e.g., Aegina [level VIII–phase H] and Phylakopi [two

*I would like to thank Y. Papadatos for discussing both his research at Archanes, Gournes, Livari, and Kephala Petras and his approach to the topic of Cycladic interaction with Crete. I am also grateful to E. Nodarou for sharing the results of her study of Early Minoan ceramic technology and fabrics. Finally, I would like to thank several excavators in east Crete, J. Soles (Mochlos), V. Apostolakou and P. Betancourt (Pacheia Ammos), and V. Watrous (Gournia), for showing me the recent finds from these sites. I hope that readers will also join the discussion on the *AJA* website (www.ajaonline.org/).

¹Rutter (1983, 1984) was responding to the publication of Barber and MacGillivray 1980; see also Warren and Hankey 1989, 24–9.

²Rutter 1983, 69–71.

³This picture has changed slightly since Rutter 1983, 1984. EM IIB Vasiliki Ware has been found at Akrotiri (Wilson et al. 2008, 269–70), and three possible Kastri Group vessels (EM II–III date) are reported from the Early Minoan cemetery at Ayia Photia on Crete (Davaras and Betancourt 2012, 88–9, nos. 1523–25).

⁴Rutter 1984, 103. For problems with the identification of EM III pottery, see Evans 1921, 108–9; Zois 1968; Andreou 1978, 55–92; Betancourt 1984; Warren and Hankey 1989, 17–21, 124–27; Manning 1995, 63–72; Watrous 2001a, 179–82; 2001b, 213–14; Apostolakou et al. 2007–2008; Momigliano 2007; Branigan 2010; Watrous and Schultz 2012a.

sherds were found beneath early Phylakopi II levels on Melos]).⁵ Several studies have reconsidered both the imported pottery and chronological links, but the challenge of removing or filling Rutter's gap may require new archaeological data.⁶

The recent excavations for the supports of the new shelter over the site of Akrotiri have provided one such parameter. EM IIB Vasiliki Ware sherds were found in deposits with Kastri Group material, confirming Rutter's Late EB II horizon.⁷ Cleaning operations in the subsequent period produced the Group A deposits in Pillar Pits 26 and 67 at Akrotiri, which are contemporary with Aegina phases F–H (the end of EH III to the beginning of the Middle Helladic) and Phylakopi I.2–3 and include several MM IA imports.⁸ On paper, there appears to be a gap in the Minoan imports (and perhaps also the habitation sequence?) at Akrotiri that corresponds to Rutter's gap, which overlaps with the elusive EM III period on Crete.⁹ Recent studies of EM III deposits in north-central Crete also largely confirm the absence of Helladic and Cycladic material on the island (with the exception of a few EC III sherds at Knossos).¹⁰ This article takes another look at late Prepalatial Crete and examines how recent fieldwork has shed new light on the problem.

Before turning to the EM III period, one should examine the evidence for interaction between Crete and the Cyclades in the preceding EM I–II periods, which provides an important context for this topic.¹¹

This review is selective and emphasizes the need to treat Crete as a mosaic of smaller regions rather than a single entity. In *The Emergence of Civilisation*, Renfrew drew on a range of Cycladic imports or Cycladic-style material found on Crete as one small part of his discussion of the “international spirit” that characterized the intense interregional interaction of the EB II Aegean.¹² Subsequent excavations on Crete (e.g., at Ayia Photia, Petras, Livari, Poros, Gournes, Mochlos, and Archanes) have increased the sample size, adding not only new sites but also raw materials, technologies, and finished objects from both EM I and EM II levels.¹³ Instead of direct trade between the Cyclades and different parts of Crete, several studies have drawn attention to Cretan sites on the north coast that served as gateway communities for the inflow of raw materials, finished products, and knowledge for manufacturing Cycladic-type artifacts on Crete.¹⁴ The distribution of this material across the island is uneven, with sites on the north coast consuming larger numbers of these objects; moreover, even within north Crete, certain sites (e.g., Poros, Mochlos, Ayia Photia, Petras) and specific groups within inland communities (e.g., Archanes) appear to have had preferential access to the imports.¹⁵

Of the EM IB sites on Crete with Kampos Group material, three sites (Ayia Photia, Gournes, and Poros) contain substantial concentrations that suggest not only trade but also the possibility of Cycladic groups living on Crete.¹⁶ The architecture and contents of the

⁵ Rutter 1983, 71–3; 1984, 103–5. For Lerna, see Rutter and Zerner 1984; Cadogan and Kopaka 2010. For Aegina, see Gauss 2006. For Phylakopi on Melos, see Hood 2007, 248–50.

⁶ Barber and MacGillivray 1980; Warren and Hankey 1989, 24–9; Manning 1995, 66–73; Broodbank 2000, 309–19, 331–35; Broodbank and Kiriatzi 2007, 265–67; Momigliano 2007, 80–103; Wilson 2007, 70–7; Cadogan and Kopaka 2010; Nikolakopoulou (forthcoming).

⁷ S. Kariotis (pers. comm. 2013) has mentioned a forthcoming publication of the EM IIB imports at Akrotiri by S. Kariotis, P.M. Day, and D.E. Wilson. Wilson et al. (2008, 269–70) provide a brief description, noting that “recently discovered EM IIB pottery imports in late EB II Kastri Group contexts at Akrotiri change this picture. It is now clear that at least a portion of the EM IIB period on Crete was contemporary with the Kastri-Lefkandi I phase in the west Aegean.”

⁸ Knappett and Nikolakopoulou 2005, 175–79; Nikolakopoulou et al. 2008, 311–17; Nikolakopoulou (forthcoming).

⁹ The only site where such a gap in occupation is widely accepted is Ayia Irini on Kea (Overbeck 1989; Nikolakopoulou [forthcoming]).

¹⁰ For the EC III material at Knossos, see Momigliano 2007, 94. For the MC I material at Knossos, see Momigliano 2007, 102–3.

¹¹ Papadatos and Tomkins (2013) examine the Final Neolithic and EM I finds from Kephala Petras, providing a formative new chapter to the story of Aegean cultural interaction and a detailed introduction and overview of many of the top-

ics discussed in this article. See also Renfrew (2010), who reviews the evidence for interaction between Crete and the Cyclades from EB I to EB II, and Cherry (2010) for a minimalist view of the EM I–III context for Crete's Prepalatial, off-island interaction before MM IA.

¹² Renfrew 1972, 451–55; Broodbank 2000, 276–309; Cherry 2010, 116–20; Papadatos and Tomkins 2013.

¹³ Infra nn. 14, 15. For Livari, see Papadatos 2011; Papadatos and Sofianou 2012.

¹⁴ Branigan 1991; Carter 1998; Papadatos 1999, 2005, 2007; Broodbank 2000, 276–309; Whitelaw 2004, 238–42; Renfrew 2010; Papadatos and Tomkins 2013. The last article provides a comprehensive overview, tracing the phenomenon back to the Final Neolithic levels of Kephala Petras.

¹⁵ In general, see Broodbank 2000, 300–9; Papadatos 2007; Renfrew 2010; Papadatos and Tomkins 2013. For Poros, see Dimopoulou-Rethemiotaki et al. 2007; Wilson et al. 2008. For Mochlos, see Carter 2004. For Ayia Photia, see Davaras and Betancourt 2004, 2012. For Petras, see Papadatos 2007; Tsipoulou 2012. For Archanes, see Papadatos 1999, 2005, 2007.

¹⁶ For Ayia Photia, see Davaras and Betancourt 2004, 2012. For Gournes, see Galanaki 2006, Galanaki et al. 2011. For Poros, see Dimopoulou-Rethemiotaki et al. 2007; Wilson et al. 2008. For recent reviews of the evidence and arguments for Cycladic groups visiting and living on Crete, see Papadatos 2007; Dumas 2010; Renfrew 2010; Papadatos and Tomkins 2013.

graves at Ayia Photia, Crete, are similar to remains recovered at Ano Kouphonisi in the Cyclades.¹⁷ At Ayia Photia, the grave goods with links to Kampos Group material in the islands include long obsidian blades, midrib daggers, and pottery (e.g., tab-handled bowls, frying pans, various pyxides, and kernoi—which together constitute 94% of the pottery from the site, according to Davaras and Betancourt).¹⁸ The contemporaneous levels from the Sanoudakis plot at Poros have produced a large quantity of debris from the production of obsidian blades and copper-based daggers and silver objects.¹⁹ Dimopoulou-Rethemiotaki et al. note that the Cycladic-style pottery, which constitutes 30% of the assemblage, is “dominated by bowl and goblet shapes which are the domestic equivalent of the funerary assemblage at Haghia Photia and Gournes.”²⁰ Analysis of the pottery at both Ayia Photia and Poros reveals a Cycladic tradition of calcite tempering; however, the recent publication of the Ayia Photia pottery also indicates the presence of ground-up ceramic material in the same vessels (grog), which is a Cretan rather than island practice.²¹ This evidence suggests that most of the vessels in EM IB levels at Poros, Ayia Photia, and Gournes were made on Crete near these individual sites by potters with intimate knowledge of Cycladic shapes and decoration.²² The exceptions are the small incised bottles that are probably imported from the Cyclades.²³ While more than 130 of these vases ended up in the Cycladic-type tombs at Ayia Photia, some of the Kampos-style vases, metals, and stone objects were consumed as prestige items elsewhere on the island by groups using Cretan burial customs.²⁴

In EM IIA, Cycladic raw materials (e.g., obsidian, silver, copper), pottery, and other types of material culture in the Keros-Syros style continued to be consumed on Crete, but the nature of the interaction may

have changed (e.g., evidence suggests that Cycladic presence in the gateway communities on Crete diminished and that Cretans were also traveling to the resource-rich western islands of the Cyclades).²⁵ This important point emphasizes the potentially dynamic nature of this interregional relationship. At some point in EM IIA, the Cycladic-type cemeteries at Ayia Photia and Gournes went out of use. In north-central Crete, much of the Cycladic-style pottery from Poros was no longer produced locally but rather was imported and restricted to two shapes: collared jars, which make up 90% of the imports, and sauceboats, which form less than 10% of the imports.²⁶ Moreover, these shapes are found overwhelmingly at Poros but not at Knossos, indicating that these ceramic imports reached only the gateway communities and did not circulate widely. This pottery also makes up a much smaller percentage of the overall assemblage even at Poros (less than 2%), and petrographic analysis suggests that the transport jars were produced on Melos, Siphnos, and Kea and that a local version was made in north-central Crete.²⁷ Poros continued to serve as the major conduit of EM IIA imported Cycladica and raw materials (obsidian from Sta Nychia on Melos, copper from Kythnos and Lavrion, silver and lead from Siphnos or Lavrion, and marble and emery from Naxos) that were transformed locally into tools or jewelry (obsidian blades and midrib daggers).²⁸

The finds from the EM IIA levels at Archanes (among the richest on the island) demonstrate that certain Cretan groups had preferential access to these finished goods. Papadatos’ study of the EM IIA assemblage of Tholos Gamma highlighted the Cycladic character of the burial objects (96 of the 175 artifacts were Cycladic), which included midrib daggers, marble figurines, gold jewelry, and obsidian.²⁹ Although

¹⁷ Betancourt and Davaras 2004. For Ano Kouphonisi, see Zapheirou 2008.

¹⁸ Davaras and Betancourt 2004; 2012, 95–114; Day et al. 2012. The final publication changes several important conclusions about the provenance of the pottery published in an earlier, preliminary report (Day et al. 1998). For a discussion of the Cycladic origin of the metal and the technology used to manufacture these daggers, see Muhly 2004, 2008; Doonan et al. 2007.

¹⁹ Dimopoulou-Rethemiotaki et al. 2007; Doonan et al. 2007; Wilson et al. 2008.

²⁰ Dimopoulou-Rethemiotaki et al. 2007, 93.

²¹ Day et al. 2012, 135–38.

²² Day et al. 2012, 135–38. E. Nodarou (pers. comm. 2012) conducted the petrographic study of the Gournes pottery.

²³ Day et al. 2012, 136.

²⁴ Examples include the burials in the Pyrgos Cave (Xanthoudides 1918) and the Prepalatial cemeteries at Petras (Tsiropoulou 2012) and Livari (Papadatos and Sofianou 2012).

²⁵ Papadatos 1999, 2005, 2007; Carter 2004; Whitelaw 2004; Dimopoulou-Rethemiotaki et al. 2007; Cherry 2010, 116–20; Renfrew 2010. This pattern would represent a resumption of activity observed by Papadatos and Tomkins (2013) for Final Neolithic levels at Kephala Petras.

²⁶ Dimopoulou-Rethemiotaki et al. 2007; Wilson 2007; Wilson et al. 2008; Renfrew 2010, 288–89.

²⁷ *Supra* n. 26.

²⁸ For Poros, see Dimopoulou-Rethemiotaki et al. 2007; Doonan et al. 2007; Papadatos 2007; Wilson et al. 2008. In general, see Broodbank 2000, 80, fig. 19; 287–309. For the obsidian from Melos, see Carter 2004. For copper from Kythnos, see Stos-Gale 2001; Muhly 2004, 2007; Bassiakos and Philaniotou 2007; Gale and Stos-Gale 2007, 104–7. For silver and lead from Siphnos, see Gale and Stos-Gale 1981. For copper, silver, and lead from Lavrion, see Stos-Gale 2001; Gale et al. 2008.

²⁹ Papadatos 1999, 2005, 2007.

two EM IIA tholoi received large numbers of burials in the Archanes cemetery, most of the Cycladica is associated with the group buried in Tholos Gamma. Careful study of the material also revealed that a significant amount of the Cycladica from north-central Crete was in fact made or retouched by artisans on Crete working for Cretan consumers.³⁰

The subsequent EM IIB record in north-central Crete is limited and indicates possible discontinuities at many Prepalatial cemeteries on the north coast (with the exception of Mochlos).³¹ Exchange patterns on the island were also disrupted. Pottery studies at Knossos suggest an end to ceramic imports from the Cyclades in EM IIB and EM III (and this change in off-island imports appears to coincide with a noticeable decline in local pottery circulation between north and south-central Crete).³² While some of this may reflect changes in Aegean interregional exchange networks—namely, the emergence of an east–west network linking Anatolia and the central Aegean with Kastri Group material—there is also evidence from Kythera suggesting that groups in north-central Crete were developing more active, alternative off-island strategies.³³

Broodbank and Kiriati's restudy of pottery from deposits Beta and Gamma at Kastri, Kythera, identified Cretan imports and locally produced Minoanizing pottery with strong links (including the use of sand tempering) to pot-making traditions in north-central and western Crete.³⁴ They argued that this marks the (peaceful?) arrival of the first permanent settlers and potters from Crete who lived alongside the local population. It appears that by MM IA, with the continued arrival of new groups from Crete and the noticeable

decline in indigenous material culture in the hinterland, Kythera had become a Minoan colony with a peak sanctuary. To explain this long-term interest in Kythera, the authors suggested that the island offered a crucial base for circular routes used by EB II longboats moving from Crete to mineral-rich islands of the western Cyclades, southern Attica, and the Peloponnese.³⁵

Above, I traced two themes that have emerged from recent scholarship: the changing character of the Cycladic-Cretan exchange networks in EM I–II and the variation in access and consumption of Cycladic raw materials and products by different communities and regions on Crete. Now, I examine more closely the late Prepalatial period of two regions of Crete: the Mirabello area and north-central Crete. One goal is to survey recent refinements to the relative chronology for the EM III and MM IA periods, which may aid in the search for Cretan material in the Cyclades. A second is to show how new approaches to regionalism, urbanism, and complexity are reshaping our understanding of broader developments in the late Prepalatial period and the appearance of Crete's first palaces.³⁶

In the Mirabello region, several scholars have recently drawn attention to the unique role of Mochlos from EM II to MM IA.³⁷ The unparalleled wealth buried in its large cemetery included imported obsidian, copper, silver, gold, and ivory, which Soles and Watrous have interpreted as a sign of nascent social stratification in the local EM II to MM IA community.³⁸ The same evidence has also been used to describe Mochlos as a Cretan version of an EB II Aegean trading community like Dhaskalio; both were capable of launching expeditions in longboats to acquire raw materials and

³⁰ Papadatos 1999, 2007. The figurines with folded arms provide a good example. Papadatos (2007, 425–29) notes that of the 27 from Archanes, Teche, Knossos, and Pyrgos, only seven find exact parallels in the islands. The others have features (e.g., the depiction of the mouth or separated legs) that distinguish them from island products.

³¹ Watrous (2001a, 180) places the break in EM III; see also Whitelaw 2004, 244–45; Papadatos 2005; Wilson et al. 2008. Legarra Herrero (2012, 340) notes that “in conjunction with major readjustment of Cycladic trade (Broodbank 2000, 317; Dimopoulou-Rethemiotaki et al. 2007, 87, 92–4), most of the cemeteries along the north coast seem to have been abandoned in EM IIB.” Recent excavations at Mochlos by Soles and Davaras recovered considerable evidence for a major EM IIB destruction in the settlement, which is not visible in the mortuary record on the island, much of which was dug by Seager in 1908.

³² Wilson and Day 1994; Wilson 2007, 76–7.

³³ For the development and character of these east–west trade networks linking Anatolia with the islands, Attica, Euboea, and the Greek mainland, see Broodbank 2000, 283–87, 350–56; Rambach 2000, 332–62. Whitelaw (2004, 2012) also

interprets this discontinuity as a sign of nascent growth and expansion at certain urban centers such as Knossos, Malia, and Phaistos.

³⁴ Broodbank 2004; Broodbank and Kiriati 2007, 247–64.

³⁵ Broodbank and Kiriati 2007, 264–68.

³⁶ Many studies of Prepalatial Crete have emphasized the regional character of the material culture. For pottery, see Betancourt 1985; Wilson and Day 1994; Whitelaw et al. 1997. For mortuary studies, see Relaki 2004; Papadatos 2007; Murphy 2011. For daggers, see Branigan 2011. For urbanism and social complexity, see Renfrew 1972; Cherry 1983, 1986, 2010; Soles 1988; Manning 1994; Haggis 1999, 2002; Schoep and Knappett 2004; Whitelaw 2004, 2012; Schoep and Tomkins 2012; Todaro 2012; Tomkins 2012.

³⁷ Soles 1988, 2012; Manning 1994, 238–44; Carter 2004; Whitelaw 2004; Watrous 2005; 2012, 98–100; Papadatos 2007; Colburn 2008, 2011; Legarra Herrero 2012, 340–46; Watrous and Schultz 2012a, 37–40; 2012b, 26–31; Papadatos and Tomkins 2013.

³⁸ Soles 1988; Watrous 2012, 98–100; Watrous and Schultz 2012a, 37–40; 2012b, 26–31. For the cemetery, see also Seager 1912.

prestige goods from off-island sources.³⁹ This material was then transformed and consumed in large quantities at Mochlos or exchanged with local Mirabello communities. Carter makes the most explicit case, citing the many clay boat models in both the town and tombs as well as the considerable amounts of obsidian worked using a technology unique to Mochlos. The absence of certain Cycladic finished objects at Mochlos (e.g., marble figurines like those found at Archanes and Petras) is interpreted as yet another sign of the idiosyncratic behavior of this trading community; however, this view may need to be modified after the final study of the Prepalatial buildings excavated in 2010 near Prepalatial Building Nu.⁴⁰

Scholars have also drawn attention to the large amount of gold in the EM II levels at Mochlos, which was transformed into jewelry by local workshops.⁴¹ The gold was probably imported from eastern sources, perhaps Egypt, on trade routes also bringing amethyst, hippopotamus ivory, and Egyptian stone vases.⁴² It may not be a coincidence that Cretan communities developed these new trade networks—to the west via Kythera for access to metal sources in Lavrion, Kythnos, and Siphnos, or to the southeast Aegean to acquire gold, ivory, obsidian (from Anatolian sources), and Egyptian material—at the same time that groups in the Cyclades were developing closer links with Anatolia, Euboia, and the Greek mainland during the Kastri phase.⁴³

Many sites in the Mirabello and Ierapetra region suffered fire destructions at the end of EM IIB (e.g., Myrtos, Vasiliki, and Mochlos), and they preserve substantial deposits of EM IIB pottery for descriptions of the phase.⁴⁴ The definition of the subsequent EM III

and MM IA phases is more problematic and has been the topic of considerable debate with ramifications not only for the Mirabello area but also for efforts to link developments in different regions of Crete. Here, I briefly highlight the source of the controversy and recent efforts to resolve it.⁴⁵ The problem stems from several facts. First, the EM III pottery produced in east Crete is very different from the pottery made in north-central Crete, and it appears that ceramic exchange between the regions was very limited in the period. Second, the absence of destruction deposits with EM III material hints at a peaceful transition to MM IA, which will probably be difficult to detect without unusual short-lived contexts.⁴⁶ Finally, the appearance of small amounts of polychrome (red and white) decoration in MM IA deposits in north-central Crete is not attested in the east, a situation that has again confused attempts to link ceramics across the island.⁴⁷

In the Mirabello region, excavations at Vasiliki demonstrated that distinctive EM III Light-on-Dark Wares were found in the houses above an earlier phase with Vasiliki Ware.⁴⁸ Subsequent efforts to isolate and define EM III pottery in the region have been greatly aided by two recent excavations. The first is the rock shelter in Pacheia Ammos; the second is the metallurgical site of Chrysokamino (where copper ores from the Cyclades or Lavrion were brought and smelted on Crete—another potential example of local ventures to the islands).⁴⁹ The pottery from the rock shelter includes White-on-Dark Ware, Dark-Banded Ware, plain ware in distinctive Mirabello fabric, and one sherd of Vasiliki Ware.⁵⁰ The motifs of the EM III White-on-Dark Ware are restricted to simple linear designs.⁵¹ In contrast, the more elaborate curvilinear motifs that

³⁹ Broodbank 2000, 211–75; Carter 2004; Whitelaw 2004, 238–42; Broodbank and Kiriati 2007, 267. For the relationship between Mochlos and the wider Mirabello region, see Watrous 2012, 98–100; Watrous and Schultz 2012a, 37–40; 2012b, 26–31.

⁴⁰ For comments on the missing Cycladica, see Papadatos 1999, 122–26; Carter 2004; Legarra Herrero 2012, 340–42; Papadatos and Tomkins 2013. For Building Nu, see Soles 1992, 424, pl. 91b. Recent excavations near Building Nu have recovered a major deposit of Early Minoan pottery. Macroscopic analysis of some jar fabrics suggests potting sources in the Cyclades. Finally, an Early Cycladic marble palette was recovered in the lowest levels of the town beneath the so-called theatrical area of the Late Minoan I Building B.2.

⁴¹ Papadatos 1999, 124–26; Colburn 2008, 206–16; 2011, 2–4; Hickman 2011.

⁴² Bevan (2004, 111–13) identifies Mochlos as one of the sites producing small imitations of Egyptian 6th Dynasty stone vases.

⁴³ *Supra* n. 31. For Cretan trade with the eastern Mediterranean, see Krzyszkowska 1983, 1988; Wiener 1991; Manning

1994, 242–46; Betancourt 1998; Watrous 1998; 2001a, 191–93, 196–98; 2001b, 219–20; Broodbank 2000, 341–61; Bevan 2004; Ferrence 2007; Colburn 2008, 2011 (with specific reference to gold and hippopotamus ivory from Egypt); Branigan 2010, 26–7; Cherry 2010; Sherratt 2010, 93–5; Hood and Cadogan 2011, 294 (two pieces of Anatolian obsidian in EM II levels and four more in EM III levels); Betancourt 2012, 187–89; Papadatos and Tomkins 2013.

⁴⁴ Watrous and Schultz 2012b, 31.

⁴⁵ *Supra* n. 4.

⁴⁶ Apostolakou et al. 2007–2008.

⁴⁷ Momigliano 2007, 87–91, 97. The earliest polychrome appears on a pair of EM III jugs at Knossos, which are thought to be imports from the Mesara (Momigliano 2007, 87).

⁴⁸ Seager 1905, 218; Zois 1992; Apostolakou et al. 2007–2008, 39; Watrous 2012, 99–100. Seager does not describe the stratigraphy explicitly, but the EM IIB–III sequence is implied.

⁴⁹ Betancourt 2006, 71–3; Apostolakou et al. 2007–2008.

⁵⁰ Apostolakou et al. 2007–2008.

⁵¹ Seager 1905, 218; Apostolakou et al. 2007–2008, 39–43.

appear on White-on-Dark Ware vases in the late Prepalatial North Trench deposit at Gournia and trenches 5000/6000 of Area E3 at Mochlos can now be dated to MM IA.⁵² The EM III pottery shapes are also instructive.⁵³ Teapots, shallow bowls, cook pots, lekanai, and pithoi continued EM IIB forms, but new shapes, such as the tall conical jar, bridge-spouted jar, and spouted kantharos, were introduced in EM III. Straight-sided and angular cups appeared in MM IA.

The Gournia, Kavousi, and Vrokastro surveys have recorded the late Prepalatial settlement history of the region, which puts the new EM III and MM IA ceramic sequence into context.⁵⁴ In the Gournia region, seven smaller sites were abandoned, while the larger village-level sites of EM IIB were rebuilt in EM III.⁵⁵ Only Vasiliki offers an excavated illustration of the dynamic, where a very modest EM III reoccupation was followed by the construction of four or five new houses and a defensive wall in MM IA.⁵⁶ Watrous and Schultz interpret these changes in the Mirabello area as a pattern of decline in EM III and regrowth in MM IA, when three sites built defensive walls.⁵⁷ They also link the EM IIB destructions to new arrivals from the Cyclades, where many sites were abandoned. They suggest that signs of the newcomers include a cluster of new sites in the Gournia and Kavousi survey zones and that “cist graves, a Cycladic type, and pithos burials, a western Anatolian type, appear locally at Sphoungaras, Pseira and Pacheia Ammos.”⁵⁸ While this is an intriguing thesis, the absence of a broad kit of Cycladic or Anatolian features or material apart from the copper

ores consumed at Chrysokamino, which are thought to come from the Cyclades, weakens the argument.⁵⁹ Moreover, “others who are engaged in survey are by no means convinced that EM III was a period of isolation, retraction and depopulation.”⁶⁰ Watrous and Schultz also draw attention to the use of calcite- or quartz-tempered pottery in EM III and MM IA as a Cycladic tradition and thus a sign of newcomers to the island in EM III; however, this temper had been used for several centuries on Crete by EM III and therefore cannot be read as a sign of newcomers.⁶¹ During EM III and MM IA, Mochlos continued to serve in the role of gateway community for the region (Watrous and Schultz see an increase in imports from the eastern sources: stone vessels, ivory, a cylinder seal, gold); however, this role ended with the destruction of the settlement in MM IA.⁶² The regional winner was Gournia, whose rise can likely be traced to the EM IIB destructions seen in the area and whose characteristic pottery is found in large amounts at Prepalatial sites across the north part of the Isthmus of Ierapetra, including Mochlos.

The late Prepalatial chapters by Momigliano in the *Knossos Pottery Handbook* and the publications of the Early Minoan levels from Hood’s excavations have put an end to the controversial position of EM III in Minoan archaeology in north-central Crete.⁶³ Momigliano makes a case for subdividing the late Prepalatial into EM III (early) (South Front House [SFH] Foundation Trench Group), EM III (late) (Upper East Well Groups), and MM IA (House C/Royal Road South Fill Group); however, Hood and Cadogan were not able

⁵² For this new identification of EM III, see Apostolakou et al. 2007–2008. For the definition of MM IA, see Watrous 2001a, 179–82; 2001b, 213–14; Apostolakou et al. 2007–2008, 39; Watrous and Schultz 2012a, 37–8. For the North Trench, see Hall 1904; Betancourt 1984; Watrous and Schultz 2012a, 37–8. The recent excavations by Watrous at Gournia have again targeted the North Trench and have recovered substantial new deposits, which will form the focus of a major restudy of late Prepalatial pottery in the region. The author is grateful to J. Soles and C. Davaras for permission to examine and mention the late Prepalatial pottery from trenches 5000 and 6000 in Area E3 at Mochlos.

⁵³ Apostolakou et al. 2007–2008; Haggis 2012, 143–47.

⁵⁴ Hayden 2004; Haggis 2005, 65–9. Watrous and Schultz (2012a, 35–6) are critical of Hayden’s and Haggis’ interpretations of EM III continuity at EM IIB sites in the Vrokastro and Kavousi survey areas.

⁵⁵ *Supra* n. 54.

⁵⁶ Seager 1905, 218; Zois 1992; Watrous and Schultz 2012a, 36–40.

⁵⁷ Watrous 2012, 99–100; Watrous and Schultz 2012a, 36–40.

⁵⁸ Watrous and Schultz 2012a, 38–9; see also 2012c. Watrous and Schultz (2012a) suggest that these newcomers occupied

poorer lands in the area and may have developed a patron-client relationship with local elites established at more stable sites like Gournia, Vasiliki, and Mochlos. They trace this possible dynamic through the MM IB–II periods in the region.

⁵⁹ For a different understanding of Chrysokamino, see Betancourt 2006.

⁶⁰ Branigan 2010, 29. For the surveys, see Haggis 2002, 125–29; 2005, 65–9; Whitelaw 2004, 235; 2012.

⁶¹ Watrous and Schultz 2012a. E. Nodarou (pers. comm. 2012), who has conducted petrographic analysis of several EM I–III ceramic assemblages across the island, drew my attention to the use of this fabric before EM III. See also Papadatos and Tomkins (2013) for a detailed discussion of the use of this fabric on Crete from the beginning of the ceramic Neolithic through EM I.

⁶² Whitelaw 2004; Cherry 2010, 118, 123–25, 130; Watrous and Schultz 2012a, 39–40. Excavations on the island by Seager in 1908 and Soles and Davaras from 1989 to 2012 have recovered scattered MM IB–II remains in the cemetery and the settlement on the island, suggesting a noticeable decline in activity at the site after MM IA.

⁶³ Momigliano 2007; Wilson 2007; Hood and Cadogan 2011, 75–226, 276–79, 287–88.

to identify any corresponding EM III (early) levels in Hood’s excavations.⁶⁴ According to Momigliano, the Knossian EM III fine wares include Dark-on-Light Ware and Light-on-Dark Ware, which employ similar shapes and decorative patterns.⁶⁵ The goblets and shallow bowls continue EM II shapes, while the tumblers and rounded cups with thick bands of decoration are new to the period.⁶⁶ The assemblage shows striking differences from the Mirabello pottery in terms of both shapes and motifs, reflecting the strong regional trends of Prepalatial Crete.⁶⁷ Smaller amounts of relief (barbotine) and incised ware are noted with two polychrome jugs that appear to be imports from the Mesara.⁶⁸ In MM IA, these shapes and decorations continued; angular and straight-sided cups appeared; and the numbers of polychrome and barbotine vessels increased, though both are still found in small numbers.⁶⁹

Momigliano’s survey of EM III and MM IA imports and exports is also of considerable interest. First, she identifies Knossian EM IIB and EM III material in deposit Beta on Kythera, noting also the absence of anything as late as Polychrome MM IA.⁷⁰ In EM III, there is no evidence for relations with the mainland, and the Cyclades remain a problem because of site abandonments. Cycladic-type material assignable to the Phylakopi I.2 phase (a jar handle) has been found in early EM III levels of the SFH Foundation Trench.⁷¹ This link is both unique and crucial for efforts to link Phylakopi I.2 levels with EM III, which would help close Rutter’s gap. There are two other vases, including a dark burnished and incised mug of Phylakopi I.2 type, from less secure contexts in House B.⁷² MM

IA sherds are found across the Aegean at Kythera, Lerna, and Aegina, in a fill beneath a Phylakopi II floor, in deposit A at Akrotiri, and at Lapithos on Cyprus.⁷³ There is one MH I import at Knossos.⁷⁴

This treatment of EM III and MM IA ceramics at Knossos is part of a much broader reassessment of late Prepalatial Crete and the appearance of the first palaces in MM IB.⁷⁵ Detailed ceramic and architectural studies at Phaistos and Knossos by Todaro and Tomkins have produced evidence that Crete’s first palaces were not built from scratch in MM IB but instead represent several stages of large-scale construction from the Final Neolithic to MM I.⁷⁶ According to Tomkins, the construction of the Knossos palace was a dynamic act, with each generation curating and expanding the built space in many phases of a long monumental history.⁷⁷ Court-centered rituals of public gathering offered opportunities for integration and for gaining a sense of common origins, but they also offered individuals and groups the opportunity to negotiate emerging social inequality and access to resources through large-scale provisioning of ritual feasting.⁷⁸ Tomkins suggests that by EM III several parts of the Knossos complex were in place, including a possible Central Building, courts, entrance corridors, and a peripheral building to the north supported by a massive terrace construction.⁷⁹ Whitelaw’s survey of the Knossos Valley has provided further context for these developments, suggesting that a rapid and unprecedented increase occurred in the size of the settlements at Knossos (and Phaistos and Malia) in the late Prepalatial period.⁸⁰ He links this dynamic to the availability and control of the limited

⁶⁴ Momigliano and Wilson 1996, 47–52; Momigliano 2007, 81–2; Hood and Cadogan 2011, 288.

⁶⁵ Momigliano 2007, 84–9.

⁶⁶ Momigliano 2007, 83–94.

⁶⁷ Cf. both the shapes and decoration of the White-on-Dark Wares from Momigliano (2007, 88–9, figs. 3.6, 3.7) (Knossos) and Apostolakou et al. (2007–2008, 39–42, figs. 4, 5) (Pacheia Ammos).

⁶⁸ Momigliano 2007, 84–91.

⁶⁹ Momigliano 2007, 94–103.

⁷⁰ Momigliano 2007, 93–4 (EM III), 99–103 (MM IA); see also Coldstream 1972, 83–91; Broodbank and Kiriati 2007.

⁷¹ Momigliano and Wilson 1996, 45, fig. 27, no. P 158; Momigliano 2007, 94.

⁷² *Supra* n. 71.

⁷³ *Supra* n. 5; Momigliano 2007, 100–3.

⁷⁴ *Supra* n. 73.

⁷⁵ *Supra* n. 36. The bibliography is too extensive to summarize here, but the articles in the proceedings of two recent conferences are a good start (Barrett and Halstead 2004; Schoep et al. 2012).

⁷⁶ In general, see Schoep and Tomkins 2012. For Knossos, see Tomkins 2012. For Phaistos, see Todaro 2012. For Malia, see Schoep 2002, 2012. Whitelaw (2012, 120–47) outlines

new evidence for the appearance of the palaces in the late Prepalatial period. Finally, Cherry (2010) reexamines the evidence for off-island contacts and the gradual emergence of complexity in the Prepalatial period to support his previous arguments (Cherry 1983, 1986) for the sudden and late appearance of the palaces. He states that his earlier view “might now be refined by narrowing the decisive period of change to MMIA alone (instead of EMIII/MMIA) or perhaps more simply to ‘very late prepalatial’” (Cherry 2010, 127).

⁷⁷ Tomkins 2012, 64–9. “The impression is of a building complex that is always in the process of becoming, a palimpsest of multiple, episodic investments of material and symbolic resources and thus a dynamic rather than a static or unitary entity. . . . Rather the Court Complex, like other prehistoric monuments . . . was a constant work in progress, lacking any particular, foreseeable outcome. . . . Each generation curated or modified, extended or reduced the building in accordance with . . . the social identities, values, strategies and relations that were in operation” (Tomkins 2012, 64).

⁷⁸ Tomkins 2012, 66.

⁷⁹ Tomkins 2012, 49–59, figs. 2.6–8. See also the cover illustration to the book.

⁸⁰ Whitelaw 2004, 2012.

fertile land around these sites and the need to expand available agricultural catchments to feed the growing populations at these nascent urban centers.⁸¹

How emerging elites mobilized labor to create the first regional economies on Crete in the late Prepalatial period is another significant question whose answers have bearing not only on the appearance of palaces on Crete but also on the island's subsequent engagement with the Cyclades from MM IA. Haggis has interpreted peak sanctuaries that appear in EM III–MM IA as potentially the most significant regional apparatus of the late Prepalatial economy.⁸² He suggests the peak sanctuaries served as the social and religious basis for the elite's control over the regional labor pool, the development of extensive agricultural projects, production, mobilization, and interregional interaction. Similar large-scale ritual behavior is also attested at late Prepalatial cemeteries; however, new evidence suggests that both of these phenomena were preceded by large gatherings in the courts at Knossos and Phaistos from the Final Neolithic/EM I.⁸³ Equally significant, Broodbank and others have emphasized that the appearance of new seafaring technology with the adoption of deep-hulled sailing vessels on Crete (first depicted on MM I–II seals) was important for increasing the distance (to 100–150 km per day), direction, and scale of trade both on and off the island and gave Cretans access to more direct routes to the Cyclades.⁸⁴ Broodbank suggests that the decline of Phylakopi I culture (with very little Minoan contact) may have been closely linked to the adoption of this new technology and a reorientation of Cretan exchange networks along more direct routes to the islands.⁸⁵

I return to the topic of a Cretan perspective on the proposed EC III gap to ask whether there have been advances since Rutter's definition of the problem. At the very least, there has been significant progress in the definition of EM III as a proper phase, and this will continue with the publication of several new Mirabello deposits, which should provide another window into the possible overlap of the Phylakopi I levels and EM III. The small number of links between EM III and Phylakopi I.2 material at Knossos is one part

of the theory of Broodbank and others identifying early Phylakopi I as the phase that should fill Rutter's gap.⁸⁶ The recent publication of Phylakopi suggests new Phylakopi I deposits will be difficult to find, but the recent discovery of MM IA sherds in deposit A at Thera with Phylakopi I.3 material provides one test case, and the forthcoming publication of the new excavations at Dhaskalio should provide another important perspective.⁸⁷ New excavations on Crete at Knossos, Poros, Petras, Mochlos, and Palaikastro might provide others; however, Broodbank has also suggested that the absence of interaction may not be a problem of archaeological visibility but instead may reflect the actual existence of mutually exclusive exchange networks in this period (his Island and Southwestern Networks).⁸⁸ This view has, however, been challenged by the new EM IIB and MM IA finds from Akrotiri and the continued consumption of Cycladic raw materials on Crete at late Prepalatial sites like Mochlos, suggesting at least some contact in these periods.⁸⁹

From a Cretan perspective, the site that may offer the greatest potential for new evidence for both the EB III–MB I transition and the broader subject of Minoanization in the Aegean is Kastri on Kythera. The recent survey there has answered and raised several important questions about Minoan colonization, trade, and craft production, but what is needed now is a much larger sample from Kastri to explore these ideas further.⁹⁰ The site's physical setting and size is impressive, but one is equally struck by how little of Kastri has been excavated and how much remains available for exploration.⁹¹

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⁸¹ Whitelaw 2012.

⁸² Manning 1994, 239–51; Haggis 1999. For peak sanctuaries in general, see Rutkowski 1988; Peatfield 1990; Watrous 1995; Kyriakidis 2005; Briault 2007; Faro 2008; Nowicki 2011.

⁸³ Todaro 2012; Tomkins 2012. For communal rituals at late Prepalatial cemeteries, see Soles 1992, 226–42; Murphy 1998; Branigan 2010, 28–9; Legarra Herrero 2012, 343–51.

⁸⁴ Broodbank 2000, 341–49; see also Manning 1994, 240–41; Bevan 2004, 108–9; Branigan 2010, 26–7; Sherratt 2010, 94.

⁸⁵ Broodbank 2000, 351–61.

⁸⁶ Broodbank 2000, 331–35; Momigliano 2007, 94.

⁸⁷ *Supra* n. 8. Renfrew 2007, 486–87; Renfrew et al. (forthcoming).

⁸⁸ Broodbank 2000, 355, fig. 120.

⁸⁹ *Supra* nn. 7, 8, 40.

⁹⁰ Broodbank 2004; Broodbank and Kiriati 2007.

⁹¹ Hope Simpson and Lazenby 1972, fig. 3; Huxley and Coldstream 1972.

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