

Popular Religion and Ritual

in prehistoric and ancient Greece
and the eastern Mediterranean

edited by

Giorgos Vavouranakis
Konstantinos Kopanias
Chrysanthos Kanellopoulos

ARCHAEPRESS ARCHAEOLOGY



ARCHAEOPRESS PUBLISHING LTD

Summertown Pavilion

18-24 Middle Way

Summertown

Oxford OX2 7LG

www.archaeopress.com

ISBN 978-1-78969-045-3

ISBN 978-1-78969-046-0 (e-Pdf)

© Archaeopress and the individual authors 2018

Sponsored and funded by the Department of History and Archaeology of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens

Language editing: Colin F. Macdonald

Cover: Artist's impression of a Cretan Dark Age procession. Drawing by D. Koukoulas.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the copyright owners.

Printed in England by Oxuniprint, Oxford

This book is available direct from Archaeopress or from our website www.archaeopress.com

Contents

List of contributors	iii
Popular religion and ritual: introductory notes	vii
Giorgos Vavouranakis	
Ritual, multitude and social structure in Minoan Crete	1
Giorgos Vavouranakis	
What relationship with the First palace of Phaistos? The funerary complexes of Kamilari and Ayia Triada in the Protopalatial period	11
Ilaria Caloi	
Mass and elite in Minoan peak sanctuaries.....	19
Matthew Haysom	
Inverting vases in Bronze Age Crete: Where? When? Why?.....	29
Santo Privitera	
A Minoan ‘ <i>chytrós</i> ’? Unexpected archaeological evidence for the possible pre-historic origin of an ancient Greek ceremonial practice	39
Lefteris Platon	
Metamorphoses and hybridity in the wall-paintings at Akrotiri, Thera.....	47
Annette Højen Sørensen, Walter L. Friedrich and Kirsten Molly Søholm	
Approaches to popular religion in Late Bronze Age Greece	55
Helène Whittaker	
The Mycenaean figurines revisited	63
Nagia Polychronakou Sgouritsa	
Mount Lykaion (Arkadia) and Mount Oros (Aegina): two cases of Late Bronze Age sacred ‘high places’	73
Eleni Salavoura	
The ‘Minoan Goddess with Upraised Arms’ today.....	85
Theodore C. Eliopoulos	
Re-positioning ‘rural’ sanctuaries within the Cypro-Archaic societies: some considerations	97
Anastasia Leriou	
Popular religion in ancient Judah during the 8th and 7th centuries BC. The case of the female pillar figurines	105
Valia Papanastasopoulou	
Representations of the demon-god Bes in Rhodes and Samos during the 7th and 6th centuries BC and their influence on popular religious beliefs: Bes and the ‘fat-bellied demons’	113
Electra Apostola	

Of curses and cults: private and public ritual in Classical Xypete	125
Jessica L. Lamont and Georgia Boundouraki	
Cursing rituals as part of household cult: a fourth century BC inscribed bowl from Salamis	137
Yannis Chairidakis	
Representations of masked figures: a comparative study and an interpretative approach to their cult-use and meaning	143
Maria G. Spathi	
Detecting the cult of a border sanctuary on the Messenian slopes of Mount Taygetos	157
Socrates Koursoumis	
Popular religion and the beginnings of the Olympic Games.....	165
Panos Valavanis	

Ritual, multitude and social structure in Minoan Crete

Giorgos Vavouranakis

Introduction

Popular images of Minoan Crete frequently include scenes of ritual activity, such as processions, human figures in front of altars, or sanctuaries sometimes full of people. Indeed, research holds that ritual was not simply a fundamental component of social life on the island, but also a main axis of socio-historical evolution through the third and second millennium BC. Thus, it has been recently suggested that the Minoan palaces, the par excellence feature of Bronze Age Crete, were the equivalents of Syrian temples and not places of political authority (Schoep 2012). This is not the place to examine the political vs. ritual debate concerning the character of the Minoan palaces. It suffices to note that ritual and other ceremonial activities, especially the ones with public participation, were part and parcel of the palatial phenomenon, which also included the transformation of Crete from a series of small-scale communities to regional societies with institutional rather than kin-based organisation.

The palatial emergence was paralleled with a significant reinforcement of public ritual activity throughout Crete. Popular sanctuaries were established on mountain peaks. Caves attracted similar activities, too. At the beginning of the so-called Old Palace period or Middle Minoan (henceforth MM) IB in pottery terms (c. 2000-1900 BC) food and drink continued to be consumed outside tombs and in the open-air spaces of cemeteries, as it had been since the late Prepalatial period (Early Minoan and henceforth EM III – MM

IA, c. 2300-2000 BC). Such acts are considered to have gradually disconnected from the strict identification with their mortuary context and, instead, to have acquired a generic symbolic and essentially social role (Vavouranakis 2007: 161).

This paper is concerned with the spreading of popular ritual in early second millennium BC Crete and, more specifically, the social dimension of this Old Palace phenomenon. To this aim, the paper reviews the main contexts of popular rituals and then argues that their adequate understanding requires the re-conceptualisation of the popular element of Minoan society as ‘multitude’ (Figure 1).

Peak sanctuaries

Peak sanctuaries, as already mentioned, constitute one of the main expressions of popular ritual in MM Crete (Figure 2). They are examined in detail by Matthew Haysom in this volume, so only a few points pertinent to the present discussion are mentioned here. Peak sanctuaries were mostly naturally demarcated places, where people engaged in cultic acts and deposited figurines and other votive items. Most peak sanctuary sites allowed visual contact with other similar sites. This feature allowed the participants of ritual acts to feel connected to other groups of people in the wider region. Bogdan Rutkowski (1986: 94) further emphasised the connection of many such sanctuaries to pastoral activities, not only due to their position high up in the mountains but also because of the animal figurines deposited in them.

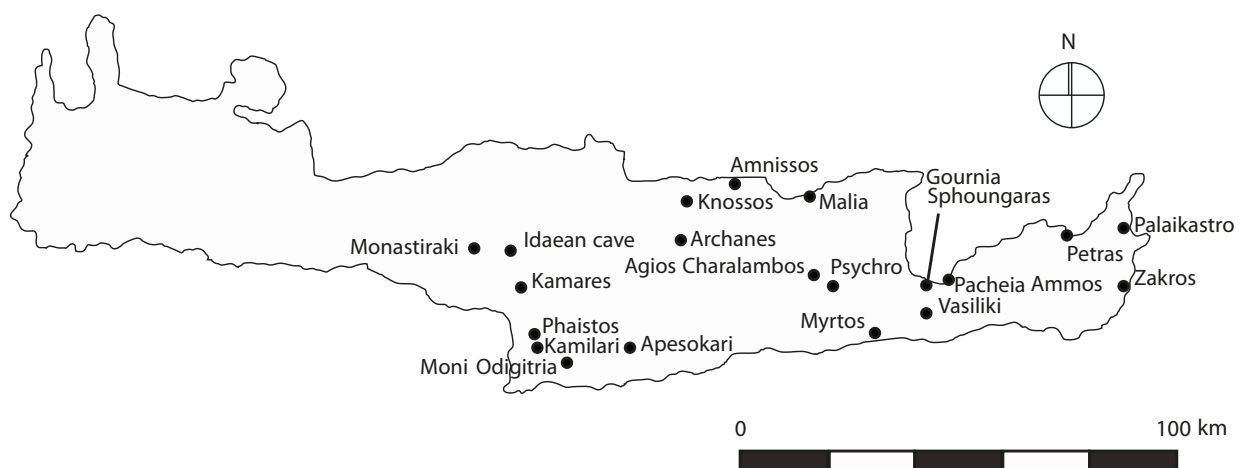


Figure 1: Map of Crete with main sites mentioned in the text.

John Cherry (1986) attempted to link the peak sanctuaries to the palaces and regarded them as territorial markers of political authority. This interpretation was countered by Alan Peatfield's (1990) study, which showed that each peak sanctuary had a strong local character and that the artefacts deposited are mostly non-palatial. Peatfield suggested that these sanctuaries were places of popular activity and probably ritual hubs for the communities of their respective regions. Donald Haggis (1999) tried to re-connect the peak sanctuaries to the palatial emergence. He proposed that the public gatherings constituted labour pools for the Old Palace elites. From his point of view the lack of palace-style depositions served the elites, which found a medium for the smooth penetration of the social web. Specifically, and always according to Haggis, the elites saw the peak sanctuaries as an occasion to manifest their leading abilities in decision making as regards issues of wider social interest, without having to openly confront the rest of the people. Interesting and nuanced as it may be, this interpretation is based largely upon negative evidence.

Steven Soetens (2006) has also studied the peak sanctuaries. He developed a GIS model, which allowed him to argue that they were placed at key-points for

the circulation of people, especially in relation to agropastoral production, but that they were also closely connected to their surrounding settlements. Soetens' work strengthens the local and popular character of the peak sanctuaries. By contrast, Matthew Haysom (this volume) has shifted the discussion back to the elites. He links peak sanctuary votives to the Minoan elites through the predominant symbolic connotations of the former to masculinity and physical competition. He then argues that participation in peak sanctuaries was not restricted to the rural population. Rather, these sanctuaries were places of competition between the elites and the rest of the population and as a result they were both popular cult contexts and expressions of elite ideology. Haysom concludes that such a dual approach may resolve the opposition between pro-elite and non-elite interpretations.

Sacred caves

Caves are another context for ritual activity in Bronze Age Crete (Rutkowski 1986: 47-72; Tyree 2001; 2017). They had been used as hosts of social gatherings since the Neolithic (Tomkins 2013), as burial places and some of them, such as the Idean cave, as foci of ritual activities (Manteli, 2006). The Eilytheia cave at Amnisos may have been used either for burials or for cult activity



Figure 2: View of the peak sanctuary at Petsofas from the south-west (photo: author).

or both in the FN-EM II period (Tyree, 2006: 332). At the end of the Prepalatial period, the Idaean and the Kamares caves began to be used as places of cult. Cult activity extended to many other caves in the Old Palace period, but their related levels have been usually found mixed with the depositions of the New Palace period (MM III – Late Minoan – henceforth LM – I in pottery terms or c. 1700-1450 BC).

Ritual activity in these caves frequently revolved around stalagmites and parts of the bedrock shaped as altars and it probably hinged upon altered states of consciousness caused by the lack of light and/or by the lighting of fires. Humidity and the almost standard presence of the element of water in smaller or larger pools must have accentuated the ritual experience. Other features of sacred caves include the deposition of pottery and the consumption of drink, animal sacrifices and/or their meat consumption and the deposition of votives, such as figurines and, most distinctively, weapons. Many of the latter are non-functional and thus their deposition was a purely symbolic gesture (overview of the features of and ritual acts in caves by Tyree 2013).

Rutkowski (1986: 64-65) has argued that most of the sacred caves were places of popular pilgrimage and cult. However, the status items at the largest caves, such as the Idaean, Kamares and Psychro, are suggestive of elite involvement, at least in the New Palace period, when caves reach their full floruit as cult places. There is evidence to suggest that such involvement may be stretched back to the Old Palace period, too. Thus, the fine MM pottery deposited in the Kamares cave has strong links with the palace of Phaistos. For example, the spouted jar, which is one of the main vessel shapes of the Kamares assemblage, was the distinctive serving vessel at Phaistos (Van de Moortel 2011). Moreover, and following Haysom's (this volume) aforementioned reasoning about the importance of male symbolism in peak sanctuary votives, the deposition of weapons makes it possible to see an early elite interest in sacred caves, too. Such interest suggests that sacred caves, like peak sanctuaries, were one more context for the dynamic negotiation of elite and non-elite relations in the Old Palace period.

Cemeteries

It is well established that changes in funerary customs are linked to the transformation of Crete from a series of small EM communities to regional MM societies organised around institutions, which may have included a primary form of the state. For example, the consumption of food and drink at cemeteries declined and prominent tombs built above the ground were abandoned. Both these changes were gradual, as they did not become manifest until the end of MM IB, when most

of the Old Palaces had been established. Nonetheless, the overlap with the appearance of new contexts of ritual activity, which, apart from the palaces, included the aforementioned peak sanctuaries and sacred caves, is taken to reflect the rising importance of a new type of social organization, which hinged upon the palaces and the public gatherings at their courts (Legarra Hererro 2014: 157-159). Any exceptions to this rule are usually explained as local archaic retentions of older practices (Girella 2013: 158-159) allowed by the loose character of elite control in the Old Palace period (Knappett 1999). Alternatively, the shift of ritual focus from the cemetery to the palace is described as the triumph of an ideology of indigenism, which prevailed after the cessation of imports in EM IIB. According to this argument, palaces proved more suitable arenas for the ritual appropriation of such an ideology (Hamilakis 2014).

Public gathering areas

Public open-air spaces attained a crucial role in Minoan social life. The EM IIB settlement at Myrtos-Phournou Koryphi had a central open space above the remains of the EM IIA phase (Warren 1972: 22). EM II Vasiliki also featured a public space to the west of the West House (Zois 1976: 72). Phaistos (Todaro 2012) and Knossos (Tomkins 2012) had been featuring an open space each in the central parts of their respective hills since the Final Neolithic (henceforth FN) and EM I respectively. The fact that they were eventually succeeded by the central courts of the respective palaces is telling of their significance during the Prepalatial period, too.

These central courts are the defining features of the palaces, because they were architecturally designed around the former, hence the key-role of palatial courts not only in public ceremonies but in the circulation and overall function of the palatial buildings (Palyvou 2002). The west courts of the palaces are also very important. They constituted the meeting points between the palaces and the towns around them. The west court at Phaistos had additionally attained a long history of ceremonial activity (Todaro 2012). Public open-air spaces may be found outside exclusive palatial control, too. Monastiraki (Kanta 2006) features a central court that is partly open to public access and thus as much part of the settlement as of the palatial building itself. Gournia may have featured a public square, which was partly annexed later by the LM IB palatial building.

However, the best-known example of a non-palatial public space is the so-called Agora at Malia, which is surrounded by storage and ceremonial facilities, and houses. The Agora co-existed with the palace and Quartier Mu, a complex with both craft and ceremonial functions (Poursat 2010). The existence of three alternative hosts of public ceremonies has been

interpreted as evidence of a heterarchical organisation, namely of horizontally connected corporate groups, each controlling one of the three aforementioned architectural complexes. The political authority is assumed to have resided in Quartier Mu rather than the palace. The latter has been recently considered a Minoan equivalent to the prehistoric Syrian temples (Schoep 2012). A related supposedly bottom-up argument about the identity of the palatial authority holds that the palaces were the result of the agency of 'houses' (Driessen 2010). The latter are conceptualised as corporate and thus heterarchically inter-connected groups, whose constitution was based either on real or on imaginary ties of common family descent and usually but not exclusively on co-residence.

This is not the place to assess the validity of the above interpretations. It suffices to point out that the emphasis has been again placed on the top of the social pyramid. Even the argument for the agency of 'houses' essentially explores how a few small groups rose from the bottom to the top of the social pyramid. One more example may illustrate this interpretative tendency. A phenomenological study (Letesson and Vansteenhuyse 2006) of the function of the west courts has explored patterns of inter-visibility between the spectators in the court and the people standing in the windows of the west facade of the palace to conclude that the west courts were instrumental in the top-down transmission of political messages, which would help the political elites to legitimise their authority ideologically. As a result, and although the importance of public spaces in Minoan Crete has been well acknowledged and thoroughly studied, especially the relation between the palatial elites and the rest of the people, research tends to concentrate on the palatial and, more generally, authoritative, end of this relation.

The western model concerning the relation between political authority and society

It is pertinent to offer a few overall comments about previous research on Minoan public ritual and other ceremonial activity. The above review has established that the Old Palace period saw an increased emphasis on popular ritual, which rose in parallel with the establishment of the palaces. However, and although the two phenomena seem actually inter-connected, Minoan research has not explored them to the same degree. The palaces have almost monopolised research focus, while the social role of popular ritual in Old Palace Crete has yet to be adequately understood. Several of the interpretations presented above see popular ritual as an elite ideological instrument (e.g. Cherry or Haggis). Others disconnect the two altogether and approach popular ritual from a genre-style descriptive premise, either implicitly (Peatfield) or explicitly (Rutkowski). Diachronic changes in popular ritual are

equally problematic. Thus, the passage from Prepalatial popular funerary rites aiming at communal cohesion to the Old Palace public ceremonies, which were presumably instrumental to the elites, is still a gap in our knowledge. Attempts to override this gap either downplay the role of the elites and their asymmetrical relation to the rest of the people (e.g. Hamilakis) or maintain a focus on the top of the social pyramid instead of its dynamic relation to its lower echelons (e.g. Driessen).

The lack of reflection upon popular ritual may be plausibly attributed to the under-theorisation of the notion of the 'popular' or, simply put, what we mean by 'the rest of society' in Minoan Crete. This is in stark contrast to the detailed understanding of, and the plethora of available, alternative, interpretative models about, political authority on Crete. The latter has always been on the top of Minoan research agenda, from the time of Evans to the post-processual and other equally critical approaches, which, as already mentioned above, have either downgraded the political element in the palatial process and/or maintained a focus on power and authority despite their wish for bottom-up understandings of Minoan society.

Traditional approaches allow the assumption that the 'rest of society' was a political body comprehensively constituted and able to operate with a general intellect or collective wish but only in response to the agency of the political authority. The idea of such a 'body politic' may be also implicit in the processual models, which appeared from the early 1970s and mostly after the publication of Colin Renfrew's *Emergence of Civilisation* (1972) until the late 1980s. Paul Halstead's (1988) review of these models demonstrates a common need to understand how the people reacted to the agency of the elites and whether the latter persuaded, tricked or coerced the rest of society. The polarisation between the authority and the people is the result of research insistence upon the identity of the former (e.g. Renfrew's proposal for cunning managers or Halstead's alternative about successful farmers). This insistence has resulted in the detailed circumscription of political authority, which necessitates an equally detailed delineation of its socio-political interlocutor, the rest of society. The implicit identification of the latter with some form of political body stems out of Old Palace Crete being envisaged as a (primary or proto-) state society (Cherry 1986), which is the only type of socio-political organisation that requires a 'body politic' to respond to. The same view on power and people has more recently been re-addressed by Vansteenhuyse and Letesson (2006), who emphasise the emission of political messages by the elites to the people during public gatherings in the west courts of the palaces. This view allows the suggestion that the people were somewhat passive and may be rather characterised as

mass. The problem of such identifications lies in the variability of popular forms of ritual activity, which has been reviewed above and which is not explained adequately.

Corporate group models, such as Driessen's house model, avoid the polarisation between the authority and the rest of society and as a result they avoid the pitfall of the body politic, because they place emphasis on horizontal social organization. Nevertheless, they fail to address the phenomena of urban formations, regional sanctuaries and the rather extensive social radius of the palatial phenomenon. In order to avoid an 'either/or' question between corporate groups and wider social formations Schoep and Knappett (2004) have argued that Old Palace Crete may have experienced a dual process of social evolution, with both hierarchical and heterarchical features. Due to such a process and if states existed in Minoan Crete, they were institutions of extensive rather than intensive and thus of loose and contestable control (Damilati and Vavouranakis 2011). It is possible then that Old Palace corporate groups were also embedded in a wider social matrix. For example, and if Driessen's suggestion that the palaces were the result of co-operative agency by several houses is accepted, it is necessary to understand the characteristics of this co-operation, given that it lasted for several centuries and thus attained a stable form for a considerable stretch of time. The conceptualisation of the 'rest of the people' in Old Palace Crete needs to be flexible enough to allow on the one hand the fluid nature of political authority at the time and, on the other hand, the variability of the manifestations of popular agency, such as the peak sanctuaries and the continuing emphasis on funerary food and drink consumption. As a result, any definition that adheres to the body politic or any other organic metaphor implying a hierarchically structured and homogeneous entity should be avoided.

The concept of the multitude

The concept that may prove helpful to the above need is the multitude. It has recently become popular through the work of Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri (2004: 103-227). The two social thinkers have attempted to understand the current globalised world. The rise of financial corporate groups, such as the international corporations themselves or the so-called 'markets,' have weakened the power of the states and their institutions. Moreover, global financial interests have loosened class structures, since they have been pushing the great mass of the population into a homogenised and proletarian whole, through practices such as nomadic and flexible labour conditions. Hardt and Negri note that it is unfeasible to transform the global population into a political body such as 'the people' because the scale of such a project is too large to allow

for a global general intellect such as class consciousness to arise. Furthermore, the post-modern world we live in does not encourage the formation and maintenance of greater social frameworks. Rather it promotes their fragmentation.

Hardt and Negri stress that the problem of the globalised world mentioned above hinges upon the inability of traditional thinking to accept that social subjects are multiple entities and thus unable to hold authority. Instead according to the same way of thinking, they must be ruled, because only single entities are rulers, such as the king, the party or the people (and in reference to Minoan Crete the elite or the house). The idea that social agency and the holding of authority require unity has also been tackled by Paolo Virno (2004: 21-43), another social thinker who has worked on the concept of the multitude. Virno criticizes the view that collectivity is a course of convergence from the many individuals to the one body. He argues that becoming One does not have to lead towards the unifying promise of sovereign authority such as the State.

Instead, he emphasises language, intellect and the general faculties of the human condition as a premise for social unity that does not absorb singularity. Virno goes on to suggest that if the general intellect is conceived as public intellect, then it becomes a way of escaping private thinking. It opens each one of us to connect with others and this feature is essential for the maintenance of the multitude. First, it provides stable points of reference, such as the common values and goals that are forged through the public intellect. In addition, it invites new participants, which refresh the network communication and make the multitude expand. Open communication also means that commonality is retained but not reduced to sameness. Individual distinctions are respected and not threatened, since communication always requires two distinct parts, and distinct parts allow different people to pursue the same goals in diverse ways. Furthermore, the commonality of the multitude renders the latter a network of inclusion and not of exclusion, which is usually the basis of social distinction and political authority. As such, the multitude is by definition opposite to centralized authority.

Nonetheless and in order to oppose the latter actively, the members of the multitude need to produce common goods and to focus on a common political project. Hardt and Negri place emphasis on immaterial goods, such as knowledge that may be shared and the very same values and relations that form the communication network of the multitude. This suggestion is reminiscent of Virno's view about the importance of human intellectual faculties. Moreover, the production of common goods on the one hand brings about the multitude and on the other hand it creates contexts

outside the exclusive control of sovereign authorities. These contexts inevitably become virtual foci of resistance. Furthermore, the tendency of the multitude toward connectedness and expansion allows the quick spreading of resistance to new and diverse groups and individuals in a piecemeal but effective manner.

Swarm intelligence

Effectiveness is achieved through the coordination of the different members of the multitude, which do not have to conform to a single way of thinking. The multitude employs swarm intelligence (Kennedy et al. 2001). The latter describes the collective intelligence of ants, bees, flocks of birds, but also of groups of people. It starts from the premise that intelligence is the ability to optimize behaviour in order to overcome environmental constraints in a trial and error manner. It follows that aggregations of individuals mean that more trials and errors happen within the same stretch of time and thus statistical probabilities to achieve the goal augment significantly. Furthermore, the communication between the members of the swarm means that each member learns by observing and coming into contact with others. The aims of swarms are usually simple but complex collective behaviours with concrete results may be produced through the combination of simple acts, provided that all members follow a few basic rules of conduct. Ant and bee colonies are typical such examples.

In order to apply this approach to human societies, Kennedy, Eberhart and Shi (2001: 94-114) argue that human intelligence does not rely so much on the inner cognitive procession of information, but, rather, on sociality, which promotes the exchange of information and enhances the ability to form new and elaborate concepts in order to get in touch with others. John Barrett (2013) has reached a similar argument about the evolution of human cognition in early Prehistory. He has argued that the human mind did not evolve because people were able to 'download' and store information outside the human brain into material media, such as rock art or, later, written records. Rather, social relations operated as a storage medium for knowledge. This knowledge was recalled and re-appropriated every time a social relation was enacted in practice.

These suggestions converge at the importance of social relations in augmenting and enhancing human cognition and the effectiveness of human agency. They also point out that it is possible for people to coordinate their actions without losing their individuality. Hardt and Negri bring about the example of the 'White Overalls,' a group of young unemployed people in Italy, who have organized protests in their homeland, but they have also participated in the Zapatistas movement in the Seattle protests in 1999 and finally in the Genoa

G-8 protests in 2001. They were a group that would form out of and re-dissolve into thin air. The importance of the White overalls as leader of the multitude lies in 'their network organization, spatial mobility, and temporal flexibility, which facilitated the organization of a coherent political force against the new global system of power' (Hardt and Negri 2004: 266-267).

The multitude before the establishment of the modern nation-state

Although discussion about the multitude is focused on the current reality, the ideas just set out are pertinent to the basic tendency of the human condition towards social life. In this respect, the importance of common knowledge, values and ways of life may be explored with reference to past societies, too. Indeed, Virno and Hardt and Negri admit that they have borrowed the multitude from the philosophical and political thought of the 17th century and more specifically, from the writings of Baruch Spinoza and Thomas Hobbes. Virno (2004: 21-23) explains that Spinoza defined the 'multitudo' as a plurality that persists and is able to act in both a political and collective manner. It has remarkable coherence but it does not reduce the value of its constituent parts into a hierarchical structure.

Furthermore, Spinoza (2004 [1670-1677]) saw the multitude as an entity eager to expand its power until it embraces the totality of society. Thomas Hobbes (2005 [1651]) agreed on this but saw eagerness as greediness. Hobbes prioritized the emergence of the single sovereign ruler as a way to tame the difficult human nature. For Hobbes the multitude had negative connotations. It belonged to a state of social being before the state and its order, in nature and its chaos. As Virno notes again, Hobbes thought that the multitude presented a challenge to political unity, resistance to authority and an active resistance to the transference of natural rights on to the sovereign leader(s), through the very composition and behaviour of such an entity.

The multitude in Minoan Crete

Spinoza and Hobbes lived and wrote at a time when the modern – and essentially nation – state was still fluid and under formation. For this reason, it is possible to examine the applicability of the concept of the multitude to Minoan Crete, because and as already noted, the emergence of the palaces marked the establishment of a fluid and flexible set of social and political institutions. Notwithstanding the great differences between the two socio-historical contexts of the Prehistoric Aegean and early modern Europe, the period before the Thirty Years' War featured a fluid mosaic of monarchies, republics, empires and most indicatively, the Holy Roman Empire in Germany, with its many principalities, duchies and free cities.

This mosaic is not incompatible with the establishment of several palaces in central Crete, their co-existence with non-palatial towns in east Crete and the parallel establishment of a-typical palatial forms, such as Monastiraki. In the same vein, palaces required a socio-political conlocutor organized at a similar geographical scale to their regional radius of influence. The proliferation of urban centres in the Old Palace period demonstrates that such social organization had indeed been reached. The fact that not all of these urban centres featured palaces, especially the ones in east Crete, suggests a significant degree of organizational diversity beyond the reach of central institutions, which fits easily within the concept of the multitude.

Another Old Palace feature that evokes the same concept is the balance between individuality and collectivity. Such balance is observed in the growing popularity of seals from the late Prepalatial through to the Old Palace period, which indicates that individual identities were preserved and not subsumed by collective modes of sociality. The emergence of the cup, a shape for individual consumption, as the key element of commensal occasions is equally telling. For example, the significant variety of motifs on the decorated cups at Lakkos, Petras, in east Crete suggests horizontal social differentiations. Vertical structures at Petras are instead assumed to have hinged upon the standardization of the production of polychrome pottery (Haggis 2007: 755-762). Nonetheless, similar levels of standardisation had been reached in Prepalatial Mesara, a place, which then saw the establishment of a palace at Phaistos and thus some form of vertical social structuring (Todaro 2013: 231-240). Standardization then may be reflecting social cohesion rather than differentiation. Indeed, the ability of the MM users of tholos tomb B at Apesokari, a community peripheral to the palatial centre of Phaistos, to consume Kamares ware (Figure 3) further corroborates the idea that standardized pottery production and variability in decoration may be actually pointing towards the emergence of the multitude rather than the institutionalization of social hierarchy.

The latter may only be observed in the main palatial centres of central Crete. Thus, Old Palace assemblages at Knossos feature a low ratio of decorated cups and a high ratio of undecorated ones (Macdonald and Knappett 2007: 163-165). Such difference may be taken to reflect the wish of specific individuals to set themselves apart

from the rest of the social group. A similar pattern has been argued for late Prepalatial Phaistos, where the emergence of the plain conical cup as the main and widely used drinking vessel is counterpointed by restricted assemblages of decorated tableware (Todaro 2013: 199, 264). However, and beyond the strict sphere of the palace centres, there is more evidence to support the wish of the multitude to expand its power. Such evidence is the guarded road network in far east Crete, which remained away from any palatial influence (Tzedakis et al. 1989). The only explanation for the construction and maintenance of such a network is the collaboration between different urban centres, such as Zakros and Palaikastro. A similar network, not of roads but of beacons is argued to have existed in Pediada, south of Knossos. It has been assumed that this network was created under the auspices of a sovereign authority (Panagiotakis et al. 2013), but the evidence from east Crete contradicts this view and allows the suggestion that the beacon network was also a work by a multitude.

Popular ritual and the multitude in Middle Minoan Crete

The spreading of popular cult and of other ritual practices in the Old Palace period may also be considered as a sign of the emergence of the multitude. The fact that different arenas for public ceremonies appeared at about the same time agrees with the idea that the multitude creates different focal points, each of which is discrete and independent of the others, but at the same time one affects the other. The delicate balance between similarity and diversity within a single ritual arena is also telling. Peak sanctuaries are the best example of this balance. They all share a set of common features, such as elevation, the general



Figure 3: A Kamares ware drinking vessel from tholos tomb B at Apesokari (photo: Michael Zoitopoulos).

lack of architectural features, and visual connection with other peak sanctuaries. However, each one is distinct. The artefacts found deposited at these sites present several similarities, such as the bull figurines or the figurines of boxers and other anthropomorphic figurines. Nonetheless and at the same time, each assemblage is unique, and it has been suggested that each peak sanctuary acquired its own material, ritual and social identity on the basis of the specific votive items it attracted (Jones 1999; see also Haysom, this volume).

Several features of the Old Palace funerary record may also be better understood than before through the emergence of the multitude. For example, the importance of the cup as a consumption vessel in ritual acts has already been mentioned with regard to tholos B at Apesokari. Burial Building 6 at Archanes-Phourni may be added as an extra example (Sakellarakis and Sapouna-Sakellarakis 1997: 202-206). The treatment of the dead within Old Palace burial customs may provide further food for thought (review and bibliography in Legarra Herrero 2014). Body handling techniques mostly follow late Prepalatial trends and include the formation of ossuary spaces, such as the pit outside tholos B at Moni Odigitria (Branigan, 2010: 252), Kamilari (Girella 2013) and tholos B at Apesokari. Unfortunately, only the first of the three tholoi has been excavated recently, but the results are rather informative. Skulls and long bones had been grouped together, a fact which also points towards a balance between the retention of individuality and the collectivization of the dead. A similar effect was reached through the many individual pithos burials that were, nonetheless, from Pacheia Ammos (Seager 1916) and Sphoungaras (Hall 1912).

It might be counter-argued that secondary burial practices had existed since the early Prepalatial and, in this respect, late Prepalatial and Old Palace practices should not strike either as exceptional or as particularly telling. However, early Prepalatial funerary customs also included the frequent cleaning of the tombs and thus the destruction of old burial remains or their casual disposal at specific areas, such as the Area of the Rocks at Archanes Phourni (Sakellarakis and Sapouna-Sakellarakis 1997: 232-237). In the late Prepalatial and the Old Palace period, the skeletal material is preserved to a significant higher degree and it becomes materially a lot more visible than before. For example, Agios Charalambos is an example of a rock shelter exclusively devoted to secondary burial (Betancourt 2014). The great building expansion at Archanes Phourni in the Old Palace period (Sakellarakis and Sapouna-Sakellarakis 1997: 244) is also related to a need to preserve old burials. All these practices inevitably resulted in the retention of the personal identity of each of the dead or, at least, part of it.

Reconsidering social organization in the Old Palace period

The appreciation of the multitude and its active presence in social life through ceremonies with wide public or popular participation offers a renewed view of Old Palace Crete. This view emphasizes that the palatial transformation may have been the result of the wider tendency of Minoan society to become better connected in order to strengthen the relations of conviviality, which had characterized the Prepalatial period (Borgna 2004). Such strengthening entailed the reconfiguration of social relations at a larger geographical scale, which allowed Minoan society to expand its ability to act in an integrated manner beyond the limits of the relatively small and dispersed Prepalatial communities. The reasons for such a transformation are beyond the scope of this paper, but it may reasonably be suggested that they may be related to the cessation of imports in EM IIB, and the consequent focus of Crete on a model of economy that combined agropastoral and local craft activities. Such a shift may have triggered the need for internal markets and thus regional social relations that would channel economic interests. The spreading of popular ritual in the Old Palace period both expressed and materialized this tendency (on this see also Anderson 2016).

This view constitutes a significant departure from traditional notions of social transformation, which usually assume a specific force, usually an exclusive social group of elevated status, namely an elite who drives change and manages to take the rest of society with it. The alternative suggestion about Old Palace Crete and empowered corporate groups becomes embedded in a matrix of wider social transformation and their emergence is hence better understood as part of a growth in scale and a consequent institutionalization of pre-existing forms of social organization, such as the 'house(-hold)'. The narrative proposed here decentralizes the palaces from the process of the transformation of Minoan society. Instead, they may be seen as a reaction towards a vertical restructuring of Minoan society against an otherwise widespread ethos of conviviality and horizontal social organization that had been prevailing. This reaction may be justifiably identified with centres that featured a long history, such as Knossos and Phaistos. The latter had been occupied since the Neolithic and had almost immediately developed a wide radius of influence. As a result, the emergence of the multitude provided a serious challenge to their traditional role as regional nodes of the social web.

The above thoughts should not be taken to reiterate the traditional binary opposition between elites and the rest of the people. Although such a reiteration would follow Thomas Hobbes' reasoning that sovereign authority is counter to the multitude, the paper does not share his

view that sovereign power is the inevitable champion of social order and that the imposition of its top down order is against the chaos of the multitude and its greediness for power. This paper wishes to overcome similar dualisms and has employed the concept of the multitude in an inclusive manner, without assuming that its emergence flattened social differentiation, since peak sanctuaries did not exclude elite participation. The multitude then may have incorporated the elites in it as well as other types of social distinction within the wider matrix of the Old Palace regional integration of Cretan societies as a whole.

Bibliography

- Anderson, S.K. 2016. *Seals Craft and Community in Bronze Age Crete*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Barrett, J.C. 2013. The archaeology of mind: it's not what you think. *Cambridge Archaeological Journal* 23.1: 1-17.
- Betancourt, P.P. 2014. *Hagios Charalambos: A Minoan Burial Cave in Crete: I. Excavation and Portable Objects* (Prehistory Monographs 47). Philadelphia: INSTAP Academic Press.
- Borgna, E. 2004. Aegean feasting: a Minoan perspective, in J.C. Wright (ed.) *The Mycenaean Feast* (Hesperia 73.2): 127-59. Princeton: American School of Classical Studies at Athens.
- Branigan, K. 2010. History and use of the cemetery, in A. Vasilakis and K. Branigan (eds) *Moni Odigitria. A Prepalatial Cemetery and its Environs in the Asterousia, Southern Crete* (Prehistory Monographs 30): 251-269. Philadelphia: INSTAP Academic Press.
- Cherry, J.F. 1986. Palaces and polities: some problems in Minoan state formation, in C. Renfrew and J.F. Cherry (eds) *Peer polity interaction and socio-political change*: 19-46. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Damilati, K. and G. Vavouranakis 2011. 'Society against the state?' Contextualizing inequality and power in Bronze Age Crete, in N. Terrenato and D.C. Haggis (eds) *State Formation in Italy and Greece: Questioning the Neoevolutionist Paradigm*: 32-61. Oxford: Oxbow Books.
- Driessen, J. 2010. Spirit of place: Minoan houses as major actors. In D. Pullen (ed.) *Political Economies of the Aegean Bronze Age*: 35-65. Oxford: Oxbow Books.
- Girella, L. 2013. Exhuming an excavation: preliminary notes on the use of the Kamilari tholos tomb in Middle Minoan III, in C.F. Macdonald and C. Knappett (eds) *Intermezzo. Intermediacy and Regeneration in Middle Minoan III Palatial Crete* (BSA Studies 21): 149-59. London: The British School at Athens.
- Haggis, D.C. 1999. Staple finance, peak sanctuaries and economic complexity in late Prepalatial Crete, in A. Chaniotis (ed.) *From Minoan Farmers to Roman Traders: Sidelights on the Economy of Ancient Crete*: 53-86. Stuttgart: Steiner.
- Haggis, D.C. 2007. Stylistic diversity and diacritical feasting at Protopalatial Petras: a preliminary analysis of the Lakkos deposit. *American Journal of Archaeology* 111: 715-775.
- Halstead, P. 1988. On redistribution and the origin of Minoan-Mycenaean palatial economies, in E.B. French and K.A. Wardle (eds) *Problems in Greek Prehistory*: 519-530. Bristol: Bristol Classical Press.
- Hall, E. 1912. Excavations in eastern Crete: Sphoungaras. *Philadelphia University Museum Anthropological Publications* 3.2: 41-73.
- Hamilakis, Y. 2014. *Archaeology and the Senses. Human Experience, Memory, and Affect*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hobbes, T. 2005 [1651]. *Leviathan* (edited by A.P. Martinich). Peterborough: Broadview Press.
- Hardt, M. and A. Negri 2004. *Multitude: War and Democracy in the Age of Empire*. London: Penguin Books.
- Jones, D.W. 1999. *Peak Sanctuaries and Sacred Caves in Minoan Crete* (SIMA Pocketbook 156). Jonsered: P. Åströms förlag.
- Kanta, A. 2006. Monastiraki, a Minoan palatial centre in the valley of Amari, Crete, in A. Kanta and M. Marazzi (eds) *Monastiraki I* (Quaderni della Ricerca Scientifica Serie Beni Culturali 4): 13-34. Napoli: Università degli Studi Suor Orsola Benincasa.
- Kennedy, J., R.C. Eberhart and Y. Shi 2001. *Swarm Intelligence*. San Diego: Academic Press.
- Knappett, C. 1999. Assessing a polity in Protopalatial Crete; the Malia-Lasithi state. *American Journal of Archaeology* 103: 615-639.
- Legarra Herrero, B. 2014. *Mortuary Behaviour and Social Trajectories in Pre- and Protopalatial Crete* (Prehistory Monographs 44). Philadelphia: INSTAP Academic Press.
- Letesson, Q. and K. Vansteenhuyse 2006. Towards an archaeology of perception: 'looking' at the Minoan palaces. *Journal of Mediterranean Archaeology* 19.1: 91-119.
- Macdonald, C.F. and C. Knappett 2007. *Knossos: Protopalatial Deposits in Early Magazine A and the Southwest Houses* (BSA Supplement 41). London: British School at Athens.
- Manteli, K. 2006. Τελετουργική χρήση του Ιδαίου Άντρου ήδη από τη νεολιθική εποχή, in E. Γαβριλάκη & Γ. Τζιφόπουλος (eds) *Πρακτικά Διεθνούς Συνεδρίου. Ο Μυλοπόταμος από την Αρχαιότητα έως σήμερα. Περιβάλλον - Αρχαιολογία - Ιστορία - Λαογραφία - Κοινωνιολογία*: 11-19. Ρέθυμνο: Ιστορική και Λαογραφική Εταιρεία Ρεθύμνου.
- Palyvou, C. 2002. Central courts: the supremacy of the void, in J. Driessen, I. Schoep and R. Laffineur (eds) *Monuments of Minos: Rethinking the Minoan Palaces* (Aegaeum 23): 167-77. Liège and Austin: Université de Liège and University of Texas at Austin - PASP.
- Panagiotakis, N., M. Panagiotaki and A. Sarris 2013. The earliest communication system in the Aegean. *Electryone* 1.2: 13-27 (<http://www.electryone.gr> [accessed on 15 October 2014]).

- Peatfield, A. 1990. Minoan peak sanctuaries: history and society. *Opuscula Atheniensia* 17: 117-31.
- Poursat, J.-C. 2010. Malia: palace, state, city, in O. Krzyszkowska (ed.) *Cretan Offerings: Studies in Honour of Peter Warren* (BSA Studies 18): 259-268. London: British School at Athens.
- Renfrew, C. 1972. The Emergence of Civilisation. *The Cyclades and the Aegean in the Third Millennium B.C.* London: Methuen.
- Rutkowski, B. 1986. *The Cult Places of the Aegean*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Sakellarakis, I. and E. Sapouna-Sakellaraki 1997. *Archanes: Minoan Crete in a New Light*. Athens: Ammos/Eleni Nakou Foundation.
- Schoep, I. 2011. Bridging the divide between the Prepalatial and the Protopalatial periods? In I. Schoep, P. Tomkins and J. Driessen (eds) *Back to the Beginning. Reassessing Social and Political Complexity on Crete during the Early and Middle Bronze Age*: 403-28. Oxford: Oxbow Books.
- Schoep, I. and C. Knappett 2004. Dual emergence: evolving heterarchy, exploding hierarchy, in J. C. Barrett and P. Halstead (eds.) *The Emergence of Civilisation Revisited (Sheffield Studies in Aegean Archaeology 6)*: 21-37. Oxford: Oxbow Books.
- Seager, R.B. 1916. *The Cemetery of Pachyammos, Crete* (University Museum Anthropological Publications 7). Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania.
- Soetens, S. 2006. Minoan Peak Sanctuaries: Building a Cultural Landscape using GIS, unpublished PhD dissertation, Université Catholique de Louvain.
- Spinoza, B. 2004 [1670-1677]. *A Theologico-political Treatise; A Political Treatise* (translated with an introduction by R.H.M. Elwes). Dover Publications: New York.
- Todaro, S. 2012. Craft production and social practices at Prepalatial Phaistos: the background to the First 'Palace,' in I. Schoep, P. Tomkins and J. Driessen (eds) *Back to the Beginning. Reassessing Social and Political Complexity on Crete during the Early and Middle Bronze Age*: 195-235. Oxford: Oxbow Books.
- Todaro, S. 2013. *The Phaistos Hills before the Palace: A Contextual Reappraisal* (Praehistorica Mediterranea 5). Milano: Polimetrica.
- Tomkins, P. 2012. Behind the horizon. Reconsidering the genesis and function of the 'First Palace' at Knossos (Final Neolithic IV-Middle Minoan IB), in I. Schoep, P. Tomkins and J. Driessen (eds.) *Back to the Beginning. Reassessing Social and Political Complexity on Crete during the Early and Middle Bronze Age*: 32-80. Oxford: Oxbow Books.
- Tomkins, P. 2013. Landscapes of identity, ritual and memory. Reconsidering the use of caves on Crete during the Neolithic and Early Bronze Age, in H. Moyes (ed.) *Sacred Darkness. A Global Perspective on the Ritual Use of Caves*: 59-78. Colorado: University Press of Colorado.
- Tyree, L. 2001. Diachronic changes in Minoan cave cult, in R. Laffineur and R. Hägg (eds.) *Potnia: Deities and Religion in the Aegean Bronze Age* (Aegaeum 22): 39-50. Liège and Austin: Université de Liège and University of Texas at Austin - PASP.
- Tyree, L. 2006. Minoan sacred caves. The natural and political landscape, in A. Καλοκαιρινός and X. Δετοράκης (eds), *Πεπραγμένα του Θ' Διεθνούς Κρητολογικού Συνεδρίου* (Τόμος Α2: Προϊστορική περίοδος. Αρχιτεκτονική): 329-342. Ηράκλειο: Εταιρεία Κρητικών Ιστορικών Μελετών.
- Tyree, L. 2013. Defining Bronze Age ritual caves in Crete, in F. Mavridis and J.T. Jensen (eds) *Stable Places and Changing Perceptions: Cave Archaeology in Greece* (BAR International Series 2558): 176-187. Oxford: Archaeopress.
- Tzedakis, Y., S. Chryssoulaki, S. Voutsaki and Y. Veniéri 1989. Les routes minoennes: Rapport préliminaire - Défense de la circulation ou circulation de la défense. *Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique* 113.1: 43-75.
- Van de Moortel, A. 2011. The Phaistos palace and the Kamares cave: a special relationship, in W. Gauß, M. Lindblom, R.A.K. Smith, and J.C. Wright (eds) *Our Cups Are Full: Pottery and Society in the Aegean Bronze Age. Papers Presented to Jeremy B. Rutter on the Occasion of his 65th Birthday* (BAR International Series 2227): 306-318. Oxford: Archaeopress.
- Vavouranakis, G. 2007. *Funerary Landscapes east of Lasithi, Crete, in the Bronze Age* (BAR International Series 1606). Oxford: Archaeopress.
- Virno, P. 2004. *A Grammar of the Multitude. For an Analysis of Contemporary Forms of Life* (Translated by I. Bertoletti, J. Cascaito and A. Casson). Los Angeles: Semiotext(e).
- Warren, P. 1972. *Myrtos: An Early Bronze Age Settlement in Crete* (BSA Supplement 7). London: British School of Archaeology at Athens and Thames and Hudson.
- Zois, A.A. 1976. *Βασιλική Ι. Νέα Αρχαιολογική Έρευνα εις το Κεφάλι Πλησίον του Χωρίου Βασιλική Ιεραπέτρας* (Βιβλιοθήκη της Εν Αθήναις Αρχαιολογικής Εταιρείας 83). Αθήναι: Εν Αθήναις Αρχαιολογική Εταιρεία.