

SOCIAL TRANSFORMATIONS AND THE RISE OF THE STATE IN CRETE *

The debate on the origins of the state, or state formation, in prehistoric Crete rightly continues to arouse interest, with the proponents of an evolutionary or processual model opposed by those who favour a revolutionary explanation or quantum leap; there has even been a revival of interest in the role of east Mediterranean civilisations in state formation in Crete¹.

In *The Foundations of Palatial Crete*, published in 1970, I took up an evolutionary or gradualist approach without proposing a specific explanatory model to account for state formation. Since then I have tried to approach the problem of state formation from two different directions. First, from an overview of the first palaces and their functions, and second from pursuing evidence of social change within the Early Bronze Age. It is this second approach that I wish to take a step further in this paper, by reviewing the evidence for social change during the centuries before state formation took place, and suggesting how these transformations may have facilitated, if not stimulated, the process of state formation.

The Early Bronze Age Threshold

To appreciate, or even identify, social change during the Early Bronze Age (hereafter EBA) it is first necessary to establish at least in broad terms the nature of Cretan society at the beginning of the period. Although recent surveys have demonstrated that we have probably underestimated the density of Late Neolithic settlement in most parts of Crete² the size of Late Neolithic and EM I settlements seems reasonably clear. With the exception of Knossos, which was clearly a substantial village at the very least whatever the details of its growth pattern through the Neolithic³ settlement is confined to farmsteads, hamlets and small villages (although we should note that a number of caves were still occupied in the Late Neolithic). This applies as much to EM I sites such as Ellenes Amariou and the farmstead and hamlet sites in the Ayiofarango⁴ as it does to Late Neolithic ones such as Magasa and the sites surveyed around Kaloi Limenes⁵ and in the western Mesara. The farmsteads are free-standing buildings (they could be little else), but the hamlet or small village at Ellenes

* The author is grateful to the British Academy for a travel grant to assist attendance at the conference.

1 V. WATROUS *et al.*, "A Survey of the Western Mesara Plain in Crete. Preliminary Report", *Hesperia* 62 (1993), 191-248; J. LEWTHWAITE, "Why did Civilisation not emerge more often?", *Minoan Society*, 171-83.

2 WATROUS (*supra* n. 1), 223.

3 C. BROODBANK, "The Neolithic Labyrinth: Social Change at Knossos before the Bronze Age", *Journal of Mediterranean Archaeology* 5 (1992), 39-75; cf T. WHITELAW, "Lost in the Labyrinth", *Journal of Mediterranean Archaeology* 5 (1992), 225-238.

4 A. VASILAKIS, "Προϊστορικές θέσεις στην Μονή Οδηγητρίας, Καλοί Λιμένες", *Κρητική Εστία* 3 (1990), 11-80.

5 A. VASILAKIS, "Ανασκαφή νεολιθικού σπιτιού στους Καλούς Λιμένες της νότιας Κρήτης", *Ειλαπίνη. Τόμος Τιμητικός για τον καθ. Ν. Πλάτωνα* (1987), 45-52.

Amarion appears to have been comprised mainly of houses built in blocks (what Hutchinson called agglutinative architecture) and this of course is true of the latest neolithic buildings excavated by Evans at Knossos. The earliest copper artifact yet found in Crete, a flat axe, came from the area of these buildings, and there is a small corpus of copperwork that can be confidently ascribed to EM I⁶ comprising simple daggers, awls, and chisels. New types of stone figurine also appear in the Late Neolithic and EM I⁷. These are the only significant developments in craft activity at this time, however, and in particular there is still no evidence of Late Neolithic or EM I stone vases and sealstones. Evidence for long-distance trade is also lacking, although several groups of artifact, such as the 'fat lady' figurines and pattern-burnished pottery, point towards increasing contact between Crete and other parts of the Aegean⁸. The Ayia Photia cemetery and some other sites near the northern coast of Crete also reveal close links with the Cyclades in EM I. Elsewhere, the cave and rock-shelter burials of the Late and Sub-Neolithic continue in EM I but are largely replaced in the Asterousia mountains by the first of the circular tholos tombs. These tombs, like the cave and rock-shelter burials, are widely perceived as the burial places of an essentially egalitarian society.

Settlement and Population

We can perhaps best begin our search for evidence of social transformations in the EBA by looking at the size, nature, location and density of settlement foci. The farmstead and hamlet/small village not surprisingly continue to be significant elements in the settlement pattern. Watrous has noted⁹ that in the western Mesara, whilst larger village settlements were scarce in the Late Neolithic (only Phaistos, and site A70 covering 0.35ha were recorded), in the EBA there were 'many' settlements averaging 0.5ha. Megaloi Skinoi in the Ayiofarango covered about 3ha, though not all occupied by buildings, and Ayia Triadha was clearly a substantial settlement. Phaistos (Pl. IV) appears to have been a densely occupied site covering at least one hectare and probably considerably more¹⁰. Elsewhere, other large nucleated settlements were appearing - at Mochlos (0.8ha), Mallia (2.6ha) and Knossos (4.8ha)¹¹ and one suspects that Palaikastro is another.

The architectural character of these EBA villages and larger nucleated settlements is slowly emerging from excavations. At Myrtos and Trypiti villages of clustered 'agglutinative' households appear to continue the tradition of the Late Neolithic/EM I¹². But, within the limited areas excavated, free-standing houses appear to be built in the nucleated settlements at Knossos, Mallia, Ayia Triadha and Phaistos in the EBA. At Palaikastro in EM II and at Knossos in EM III we also see the appearance of monumental architecture. The building at Palaikastro, with walls 2m thick, measured at least 27m x 23m, and appears to have had a large room or hall 20m x 10m¹³. In its way it is every bit as impressive as the so-called North-West Platform at Knossos, which Hood has demonstrated was constructed in EM III

6 K. BRANIGAN, *Aegean Metalwork of the Early and Middle Bronze Ages* (1974), 100.

7 K. BRANIGAN, "Cycladic Figurines and their Derivatives in Crete", *BSA* 66 (1971), 57-78.

8 C. RENFREW, *The Emergence of Civilisation* (1972), 77.

9 WATROUS (*supra* n. 1), 223-4.

10 K. BRANIGAN, *Dancing With Death* (1993), 112-115.

11 T. WHITELAW, "The Settlement at Fournou Korifi, Myrtos, and Aspects of Early Minoan Social Organisation", *Minoan Society*, 339.

12 P. WARREN, *Myrtos. An Early Bronze Age Settlement in Crete* (1972); H. CATLING, "Archaeology in Greece 1988-89", *AR* 35 (1989), 101.

13 R. DAWKINS *et al.*, "Excavations at Palaikastro IV", *BSA* 11 (1905), 272-3.

(Hood, pers. comm.). This L-shaped structure measured at least 34m x 21m, and was raised up as a platform at least 2m high. We do not know the purpose of either structure, but they are clearly built on a different scale to contemporary houses in the same settlements.

The development of nucleated settlements covering areas from around 1ha to 5ha means that we are also seeing the emergence of nucleated populations of perhaps between 200 to 1500 people. Such settlements are of course in a minority, but there appears to be a general increase in the number and size of settlements in the EBA. We have already commented on the greater frequency of larger village sites of around 0.5ha, and even allowing for under-representation of Late Neolithic sites in survey data, there also seems to be an increase in the number of EBA sites compared to those of the Late Neolithic. Whilst we await a full report for the western Mesara, the preliminary report refers to almost twice as many EM I sites as Final Neolithic ¹⁴. In the surveys in the Ayiofarango and adjacent areas, the ratio of Late/Final Neolithic sites to EBA ones was 1:5 ¹⁵. The increase in site size, and in the number of sites occupied, surely points to a significant overall increase in population in Crete in the EBA. Renfrew ¹⁶ has indeed estimated a five-fold increase in population from the Neolithic to the EBA, and although his total population figures are surely inflated in all periods, the scale of increase from Neolithic to EBA, and subsequently from EBA to MBA, is probably about right.

These populations were not, however, static. The Ayiofarango survey revealed that at some point in EM III/MM Ia settlement of that catchment began to decline and that the valley was virtually abandoned by the end of MM I. There appears to be a decline in settlement numbers in the western Mesara too in EM III/MM Ia, although Watrous rightly draws attention to the difficulty of identifying rural ceramics of this period. In the case of the Ayiofarango it is clear that the population either died out or moved elsewhere. Occasional visits to former shrines and tombs in the MM/LM period suggests the latter. In the western Mesara the picture is not so certain; the dearth of settlements may reflect the concentration of population in fewer, larger settlements instead of, or as well as, a population migration to other areas. The appearance of a rash of EM III/MM I small tholos tombs of Mesara type in northern and eastern Crete, however, may still reflect small-scale movements from the south to the north and east.

In terms of settlement and population then, we can summarise the evidence for the EBA as pointing to a substantial increase in population, evidenced by more settlements in general, and more larger settlements in particular. The growth of a limited number of nucleated settlements of 1ha or more, with estimated populations from around 200 to 1500 is also to be noted. Within these large nucleated settlements we find the development of free-standing houses and in at least two cases the appearance of the first monumental architecture. Towards the end of the EBA there is some evidence for population movements, partly perhaps from small rural settlements into larger nucleated ones, and possibly also limited small-scale movements from southern parts of the island to the north and the east.

Society and Ritual

Alongside these developments at regional and community level we need to consider also the evidence for social change at family and personal level, and much of the evidence for

14 WATROUS (*supra* n. 1), 223.

15 D. BLACKMAN and K. BRANIGAN, "An Archaeological Survey of the South Coast of Crete", *BSA* 70 (1975), 17-36; D. BLACKMAN and K. BRANIGAN, "An Archaeological Survey of the Lower Catchment of the Ayiofarango Valley", *BSA* 72 (1977), 13-84; VASILAKIS (*supra* n. 4), 5.

16 RENFREW (*supra* n. 8), 251.

this comes from funerary archaeology or from the archaeology of ritual. Outside of funerary activity and locations, the evidence for EBA ritual is very limited. By far the largest groups of evidence for religious beliefs and ideology are figurines and amulets. Until the late Neolithic 'fat ladies' there are no recognisable anthropomorphic figurine 'types' in Crete. Thereafter, type-groups become more common but they are several and varied, and there is no suggestion of the emergence of either a canonical figurine type or religion.

In EM I there were six or seven stone figurine types in use in Crete; only one or two new types appear in EM II, but four new types in stone or bone appear at the end of EM II or in EM III¹⁷. In addition there are more than fifty Folded-Arm-Figurines of Cycladic type, which are the biggest single type-group of figurines. The FAFs point to a common set of beliefs, but not in all probability to anything approaching a communal religion¹⁸ and this is surely true of all the EBA figurines. Equally, the remarkable variety of amulets¹⁹ suggests varied and commonly held beliefs and superstitions rather than aspects of a communally organised ideology.

The occurrence of shrines might be a more reliable guide to the latter, but there is still little agreement on either the frequency or the nature of EBA shrines in Crete. The least controversial sites are caves, which in several cases seem to have a long history of usage which, at least in the later Bronze Age, seems to have been as places of ritual. Caves such as Arkhalokhori and the Eileithyia cave at Amnisos are examples which on present evidence seem likely to have seen ritual usage in the EBA, and most probably for a local (not necessarily nucleated) community. The discovery of a household shrine at Myrtos, has confirmed the existence of such shrines in the EBA but due to the controversy over the nature of the whole settlement at Myrtos, leaves open the question of whether the shrine served a single family/household or the whole community. Peatfield²⁰ has rejected the identification of EBA peak sanctuaries in the Ayiofarango but whilst accepting that the sites do not conform to the criteria for identifying MBA peak sanctuaries, I remain convinced that the Ayiofarango sites are indeed of a ritual nature²¹. If so, they appear to have served extended family groups and hamlets or villages. Finally there is the controversial question of the date of the first peak sanctuaries proper. Faure²² has proposed a date in EM III for some of the east Cretan examples, and I support this view myself. Peatfield, following his excavations at Atsipadhes, has also concluded that these shrines have their origins in the EBA²³. Cherry, on the other hand, remains unconvinced and prefers to see the emergence of the peak sanctuaries as chronologically and probably causally linked to the emergence of the state²⁴. If the existence of communal shrines in the EBA remains uncertain, the status of cemeteries as foci for communal ritual activity has become stronger. The very fact that in the EBA we have extensive cemetery sites with multiple monuments - whether of dug graves (e.g. Ayia Photia), built rectangular tombs and ossuaries (e.g. Arkhanes and Mochlos) or circular tholos tombs (e.g. Platanos and Koumasa) - emphasises that in death at least the EBA communities sought a common focus for their activities. In the cemeteries of rectangular tombs and tholoi, furthermore, there is reason to think that the individual tomb structures were the burial places

17 BRANIGAN (*supra* n. 7).

18 R. BARBER, *The Cyclades in the Bronze Age* (1987), 130-2.

19 K. BRANIGAN, *The Foundations of Palatial Crete* (1970), 94-7.

20 A. PEATFIELD, "The Topography of Minoan Peak Sanctuaries", *BSA* 78 (1983), 276-7.

21 K. BRANIGAN, "Open Air Shrines in Prepalatial Crete" (forthcoming).

22 P. FAURE, "Cultes populaires dans la Crète antique", *BCH* 96 (1972), 402.

23 A. PEATFIELD, "Rural Ritual in Bronze Age Crete. The Peak Sanctuary at Atsipadhes", *Cambridge Journal of Archaeology* 2 (1992), 71.

24 J. CHERRY, "Generalisation and the Archaeology of the State", in D. GREEN *et al.* (eds), *Social Organisation and Settlement* (1978), 429; and in PEATFIELD (*supra* n. 23), 83.

of groups larger than the nuclear family ²⁵. Beyond this, we have the evidence that the cemeteries were places where ritual and ceremony took place outside the tombs as well as inside them, and some of these activities were not necessarily primarily of a funerary nature. I have recently argued that in the Mesara cemeteries rituals related to the cults of both a fertility deity and the Snake Goddess were practised ²⁶. Ritual activity outside the tombs, and in some cases of a non-funerary character, is something which seems to develop between EM II and MM I. At Ayia Kyriaki, for example, the 'platform' and peribolos wall were added to the tomb complex in mid-EM II ²⁷. The evidence for external activity at Koumasa is principally the large collection of ritual vessels of EM II-MM I date found outside the tombs, whilst at Platanos a paved area is associated with the rectangular suite of rooms erected outside tholos B not earlier than EM II ²⁸. Other paved areas and/or enclosures are associated with EM III-MM I tholoi at Ayios Kyrillos, Apesokari and Kamilari.

At the same time as these developments are taking place, so in both tomb architecture and grave goods we see changes which seem to reflect the increased importance of either rank or status in funerary behaviour. Soles ²⁹ has made an impressive case for recognising the emergence of an elite in the 'house-tombs' of Mochlos, Gournia and Palaikastro. He also concludes ³⁰ that most of these tombs were used by just one or two families with additional tombs built as the lineage grew. Even in the Mesara, where the tholoi have always been seen as evidence of an egalitarian society, it has been noted that in cemeteries such as Koumasa and Platanos, one tholos is larger and more elaborate in its architecture than the others ³¹.

It is in the tholoi in and around the Mesara plain that we also see the deposition of considerable quantities of items of display - such as gold jewellery, and imported products from the Cyclades, Syria and Egypt as well as items made of imported raw materials ³². The same phenomenon has been identified by Soles ³³ in the Mochlos cemetery, where the more elaborate plans and aggrandised architecture of the tombs on the western terrace are matched by their contents - over a dozen gold diadems, silver vessels and jewellery, fine stone vases and pottery. Whether or not the diadems are specific reflections of rank, there can be little doubt that the families buried here in EM II-III were an elite within the community on Mochlos.

Parallel with the development of communal non-funerary ritual and increasing evidence for social ranking there is some evidence which suggests a new emphasis on the individual, or at least some individuals. Although we cannot distinguish individuals amongst the mass of bones recovered from the Mesara tholoi, some of the grave-goods deposited in the tombs may have been put there to identify the role of their owners in life. An unused crucible at Ayia Kyriaki, a chisel and saw from Koumasa, the leathercutter from Marathokephalon, two unfinished stone vases from Platanos, and loomweights from the same cemetery, are outside the usual run of grave goods and may have been buried to assert the identity of the bronzesmith, the carpenter, the leatherworker, the lapidary and the weaver who had used them

25 J. SOLES, *The Prepalatial Cemeteries at Mochlos and Gournia* (1992) 232-3; BRANIGAN (*supra* n. 10), 81-95.

26 BRANIGAN (*supra* n. 10), 127-36.

27 D. BLACKMAN and K. BRANIGAN, "Excavation of an Early Minoan tholos tomb at Ayia Kyriaki", *BSA* 77 (1982), 46-8.

28 BRANIGAN (*supra* n. 10), 137-9.

29 SOLES (*supra* n. 25), 255-8.

30 SOLES (*supra* n. 25), 252-3.

31 K. BRANIGAN, "Early Minoan Society: the Evidence of the Mesara Tholoi Reviewed", in *Aux origines de l'hellénisme. La Crète et la Grèce. Hommage à Henri van Effenterre* (1984), 35-6.

32 BRANIGAN (*supra* n. 31), 33-4.

33 SOLES (*supra* n. 25), 255-8.

in life. The increasing use of sealstones, which first appear in EM II, may also be taken as the increasing assertion of the individuality of at least some members of EBA society. About three-dozen sealstones are now known from EM II deposits³⁴, and at least 300 from EM II-MM Ia³⁵. At Arkhanes alone, the number of seals in EM II deposits appears to be about a dozen, and from EM III-MM Ia deposits about fifty. The selective use/ownership of sealstones is probably well demonstrated by the finds in the largely undisturbed tholos C at Arkhanes where 45 individuals were identified, and only 11 seals³⁶.

The other significant feature of burials made in tholos C and in tholos E at Arkhanes is the appearance of pithoi and larnax burials inside these classic 'communal' tombs (Pl. V); they also occur in other apparently communal burial places or ossuaries at Arkhanes³⁷. The same phenomenon has been noted in at least fifteen of the Mesara tholoi³⁸, and in house-tombs at Gournia³⁹. Wherever the stratification survives and is recorded, the larnax and pithos burials overlie earlier uncontained burials, although other uncontained burials continue to be made contemporaneously with the larnax and pithos burials. Although some of these containers were used to store several skulls, and others contained the remains of more than one individual⁴⁰, many were clearly intended for single burials. In Arkhanes tholos C, for example, 3 larnakes near the tomb entrance had multiple burials but 8 others in the chamber contained a single individual; the same preponderance of single burials was noted in the 29 larnakes found in tholos E⁴¹. The use of larnakes and pithoi for individual burials inside communal tombs appears to be another expression of individuality within the traditional framework of the extended family or kin-group tomb.

The evidence for possible social transformations provided by funerary and non-funerary activity then may be summarised as suggesting a shift from personal beliefs and superstitions, represented by the wide variety of amulets and figurines, to the creation of foci for communal ritual activity, particularly in some of the cemeteries. This shift seems to begin in EM II and gathers momentum. At the same time embellished tomb architecture and prestige grave goods appear to herald the increasing importance of rank or status. Finally, from EM II onwards we may see evidence of an emerging emphasis on the individual, initially in the adoption of personalised sealstones and burials in which the role of the individual is signified by the grave-goods, and subsequently by the use of larnakes and pithoi to allow individual burial within a communal tomb.

Social Transformations and the Rise of the State

If we consider the picture of social change during the Early Bronze Age that emerges from our survey of the evidence, we can suggest that the changes fall into two categories. First we have changes to the size and nature of social groupings or social communities. These changes run in opposing directions.

On the one hand there is a declining importance of the extended family unit or kin-group and greater emphasis on the nuclear family and the individual. On the other, alongside

34 P. YULE, *Early Cretan Seals - A Study of Chronology* (1981), 8-9; I. and E. SAKELLARAKIS, *Arkhanes* (1991), 126.

35 YULE (*supra* n. 34), 10-13; SAKELLARAKIS (*supra* n. 34), 96, 126; VASILAKIS (*supra* n. 4), 65.

36 SAKELLARAKIS (*supra* n. 34), 114-18.

37 SAKELLARAKIS (*supra* n. 34), 114, 126, 98, 127.

38 BRANIGAN (*supra* n. 10), 65-6, 141.

39 SOLES (*supra* n. 25), 8, 23.

40 SOLES (*supra* n. 25), 246.

41 SAKELLARAKIS (*supra* n. 34), 114, 199.

a general growth in population, there is the development of larger communities, with populations of between 200 and 1500 persons. These changes must have created stress and tension in the traditional social fabric, and both must have reduced the significance of the kin-group. The second category of social change is change in the way in which societies ordered and controlled themselves. There is, as we have seen, increasing evidence for the emergence of social ranking and social elites in the south, north and east of the island during EM II and EM III. This is reflected in increasing expenditure of energy on conspicuous display in burial architecture, grave goods, the acquisition of imported products, and the first appearance of monumental architecture. At the same time we see an increase in communal, as opposed to kin-group, ritual with the use of communal cemetery areas for non-funerary ceremonies. Before the end of the period we may also see the first of the peak sanctuaries, serving not only entire communities rather than kin-groups or extended families, but acting perhaps as a ritual focus for several communities in the same area.

The importance of these social transformations for state formation in Crete is not that in themselves they explain the rise of the state, but that they provide social conditions in which state formation is facilitated. This is because these changes all weaken the organic solidarity of the extended-family and kin-group centred societies of the Late Neolithic and EM I, and breakdown the immobility and social homogeneity of these societies. These characteristics are the opposite of those commonly associated with urban societies operating within a state system, such as mechanical solidarity, mobility, social heterogeneity⁴² and their diminution must facilitate the development of mechanical forms of social organisation, of greater social ranking, and of greater social and communal mobility. The other significant point about these social changes in the Cretan EBA is that they take place over a lengthy period of time - some can be discerned during EM II, others only towards the end of EM II, and still others only in EM III. Cherry⁴³ has rightly said that time 'cannot itself change anything'. But the passage of time is an enabler for processes, which need time, and even apparently abrupt transformations may result from unspectacular processes taking place through time⁴⁴. On present evidence such processes seem at least as likely to explain how state formation was possible in the years around 2000 BC in Crete, as recourse to a 'quantum leap' model which may (or may not) describe state formation, but certainly does not explain it.

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42 M. SMITH, "Complexity, Size and Urbanisation", in P.J. UCKO, R. TRINGHAM & G.W. DIMBLEBY eds, *Man, Settlement and Urbanism: Proceedings of a Meeting of the Research Seminar in Archaeology and Related Subjects Held at the Institute of Archaeology, London University* (1972), 567-74; P. WHEATLEY, "The Concept of Urbanism", in *Man, Settlement and Urbanism* (*supra* this note), 601-37.

43 J. CHERRY, "Evolution, Revolution, and the Origins of Complex Society", in *Minoan Society* (1983), 33.

44 E.g. C. RENFREW, "Trajectory Discontinuity and Morphogenesis: the Implications of Catastrophe Theory for Archaeology", *American Antiquity* 43 (1978), 203-22.

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

- Pl. IV Early Bronze Age Phaistos. The known distribution of deposits and structural remains of EM I-III.
Pl. V Social tensions in EM III. The larnax burials of individuals within the communal tholos E at Arkhanes.

DISCUSSION

P.P. Betancourt: I think you made a very good case. I might point out that additional evidence could be used to indicate the gradually increasing amount of social differentiation. This is the difference in tomb types within a single cemetery. Even, as you know, in the Messara, some of the burials are not in the tholoi themselves but in the rectangular buildings that are near them. This is, I think, especially evident in the cemetery at Mochlos where the excavations of R.B. Seager found not only the large house tombs, but also a series of very small cist graves, one burial in a hole in the rock, and a very small rock shelter in the cleft of the rock as well. These latter had very poor grave goods in contrast with those in the larger tombs.

K. Branigan: I agree. J.S. Soles has demonstrated this very fully in his publication of the Mochlos cemetery.

L.V. Watrous: As K. Branigan knows, I disagree with a good deal of what he just said. I would like to put on a couple of qualifications in what he has said. First of all he mentioned the appearance of monumental architecture, which is correct; but what he failed to mention is that we are not dealing with domestic architecture here. In the case of Knossos we are probably dealing with a terrace; it is not fair to compare a terrace to domestic architecture. At Palaikastro we have no idea what is involved there, but those walls certainly do not look like anything we know from EM domestic architecture. Secondly, yes it is true that the larnakes do appear within graves at some point after EM II. We cannot date them very well, but I think it is much more likely that they are in MM IA than earlier. What K. Branigan failed to mention is that these larnakes have almost nothing in them. They are poor, not rich. They are poorer than the EM II burials. With the exception of the one Syrian cylinder seal at Mochlos I am unaware of any import from the East in Early Bronze Age Crete. Yes, there are many imports, but they cannot be dated. They are all in the Messara tombs, and they can be anywhere from EM II down to MM II. Lastly, the business with the separation, the distribution which you find in the Mochlos cemetery: there is going to be an article of mine coming out in *AJA* 98 (1994), in which I put forth my arguments why I disagree with J.S. Soles' argument there about distribution. Generally speaking, if you look at the Mochlos cemetery you will see that in many cases the arguments that are being made are being made from EM II and later material. Also, the later tombs in fact — as R.B. Seager and J.S. Soles have pointed out — are mostly robbed. So it is not a very valid comparison in my opinion.

K. Branigan: I certainly agree that I would not count the buildings, the monumental architecture, at Knossos and Palaikastro as domestic houses; certainly not. They are obviously built on the communal scale. The sheer size of them alone suggests that. I must admit that there are problems concerning the dates of arrival of the imports in the Messara tholoi. Some people would argue with Peter Warren that most of the Egyptian stone vases do not arrive at the time of their floruit. I think, however, that the imports from the Near East and from other areas in the Aegean arrived at the time of their floruit. As to the larnax burials I do not mean that they are rich burials. I mean simply that they demonstrate the stress on the individual within a communal context.

J.S. Soles: I guess I have to defend the Mochlos tombs since I did clean several of them that Seager had excavated and found EM II and EM III pottery in the smaller tombs. These tombs are definitely contemporary with the large tombs on the west terrace. There is absolutely no question about it. And there are still many smaller tombs left to excavate. I think that K. Branigan has summarised the state of affairs in Prepalatial Crete perfectly. One additional thing which I have always wondered about, however, is that there are quite clearly two different cultures existing in Crete in the Prepalatial period; maybe more, but two certainly well identified: one in the South and one in the East and maybe in the North. The interaction between those cultures must also have something to do with the emergence of the state at the end of the Prepalatial period.

K. Branigan: I accept certainly that there are these two very clear sort of provinces, if you like, or cultural areas or groups within Minoan Crete. There does seem to be some sort of interaction there; and interestingly enough it is being now particularly demonstrated by P. Day, B. Wilson and T. Whitelaw with their studies on Minoan ceramics. All the early indications of that are that there is a lot of interregional exchange going on which is extremely interesting.

G. Kopcke: Not only do we have the seals introduced in the beginning, but then we have a change after a while when the first complete Cretan style is introduced in the cut, in the carving, in the detail of the seal. If one analyses the style which has lions and elements which do not seem to be indigenous, one comes to the conclusion that this style really does support some kind of centrality. There is a development of such significance, of such symbolic impact that to think of it as really a kind of idiosyncratic invention on the part of

the artist is impossible; so that I would think, would stress at this point that a kind of hierarchy within the seemingly communal situation.

K. Branigan: On the point of sealstones I think the only problem there is to really see what is happening across the island because most of them are coming from the Messara. Outside the Messara there are very few apart from the Archanes ones to be published soon. On the point of the two provinces again I certainly feel that what is happening in the Messara in the EBA is somewhat different from what is happening in the East. At least the two provinces are coming socially from different starting points. They may begin converging only towards the end of the EBA .



