

HAGHIA TRIADA: I SAGGI DI SCAVO NELL'AREA DELLA NECROPOLI (1997-1999)

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ABSTRACT

The paper presents the result of the soundings carried on in Ayia Triada in 1997-1999, starting from the data of old excavations and notebooks. The abundant graphic and photographic documentation reveals the complex history of the area due to ancient and modern activities. Our research concerned the following areas: A) In the area of the tomb of the Painted Sarcophagus the funerary building was brought to light, and reexamined, allowing us to date its construction to early LMIIIA2. Some decades after, the tomb was robbed as a consequence of a damnatio memoriae within the framework of a strong competition among elites. B) In the nearby of Tholos B, the ossuary has been cleaned, and an entrance door in its western side has been identified, closed in MMII. C) In the area to the South of Tholos A, the small funerary chambers 1-10 have been analytically surveyed. A small pottery deposit and the reexamination of the walls has allowed the attribution of the complex to a mature phase of MMIA, and the identification of three architectonic phases. D) In the area to the West of chambers 1-10, the three rooms a-c, found empty by earlier excavators, have been investigated, and dated after our study to MMIA. They were probably built immediately before chambers 1-10, and had the same function. An eleventh room has been identified. The back wall of Rooms a-c included two baetyls, determining a kind of ceremonial door with its sill, looking towards Tholos A. In a later phase, the two baetyls had been incorporated in a small paved room, which can be dated to MMII and which represented a cultic space, as demonstrated by the presence of a slab/kernos. The entrance of this space was no more oriented towards the tomb (as in the baetyls wall), as a consequence of changes in the funerary sphere. E) In the area of Tholos A, a small portion not yet excavated has been investigated along the northern side. F) Moreover a small sounding has been made in the so called Cyclopean wall, already brought to light in the '70es. The wall was built in the protogeometric period, and its eastern part overlapped the wall of Tholos A, already as a ruin. The wall delimited a ritual space linked with the tomb, probably used for the cult of the ancestors. G) Finally, a rich dump of MMIA pottery has been discovered in an ellipsoidal pit behind the wall of the baetyls. The vases were probably part of the original furniture of the nearby chambers 1-10, removed in MMIB to make room for the new depositions found in earlier excavations. In the final chapter a summary of the most important results is proposed. The profanation of the tomb of the Painted Sarcophagus is set against the framework of the urban phases identified in the new excavations; the event is furthermore interpreted in the perspective of the political relations between the centres of Knossos and AyiaTriada: the damnatio memoriae would echo the destruction of the palace of Knossos and the changes in the relations among the settlements of Crete. Second, the frequent uses in the area of Tholos A have been highlighted , especially in MMIA, with some insights in the nature of religious liturgies linked with the tomb. A short paragraph in the end attempts the reconstruction of a diachronic sequence of the whole area of the necropolis.