



**Πανεπιστήμιο
Κύπρου**

ΤΜΗΜΑ ΙΣΤΟΡΙΑΣ ΚΑΙ ΑΡΧΑΙΟΛΟΓΙΑΣ

**ΟΙΚΟΝΟΜΙΚΟΙ ΚΑΙ ΠΟΛΙΤΙΣΜΙΚΟΙ
ΜΕΤΑΣΧΗΜΑΤΙΣΜΟΙ ΣΤΗΝ ΑΝΑΚΤΟΡΙΚΗ ΚΡΗΤΗ**

**Η ΠΟΛΗ ΤΗΣ ΚΝΩΣΟΥ ΚΑΤΑ ΤΗ ΜΕΣΟΜΙΝΩΙΚΗ ΙΙΑ ΠΕΡΙΟΔΟ
ΜΕΣΑ ΑΠΟ ΤΗΝ ΑΝΑΣΚΑΦΗ ΣΤΟΥΣ ΓΥΨΑΔΕΣ**

ΜΑΡΙΝΑ ΒΕΛΕΓΡΑΚΗ

**Διατριβή η οποία υποβλήθηκε προς απόκτηση διδακτορικού
τίτλου σπουδών στο Πανεπιστήμιο Κύπρου**

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Abstract

In the present thesis, a re-examination of the Middle Minoan IIIA period (MM IIIA) is attempted, based on a systematic analysis of contemporary architectural and ceramic findings from the Gypsades hill at Knossos. Building 2 came to light as part of *The Knossos-Gypsades Excavation Project 2014-2015*, a collaboration of the British School at Athens and the Ephorate of Antiquities at Heraklion, Crete.

Dating MM IIIA at the first half of the 17th century BC (1700/1675-1650/1640 BC) sets the period culturally on the boundary between the Old and New Palaces, a position that emphasizes its transitional character. Until recently, thoroughly published material concerning the period was limited, as well as explicit information about stratigraphy. Rare are also archaeological contexts with chronological superimposed sequence. The importance of Building 2 lies exactly in providing undisturbed data with no subsequent interference, and a clear stratigraphical sequence, thus contributing decisively to the archaeology of the Middle Minoan period. In its ruins, one can “read” its “biography”, detect historical events, and finally interpret the human reaction to them.

The research focuses on: 1) the architectural layout of the Building 2, clarifying construction techniques, its form and function, 2) the detailed stratigraphical analysis, aiming to an interpretative explanation about the causes that yield specific archaeological strata, 3) the typological analysis of the pottery, whereas an attempt of detecting ceramic development and thus chronological change is made, 4) the attempt to incorporate Building 2 into the Knossian urban planning during the transitional period between Old and New Palaces, and 5) the examination and evaluation comparable data from other Cretan sites.

Building 2 is established on a town’s quarter along with neighboring houses. Although in distance from its administrative core, it exhibits architectural elements of palatial identity, underlying the integration of the Gypsades district within the Knossian elite.

Emphasis is given on the ceramics, as it is the main tool for chronological and cultural identification, not only of the specific building remains, but also the period

itself. Pottery study, apart from its exhaustive typological analysis and manufacture techniques, is based extensively on statistic data concerning types and wares in context. This approach is rather new and not widely adopted to Minoan archaeological research specifically as to the MM III Knossian pottery. One of the topics under study is, also, the reassessment of the MM II - IIIA periodization, based on ceramic affinities and stratigraphical sequence, proposing early MM IIIA pottery groups to date in MM IIB, and MM IIIA to be autonomous. Furthermore, discussion is made on the socio-political and economic context, in which the material in question was produced and consumed.

The cultural identification of the Knossian MM IIIA allowed its association with contemporary sites across the island, especially with central and east Crete. Their study in comparison revealed interesting patterns of influence, which confirmed Knossian authority during Neopalatial period.

The destruction of the Building 2 in the MM IIIA was extensive, due to a seismic event of large magnitude. This resulted to the building's abandonment which occurred at a short period of time within the MM IIIA. Rooms were cleared from destruction deposits and then backfilled with material, either from the building itself or from nearby pits. This procedure took place in a specific, methodical way, to which modern archaeological narrative refers as "structured deposition" and "ritual abandonment". The intensity and impact of this event, as well as the importance of the building itself, is reflected on the decision to preserve the area it was extended free of buildings, even when the later Late Minoan IB-II (1480-1390 BC) Building 1 was founded immediately to the east.