



THE AYIA TRIADA NECROPOLIS IN EM III-MM I AND ITS CONNECTIONS WITH THE NEIGHBOURING AREAS

CHIARA DE GREGORIO

PHILOSOPHISCHE FAKULTÄT - INSTITUT FÜR KLASSISCHE ARCHÄOLOGIE

This research project has the aim of studying and publishing finds and documents of the excavations carried out in the Late Prepalatial necropolis of Ayia Triada (2300/2200-1925/1900 BC)(Early Minoan III-Middle Minoan IA), one of the most important Minoan sites in south-central Crete. The cemetery comprised the *tholos* A, a monumental circular tomb with its annexes, and the so-called *Camerette*, two blocks of small rooms connected to ceremonial consumptions of food and drink. The necropoleis with *tholos* tombs were typical of the Prepalatial south-central Crete.

The Late Prepalatial necropolis was uncovered in 1904 by the Italian Archaeological Mission in Crete. The first results were later published in 1933. In the Nineties, the Italian Archaeological School at Athens undertook a new phase of research, through the re-examination of the *tholos* A and its annexes and new excavations in the area of the *Camerette* in 1997-1999. As the final dissertation at Italian Archaeological School at Athens, I have studied a pottery deposit found during those research.

New interdisciplinary methods used in the nearby contemporary necropolis of Koumasa by the University of Heidelberg will be applied in Ayia Triada. The typological and comparative exam of the pottery will be connected to petrographical studies in order to identify the origin of the artefacts. The study of the pottery will so be useful to understand the activities recorded in the necropolis and the possible links with rituals, but also to explain the relations between Ayia Triada and the neighbouring areas. Moreover, the analysis of the finds will define which was the community connected to the necropolis, possibly conceived as a gathering point and a place of promotion of group identity. As in Koumasa, the forensic archaeology will be used to determine the micro-morphological composition of the soils in the Ayia Triada necropolis and, in this way, the chronological sequence of events.

The results will be compared with the broader Cretan context to propose a final historical synthesis. The study and publication of the Late Prepalatial Ayia Triada necropolis will help to complete the knowledge of funerary and social practices in Minoan Crete and cover a gap, providing new useful data for other Late Prepalatial contexts.

KEYWORDS: Ayia Triada, Late Prepalatial, Necropolis, Interdisciplinary methods, Pottery